

# Children, Adults, Health and Wellbeing Policy Development and Scrutiny Panel

**Date: Monday, 13th November, 2023**

**Time: 9.30am**

**Venue: Council Chamber - Guildhall, Bath**

**Councillors:** Dine Romero, Liz Hardman, Alex Beaumont, Paul Crossley,  
Dave Harding, Michelle O'Doherty, Lesley Mansell and Joanna Wright

**Co-opted Non-Voting Members:** Chris Batten and Kevin Burnett

**The Panel will have a pre-meeting at 9.00am**



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## NOTES:

1. **Inspection of Papers:** Papers are available for inspection as follows:

Council's website: <https://democracy.bathnes.gov.uk/ieDocHome.aspx?bcr=1>

2. **Details of decisions taken at this meeting** can be found in the minutes which will be circulated with the agenda for the next meeting. In the meantime, details can be obtained by contacting as above.

3. **Recording at Meetings:-**

The Openness of Local Government Bodies Regulations 2014 now allows filming and recording by anyone attending a meeting. This is not within the Council's control.

Some of our meetings are webcast. At the start of the meeting, the Chair will confirm if all or part of the meeting is to be filmed. If you would prefer not to be filmed for the webcast, please make yourself known to the camera operators.

To comply with the Data Protection Act 1998, we require the consent of parents or guardians before filming children or young people. For more information, please speak to the camera operator.

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4. **Public Speaking at Meetings**

The Council has a scheme to encourage the public to make their views known at meetings. They may make a statement relevant to what the meeting has power to do. They may also present a petition or a deputation on behalf of a group.

**Advance notice is required not less than two full working days before the meeting. This means that for meetings held on Thursdays notice must be received in Democratic Services by 5.00pm the previous Monday.**

Further details of the scheme can be found at:

<https://democracy.bathnes.gov.uk/ecCatDisplay.aspx?sch=doc&cat=12942>

5. **Emergency Evacuation Procedure**

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6. **Supplementary information for meetings**

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**Children, Adults, Health and Wellbeing Policy Development and Scrutiny Panel - Monday,  
13th November, 2023**

**at 9.30am in the Council Chamber - Guildhall, Bath**

**A G E N D A**

1. WELCOME AND INTRODUCTIONS

2. EMERGENCY EVACUATION PROCEDURE

The Chair will draw attention to the emergency evacuation procedure as set out under Note 5.

3. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE AND SUBSTITUTIONS

4. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

At this point in the meeting declarations of interest are received from Members in any of the agenda items under consideration at the meeting. Members are asked to indicate:

- (a) The agenda item number in which they have an interest to declare.
- (b) The nature of their interest.
- (c) Whether their interest is **a disclosable pecuniary interest** or **an other interest**,  
(as defined in Part 4.4 Appendix B of the Code of Conduct and Rules for Registration of Interests)

Any Member who needs to clarify any matters relating to the declaration of interests is recommended to seek advice from the Council's Monitoring Officer or a member of his staff before the meeting to expedite dealing with the item during the meeting.

5. TO ANNOUNCE ANY URGENT BUSINESS AGREED BY THE CHAIRMAN

6. ITEMS FROM THE PUBLIC OR COUNCILLORS - TO RECEIVE STATEMENTS, PETITIONS OR QUESTIONS RELATING TO THE BUSINESS OF THIS MEETING

At the time of publication no notifications had been received.

7. MINUTES: 9TH OCTOBER 2023 (Pages 7 - 26)

8. CABINET MEMBER UPDATE

The Cabinet Member(s) will update the Panel on any relevant issues. Panel members may ask questions on the update provided.

9. B&NES, SWINDON & WILTSHIRE INTEGRATED CARE BOARD (BSW ICB) UPDATE

The Panel will receive an update from the B&NES, Swindon & Wiltshire Integrated Care Board (BSW ICB) on current issues.

10. INDEPENDENT REVIEWING OFFICER (IRO) ANNUAL REPORT (Pages 27 - 52)

This report is produced to provide the Director for Children's Services, the Lead Member for Children and the Corporate Parenting Board with information pertaining to the work of the Independent Reviewing Service (IRS), which is responsible for monitoring and reviewing the care provided to children and young people for whom the Local Authority are Corporate Parents.

11. BATH & NORTH EAST SOMERSET COMMUNITY SAFETY & SAFEGUARDING PARTNERSHIP (BCSSP) ANNUAL REPORT (Pages 53 - 96)

The B&NES Community Safety & Safeguarding Partnership (BCSSP) is introducing its Annual Report for 2022-2023, alongside its priorities to be actioned in its Strategic Plan for 2023-2024.

12. CHILDREN'S SERVICES ANNUAL COMPLAINTS REPORT (Pages 97 - 120)

This report provides the Panel with an overview of the operation of the statutory Complaints and Representations Procedure and the Corporate Complaints Procedure within Children's Services. It provides an analysis of all complaints received by the Service during 2022 – 2023.

13. SCHOOL MEALS (Pages 121 - 142)

This report highlights the current provision in Bath and North East Somerset with regard the numbers of pupils who are in receipt of Free School Meals and the provision they can expect to receive, and also explains the statutory requirements of schools food standards that apply to meals provided in schools.

14. PANEL WORKPLAN (Pages 143 - 148)

This report presents the latest workplan for the Panel. Any suggestions for further items or amendments to the current programme will be logged and scheduled in consultation with the Panel's Chair and supporting officers.

The Committee Administrator for this meeting is Mark Durnford who can be contacted on [mark\\_durnford@bathnes.gov.uk](mailto:mark_durnford@bathnes.gov.uk) 01225 394458.

**BATH AND NORTH EAST SOMERSET**

**CHILDREN, ADULTS, HEALTH AND WELLBEING POLICY DEVELOPMENT AND SCRUTINY PANEL**

Monday, 9th October, 2023

**Present:-** Councillors Dine Romero (Chair), Liz Hardman (Vice-Chair), Alex Beaumont, Paul Crossley, Dave Harding, Michelle O'Doherty and Joanna Wright

**Co-opted Non-Voting Members:** Chris Batten and Kevin Burnett

**Also in attendance:** Claire Thorogood (Head of Contracting & Performance), Natalia Lachkou (Assistant Director - Integrated Commissioning), Ann Smith (Assistant Director - Operations), Laura Ambler (Director of Place, B&NES, BSW ICB) and Judith Westcott (Senior Commissioner, Community Transformation)

**29 WELCOME AND INTRODUCTIONS**

The Chair welcomed everyone to the meeting.

**30 EMERGENCY EVACUATION PROCEDURE**

The Chair drew attention to the emergency evacuation procedure.

**31 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE AND SUBSTITUTIONS**

There were none.

**32 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

There were none.

**33 TO ANNOUNCE ANY URGENT BUSINESS AGREED BY THE CHAIR**

There was none.

**34 ITEMS FROM THE PUBLIC OR COUNCILLORS - TO RECEIVE STATEMENTS, PETITIONS OR QUESTIONS RELATING TO THE BUSINESS OF THIS MEETING**

There were none.

**35 MINUTES: 18TH SEPTEMBER 2023**

The Panel confirmed the minutes of the previous meeting as a true record and they were duly signed by the Chair.

## 36 CABINET MEMBER UPDATE

Councillor Alison Born, Cabinet Member for Adult Services addressed the Panel and highlighted the following areas from her update. A copy of the update will be attached to these minutes as an online appendix.

### **ASC Performance**

The number of people with current long-term services funded by Adult Social Care is **1,872**. In addition to this there are **406** carers with current services funded by Adult Social Care.

There are **48** people currently waiting for a Care Act assessment of their needs, this is an improvement on the previous month of **59**. **457** (from the 1,872) are waiting for an annual review of their needs, again this is an improvement trend from **527**. The average wait is 8 months overdue, and the longest wait is 11 months overdue. All reviews are risk rated and prioritised accordingly.

Our Mental Health teams continue to experience increased demand, approx. 10% month on month. We have received **104** referrals for detention under the Mental Health Act since April 2023 with **97** of those referrals accepted by the Approved Mental Health professionals.

### **Finance**

Whilst the number of packages provided continued to be below previous levels during the first part of the year, we are now seeing an increase (average of 25%) in year on year activity. Package costs have also increased during the year (average by 12%), due to the economic and market factors that are currently being experienced across the country.

In addition, referrals to the services are increasing in complexity which adds to the budgetary pressure and work continues with health colleagues to review and agree the correct funding model for the services required.

### **ASC Provider Services Update**

The council operates 5 Extra Care Schemes, 3 Care Homes (CRCs) and 1 care agency. The 5 extra care schemes remain rated as good by the CQC and the 3 care homes are rated overall requires improvement but with good in key areas such as caring and safety. Our home care service has yet to be inspected by CQC.

The service has undertaken a comprehensive review of its delivery and costs and will be consulting in October and November on our future plans for the service, a final decision will be made via a Single Member Decision in January 2024. Recruitment to the services continues to improve with our vacancies reducing from 70 to 22 across the services.

## **Community Catalysts working in B&NES**

Strategically, we want to empower people to make their own care and support decisions, as well as ensuring a sustainable, competitive marketplace, with capacity to support the needs of our residents.

To this aim we are working with Community Catalysts as our strategic partner to increase the number of small community enterprises in B&NES that will use their skills and passions to provide a wide range of help and support to local people.

Our recently appointed dedicated B&NES Catalyst is working with three enterprises, supporting them through the development programme, and is engaging with a further ten who have made enquiries. We have recently held two engagement workshops and set up a change group which has membership from statutory and third sector organisations. This is a great start to the project that demonstrates positive interest in this opportunity to ensure that support is community based, builds on strengths, is person-centred, preventative, and affordable.

## **New Supported Living Schemes**

Specialist Commissioners have been working with social work colleagues and social landlords Curo and Bromford to develop proposals for two new supported living schemes to enable residents to live independently, with support close to their families, friends, and communities.

We are currently out to procurement for a core support provider to provide 24-hour support at these new developments: one at Hygge Park in Keynsham and one at Sulis Down in Bath.

Both schemes will house five individuals with a learning disability and/or autism in their own flats, with space for staff to stay and the individuals to socialise. We expect the procurement process will conclude later in the autumn and the contract to be in place from January 2024.

## **Support for Unpaid Carers and Co-production**

Unpaid carers play a vital role in enabling people they care for to live with the right care and support at home. We are aware that over the past few years, rates of satisfaction amongst unpaid carers have declined nationally and locally. Our commitment to carers is very strong and we aspire to enable all B&NES carers to feel valued, continue in their caring role if they wish to do so, and to lead their best life.

To this aim we are taking forward two planned pieces of work this year. Firstly, we are preparing for the next national carers survey due to take place in February. This survey will be sent to all carers known to the council to seek a range of quantitative and qualitative information about carers' experiences and quality of life.

Secondly, we have started planning engagement for a new co-produced carers strategy, which is being developed across the autumn. Together with the B&NES Carers Centre and local carer networks, we will be asking carers what is important to

them, what would make a difference and use this insight to inform future commissioning plans for carers' support.

Kevin Burnett asked if any Council money was involved in the Community Catalysts work or was funding being provided through a third party.

The Assistant Director, Integrated Commissioning replied that the Council was funding the project, but not the delivery of care to individuals. She added that the funding was being provided by last year's allocation to B&NES of the Better Care Fund. She said that once the Catalysts were operational there would be two funding streams, either through a personal budget, for people who are eligible or directly purchasing the services.

Councillor Liz Hardman asked what the future plans for the Home Care service are and what decision will be taken by the Cabinet Member in January 2024.

The Assistant Director, Operations replied that the service is currently delivered in partnership with the RUH and is due to run until June 2024. She said that the partnership has included the recruitment of international employees and for them to be seconded into work for the Council. She added that in January 2024 they will be seeking options for the service going forward and so the Cabinet Member decision will be based around recruitment and the model of the service.

She stated that they were now looking to stop international employees from joining the service and focus on local recruitment as sponsorship visas only last for three years.

Councillor Hardman commented that it was good to see that waiting times have been reduced for residents waiting for a Care Act Assessment of their needs. She added that however, the average wait time is still eight months and asked can anything more be done to reduce this.

The Assistant Director, Operations replied that the average time is based on all patients and that it might be useful in the future to break these figures down into separate categories as some cases are difficult to assess.

Councillor Paul Crossley asked if any further comment could be given on the numbers involved in the safeguarding enquiries.

The Assistant Director, Operations replied that there has been an increase in referrals, but that the numbers that have required an investigation have been static. She said that the service has been promoted which is why the referrals have increased, but it was important to note that this had not resulted in an increase to people who have been harmed.

Councillor Crossley also raised the escalation of Mental Health cases and asked if it was known what was driving the increase and how our figures compare with other Local Authorities.

The Assistant Director, Operations replied that the figures for B&NES were in line with that of other areas and that across the Avon and Wiltshire Partnership they were seeing an increase in requests for assessments under the Mental Health Act. She



said that this did not always translate into detention as they have a robust diversion programme in place. She added she felt that they were still seeing a deterioration in peoples mental health following the Covid pandemic.

Councillor Crossley said that he was concerned about the service having enough resources and asked if the Council was prepared for this in terms of the forthcoming budget.

The Assistant Director, Operations replied that they were currently working on the staffing needs required locally, were within their agreed budget and looking to appoint additional mental health professionals. She added that from April 2024 two additional specialist posts would be in place and that approval had recently been received to recruit four apprentice Occupational Therapists.

Councillor Alison Born commented that they were assessing the resources available in advance of the budget setting process and suggested the Panel have a future agenda item relating to Mental Health provision.

Councillor Joanna Wright asked if an explanation could be given for the figure within the July Cabinet papers that said there was around a £528,000 underspend on Adults and Older People Mental Health & Commissioning.

The Assistant Director, Operations replied that this figure related to the packages of care and that the pressure identified within the update is in relation to staff capacity and their ability to carry out the Mental Health Capacity assessments.

Councillor Alex Beaumont asked if any update could be given on Charlton House.

The Assistant Director, Operations replied that a review of the 3 Care Homes within B&NES has been carried out and that a six week public consultation regarding their future use will begin later in October. She added that Charlton House has continued to make improvements, but only one floor remains in use with a low level of occupancy.

Councillor Wright referred to the New Supported Living Schemes and asked for it to be made sure that these properties are fit for purpose as she had recently received concerns from a number of residents regarding Curo properties. She asked for the Panel to consider receiving a report on Housing at a future meeting.

The Assistant Director - Integrated Commissioning replied that both schemes were to be new build properties and would be built to the expected modern standards. She added that a partnership agreement will be in place between Curo, as a landlord and the care and support provider. She said that the contract award for this was imminent and would provide an oversight of the quality of care and the quality of housing.

Councillor Wright asked who the democratic representative was on the Integrated Care Board. She said that she would appreciate seeing a structure chart of how all the various component bodies interact.

The Director of Place, B&NES, BSW ICB replied that this would be the Chief Executive of the Council, Will Godfrey. She added that a slide deck was available and she would look to circulate that again to the Panel.

The Chair suggested that this alongside a glossary of terms could be included with every update.

Councillor Wright asked how residents can be supported with regard to their understanding of Pension Credits and what they are entitled to receive.

Councillor Alison Born replied that if a resident has had a Social Care Assessment they should be able to receive some direct support and added that they could also contact Age UK / Compassionate Communities Hub for advice.

The Chair of behalf of the Panel thanked Councillor Born for her update.

### **37 B&NES, SWINDON & WILTSHIRE INTEGRATED CARE BOARD (BSW ICB) UPDATE**

The Director of Place, B&NES, BSW ICB addressed the Panel and highlighted the following areas from her update. A copy of the update will be attached to these minutes as an online appendix.

#### **BSW ICB Prescriptions Ordering Direct – Proposals for the future**

BSW ICB has developed a proposal for an organisational change to stop BSW ICB's Prescriptions Ordering Direct (POD) in its current form and look at potential options for the future of repeat prescribing. We look forward to engaging with members on the proposal over the coming weeks.

Primary care is one of the most dynamic and innovative parts of the health service and ensuring our busy primary care system across BSW is supported and resourced fairly and equitably is an important focus for BSW ICB.

The context has also changed since POD was first launched in 2017. One of the ambitions set out in the national *Delivery plan for recovering access to primary care* is to enable patients in over 90% of practices to order repeat prescriptions using the NHS App by March 2024.

We have looked at scaling POD across the system, however it is clear that the levels of necessary financial support required would not be achievable. Other POD services have now closed or are in the process of closing across England for very similar reasons.

We are now actively engaging with our staff ahead of a formal consultation on potential changes to POD. During this period, we would like to offer you and elected members with a role and interest in health services a meeting to discuss the proposal in more detail if helpful. Our engagement period will run up until 2<sup>nd</sup> November inclusive.

After the engagement period and our consultation with staff, we will consider all comments received from our colleagues, yourselves and other stakeholders and will decide on the way forward. We will also feedback to you the outcome of the consultation and engagement process once we have gathered all the information we need.

### **The BSW Primary and Community Care Delivery Plan (PCCDP)**

The BSW ICB Board has approved a Primary and Community Care Delivery Plan (PCCDP) for BSW. The PCCDP builds on existing BSW strategies, including the BSW Together Integrated Care Strategy and Implementation Plan as well as national policy and guidance.

This delivery plan also incorporates feedback from over 40 stakeholders including primary care GPs, integrated care board (ICB) members, the clinical oversight group, and the integrated community-based care (ICBC) programme.

It sets out a number of priorities to deliver transformation for primary and community care and reflects the engagement work completed with service users, providers and wider stakeholders to identify initiatives and solutions to deliver our ambition.

### **Winter planning**

As our health and care system continues to experience unrelenting demand challenges and operational pressures, we are continuing to work with our partners to deliver existing demand management and capacity improvement plans.

Operationally there continues to be significant joint working in the locality under our Home is Best programme of work which supports patients to remain at home, aims to reduce our reliance on bed-based care and improve patient outcomes and experience.

Working in partnership across health and social care, we are on track to deliver our plans to deliver against targets including reducing the number of the non-criteria to reside in our acutes - currently maintaining a position below our trajectory of 30, significantly reducing our number of discharge to assess beds by 40 per cent, we are currently at 31, exceeding our target of 36.

We have also continued to increase our use of virtual wards- a flagship BSW scheme. A key focus for the coming months is on increasing referrals to the Virtual Ward step-up model through continuing to raise the profile of service.

### **Community Investment Fund**

Good progress has been made with our Community Investment Fund. BSW ICB has been working with five BaNES-based third sector organisations and has awarded grants to Southside Hardship Fund, Julian House, Citizens Advice Bureau, Age UK and West of England Rural Network.

These grants will help some of our most vulnerable communities with cost-of-living support, food and clothing and warm home grants.

This is a key part of our strategy on health inequalities and a demonstrable example of how BSW ICB is working directly with our communities at a local level.

**BSW VCSE sector partner Bath Mind opens new well-being accommodation for adults experiencing a mental health crisis**

Local Voluntary, Community and Social Enterprise organisation Bath Mind has opened a non-medical house offering wellbeing accommodation for adults experiencing a mental health crisis.

Orchard House, located on the edge of Midsomer Norton, provides a step-up service for people living in the community who are experiencing difficulties with their mental health and need support to avoid hospital admission. It also provides a step-down service for those leaving an in-patient setting who would benefit from additional support before returning home.

The Chair asked how and who agreed the six priorities of the BSW Primary and Community Care Delivery Plan.

The Director of Place, B&NES, BSW ICB replied that they were agreed through the engagement work on the Integrated Care Strategy and included liaising with stakeholders across the system, including acute, primary and community care.

She added that the transformation priorities were as expected and that they were seen as part of the golden thread that comes through the Integrated Care Strategy. She said that there was also significant joined up working between the Integrated Care Alliance and the Health & Wellbeing Board.

The Chair asked if there was any political involvement in this process.

The Director of Place, B&NES, BSW ICB replied that there was through the work of the Health & Wellbeing Board and the Integrated Care Partnership.

Kevin Burnett referred to a question from a previous meeting and asked if the Panel could be updated on how the service at the Royal United Hospital Urgent Treatment Centre was progressing following their amendments to it which began on September 4th 2023.

The Director of Place, B&NES, BSW ICB replied that the Urgent Treatment Centre was going well and that no adverse patient impacts had been identified. She added that it would be reviewed after three months.

Kevin Burnett asked if the changes had resulted in any savings on resources.

The Director of Place, B&NES, BSW ICB replied that it has enabled this part of the service to be more efficient, in terms of what resources we put where and when and that it has enabled patients to access care how and when they need it.

Kevin Burnett asked if there was any available update on the Health Infrastructure Plan 2.

The Director of Place, B&NES, BSW ICB apologised for not having an answer on this matter yet and would seek to source an update in due course.

Kevin Burnett asked for confirmation that the BSW ICB have a SEND representative and asked what their role was and how they liaised with other agencies.

The Director of Place, B&NES, BSW ICB replied that Gill May, Chief Nurse has that role and that there are SEND Board representatives in each locality. She added that she is the executive lead for Learning Disabilities & Autism and will attend the Children & Young Persons Programme Board where discussions regarding SEND take place.

Kevin Burnett commented that at a previous meeting it was suggested that officers from the Council meet with the ICB to discuss identification of Young Carers.

He asked if a clear message could be given as to how and when people were expected to contact Prevention / Early Intervention services.

The Director of Place, B&NES, BSW ICB replied that this was partly the driver behind the Primary Care & Community Delivery Plan and the need to have the right access in place. She added that the Community Wellbeing Hub was a flagship for this area and has a role within this work area. She said that she would relay these comments to colleagues in Primary Care within the ICB.

Councillor Liz Hardman referred to the issue of dental services and stated that many local dentists were no longer able to provide a service under the NHS because they were not paid enough. She asked the ICB to explore with the Government whether the pay for B&NES NHS dentists can be improved and whether the changes would see an improvement in services for residents. She added that she welcomed the focus on the areas of greatest need and inequality of access.

The Director of Place, B&NES, BSW ICB replied that there were some structure issues that need to be resolved and that they would seek to report back as soon as possible. She added the intention of the changes is to improve access to services.

Councillor Joanna Wright suggested that the Council write directly to all local NHS dentists and ask them how many patients they have removed from their NHS lists over the past three years.

The Chair suggested that Dental Services forms a report at a future meeting of the Panel.

Councillor Liz Hardman commented that she would also welcome a future report on Pharmacies to the Panel. She asked why Prescriptions Ordering Direct was being stopped in its current form.

The Director of Place, B&NES, BSW ICB replied that it was a service that does not need to be provided and that it was only being used by one practice within B&NES. She added that arrangements have been adapted internally for those practices that do not use POD.

Councillor Hardman asked for clarification on the reductions being made with regard to Discharge to Assess.

The Director of Place, B&NES, BSW ICB replied that this was linked to their Home is Best programme and to support people to be in their own homes for as long as possible and reduce the reliance on bedded care. She stated that they had a target of 36 beds in use and had managed to reduce this to 31 which was a great achievement.

The Chair suggested that the Chair of the ICB could be invited to a future meeting of the Panel.

The Chair thanked the Director of Place, B&NES, BSW ICB for the update on behalf of the Panel.

### **38 ADULT SOCIAL CARE TRANSFORMATION UPDATE**

The Assistant Director for Strategy, Transformation & Governance introduced this item to the Panel and highlighted the following areas from the presentation.

#### Community Services Transformation Programmes Structure

Programme One - ASC Redesign & Community Partners

Programme Two - Public Health

Programme Three - Community Based Integrated Care (B&NES)

#### ASC Transfer of Services (approx. 240 staff)

Key cabinet decision made on 10th November 2022 to transfer services:

4 departments involved in the transfer.

- ASC Social Work Functions (PD01)
- Direct Payments (SD23)
- Learning Disabilities Social Work Functions (SD43)
- Learning Disabilities Provider Provision (SD43)

#### Enabling Workstreams

Workstreams - reporting to Programme One Board

- HR & HR Operations
- IM&T, Systems, Reporting and Information Governance/Data Protection
- Finance & Procurement, including transactional activity sub-groups
- Communications and Engagement
- Operational Redesign

## Governance and Assurance

- Monthly Lead Member Briefing
- Monthly Trade Union Briefing
- Regular updates to CMT and SLT
- Internal Audit July to Sept - Level 4 Substantial Assurance

## Informal HCRG Care Group staff briefings

- Two informal staff briefings sessions held May and June (Adult Social Work Teams and Provider Services)
- Focus of sessions included Transfer of Undertakings (Protection of Employment) - TUPE and what it means for individuals.
- Next sessions booked in November 2023

## Key Milestones and Achievements

- Confirmation of all Terms & Condition's (T&C's) – Sirona, Agenda for Change, Local Government and HCRG Care Group
- Commencement of the payroll build of T&Cs – September 2023
- Creation of seven workstream groups – corporate enabling functions
- Confirmation of all Information Technology equipment requirements across all teams – tender document for the purchase of required equipment drafted – September 2023
- Ongoing due diligence – HR, finance, estates, provider activities, staff training
- Creation of a communications and engagement strategy – workforce, service users & stakeholders

## Next Steps & Key Milestones

- Setting the operational budget for service delivery
- Review of mobilisation costs
- Continued due diligence across Programme One
- Completed review of estates and premises
- Completed review of day services activities – how services operate
- Formal consultation with HCRG Care Group staff

## Internal Audit – ASC Transfer Governance and Programme Management (draft report Sept 2023)

Level 4 – Substantial Assurance – The systems of internal control are good with a number of strengths evident and substantial assurance can be provided as detailed within the Assurance Summary.

## Governance Update & Next Steps

Programme 1 ASC Transfer & Community Partners and Programme 2 Public Health

- B&NES Cabinet 9th November – Update on progress with ASC Transfer and decisions to be taken on model for delivery of services as of April 2025

covering Community Partners and Public Health and decision to participate in ICBC procurement process for Community Health (BSW).

- Proposal to come back to Scrutiny Panel after November 2023 Cabinet decision on future operating model for community services for B&NES.

The Director of Place, Bath and North East Somerset, BSW ICB addressed the Panel.

### 1 Year Direct Award 2024-2025 – HCRG Care Group (B&NES)

- Single Member Decision implemented 26th July 2023 to endorse the proposal for an interim 1 year arrangement for commissioning of the Community Services contract.
- The 1 year direct award involves B&NES continuing to fund Public Health services and services delivered by Community Partners, along with the continuation of the contributions towards some Health Services as well as funding contribution to Better Care Fund pooled budget arrangement.

### Contracting Process

- ICB Co-ordinating Commissioner and B&NES Council Co-Commissioner
- ICB leading contract negotiation and process with HCRG Care Group
- BSW ICB Community Services Commissioning Intentions 2024/25 agreed with HCRG Care Group
- No variations to contract including service specifications and Local Quality Schedule

Councillor Joanna Wright asked how many staff were members of a Trade Union and how had discussions with them been received so far.

The Assistant Director for Strategy, Transformation & Governance replied that she did not have those figures to hand, but would report that information back to the Panel. She added that they meet with Trade Unions on a monthly basis with members of the HR team and that the dialogue has been good.

Councillor Wright asked how the new workforce would fit into the Avon Pension Fund following the transfer of services.

The Assistant Director for Strategy, Transformation & Governance replied that they were working diligently with all relevant partners on this issue and that information will be shared with staff regarding this in the November round of briefings.

Councillor Wright asked if a discussion could be held with representatives of the Avon Pension Fund as to whether they could be in a position to make any investment into this service area.

The Assistant Director for Strategy, Transformation & Governance replied that she would need to discuss this with officers within the Avon Pension Fund before a response can be given.



Councillor Liz Hardman commented that many people will be happy to see this process taking place. She asked if in a future report some costs could be shared as she would like to know that if following the transfer, the Council will in anyway be able to save money. She also asked why the 1 Year Direct Award to HCRG was necessary.

The Director of Place, Bath and North East Somerset, BSW ICB replied that the 1 Year Direct Award was put in place to maintain the current service safely and to allow time for a full procurement process. She added that HCRG have worked with all parties very professionally during this process.

Kevin Burnett commented that it was good to see the level of assurance that has been achieved by the programme so far. He asked what they see as their key challenges moving forward.

The Assistant Director for Strategy, Transformation & Governance replied that the volume of staff involved is a challenge, but said that two recent transfers have been undertaken within the Council so they were able to use that previous experience for this process. She said that it was important that the workforce is transferred safely and that there is a continuity of service provision. She added that in future reports they would look to include financial information for the Panel.

Kevin Burnett asked on what terms and conditions will the staff transfer into B&NES on.

The Assistant Director for Strategy, Transformation & Governance replied that they will transfer in on their existing terms and conditions and then at some point a review of these will take place.

Councillor Wright asked if they had considered whether an external audit of this process was required at all.

The Assistant Director for Strategy, Transformation & Governance replied that she would seek advice on that from the Corporate Director for these services.

The Panel **RESOLVED** to note the update and presentation that had been provided to them.

## **39 PEER REVIEW**

The Chair asked for clarification as to why no member of the Scrutiny Panel had been asked to take part in the Peer Review.

Councillor Alison Born commented that the Peer Review was carried out as inspections from the Care Quality Commission (CQC) were due to commence in January 2024. She added that the full Peer Review report was due to be available to be published very soon.

The Assistant Director – Operations introduced this item and highlighted the following areas from within the presentation. She explained that this information was being shared with the Panel in advance of the publication of the full report.

She stated that the Local Government Association (LGA) has been providing this service to Local Authorities in advance of the expected future inspections. She added that Scrutiny Panel and the Health & Wellbeing Board are not normally involved within this LGA Peer Review process.

### Key Messages – Strengths

- Well led organisation with a positive workforce culture built upon mutual respect and values.
- Clear corporate purpose with strong political and corporate leadership in supporting Adult Social Care
- Kind, collegiate, generous staff “we don’t keep a good idea to ourselves”
- Self-aware – no surprises and plans in place to address some of the challenges as reflected in the Self-Assessment
- Partnerships and strong relationships

### Key Messages – Considerations

- How systems, processes and data are used to best effect to inform practice and performance oversight
- Opportunities for further development of practice and oversight through simplification of structures and insourcing plan
- Ambitious plans with many strategic and operational initiatives planned in next 6 months as part of longer-term plan
- To support delivery of plans may wish to consider the range of support and advice that is available externally as well as internal resource required
- Co-production

### CQC Assurance Themes

- Working with people
- Providing support
- Ensuring safety
- Leadership

### Case File Audit Findings – review of 6 cases

#### Strengths

- Safeguarding – Evidence provides reassurance that people are being kept safe and that risks are appropriately identified and managed Robust and well recorded Safeguarding Adults Management (SAM) oversight including clear actions as well as timeframes for the completion of actions. Well written and proportionate safeguarding minutes.
- Learning Disabilities – Very clear evidence of relational practice, taking a person-centred approach and working beyond the boundaries of the Care Act.
- Approved Mental Health Practitioner (AMHP) - Evidence of skilful recording which provides a strong sense of who the human being is balanced with the process, legal literacy and professional opinion.

## Considerations

- Safeguarding – Although there was evidence that people were being involved in safeguarding and that their views were taken into consideration, principles of Making Safeguarding Personal could be further developed and evidenced in the way practitioners record.
- Mental Capacity – More focus is required on Mental Capacity Act and the consistent application of the fundamental principles underpinning legislation and practice. The gravitas of decisions around mental capacity must be given due consideration. Greater consideration of involving Care Act Advocates and Independent Mental Capacity Advocates when appropriate and including them as early on in the intervention with the person as possible.
- Carers – Records reviewed did not evidence a robust approach to supporting carers and recording carers assessments.

## Next Steps

- Receive final report for review and develop plan to address areas for development
- Hold lessons learnt session with team that led, managed and contributed to the Peer Review
- Mid Year Review of ASC Directorate Plan (Nov) to include Peer Review feedback and prioritise areas for development
- Ongoing consideration of transfer of ASC services as of 1st April 2024
- Update Self Assessment Report and publish
- Appointment of a Quality Assurance Lead

The Chair stated that she would welcome the Panel having a future involvement in such reviews.

Councillor Dave Harding referred to page 43 of the agenda and asked if any further comment could be given with regard to the finding that the records reviewed did not evidence a robust approach in the support to carers.

The Assistant Director – Operations replied that there appeared to be a gap in the case notes following the offer of a Carers Assessment referral to the Carers Centre of what the outcomes were of that assessment. She added that they intend to take steps to rectify this.

Councillor Paul Crossley stated that he agreed with the comments made by the Chair at that a Peer Review should hear from many different voices, including that of all the political groups. He said that he would urge the Cabinet Member and officers to include the Panel in any such future reviews.

Councillor Alison Born replied that she would feed that message back to those involved in organising the review.

Kevin Burnett commented that it was good to see the positive initial outcomes and asked if these were as expected and if they now felt ready for any future inspections.

Councillor Alison Born replied that she felt that the Adult Social Care service was already quite self-aware and that not many issues had arisen as part of the review. She stated that she was pleased that assurances had been identified in many areas of the service. She added that they would not be complacent and that they were reasonably well prepared for any future inspections.

Kevin Burnett asked if there were any particular areas that they now felt the need to focus on following the review.

The Assistant Director – Operations replied that a focus would be on completing a successful transfer of services and bringing all staff groups together to provide one service to the residents of B&NES. She added that a refresh of their quality of practice for Social Work and the framework that surrounds that should take place. She said that the framework and support to staff should also be analysed.

Councillor Liz Hardman asked if the ‘ambitious plans’ mentioned within the report would be achievable.

The Assistant Director – Operations replied that as a service they would always seek to ensure that all plans are deliverable and achievable.

The Panel **RESOLVED** to note the update and presentation that had been provided to them.

#### **40 UPDATE ON THE STAFFING POSITION ACROSS OUR CARE HOMES AND WIDER CARE WORKFORCE**

The Senior Commissioner, Community Transformation introduced the report to the Panel. She said that she hoped that it contained within it enough information to give them an understanding of both the services that the Council runs and those that it commissions.

Councillor Michelle O’Doherty asked how sustainable it was to have roughly a third of the workforce over 55 years of age and if it was known why there was a low uptake of staff, only 33%, who have a care qualification. She stated that she would like to see it made more of a highlighted career and would welcome the Panel discussing the issue in more detail at a future meeting.

The Senior Commissioner, Community Transformation replied that the work that has been carried out with United Care B&NES, jointly the Council and the RUH, has been important and contributed to the level of pay and terms and conditions that are in place. She added that they have also worked closely with their provider organisations on the challenges highlighted in the report.

Councillor Joanna Wright referred to section 3.3 of the report and asked what the hourly rate for home care is that meets the thresholds recommended by the Home Care Association.

The Senior Commissioner, Community Transformation replied that it is £25.42 and that this is a combined rate based on hourly, half hourly and weekend/evening shifts.

She added that this was now seen as the Council's starting point and linked to our 'Fair Price of Care'.

Councillor Wright asked if any further comment could be given on the creation of the BSW Academy Domiciliary Care Steering Group.

The Senior Commissioner, Community Transformation replied that the Director of Adult Social Care has led this work alongside the ICB to investigate the concerns and challenges particularly for domiciliary providers. She added that around 12 months ago, following Covid and Brexit, it was very difficult to find domiciliary care provision. She explained that Dr Sarah Green is leading this brief across the ICB to look at how the workforce can be supported under Suzanne Westhead's leadership.

Councillor Wright asked if the work of the Steering Group has proved useful.

The Senior Commissioner, Community Transformation replied that it has and has enabled a range of opportunities to discuss their challenges. She added that there is a high degree of staff turnover to contend with and that this can sometimes add to the issues connected with additional training.

Councillor Wright referred to section 6 of the report, Risk Management, and said she was concerned about the issues mentioned within it.

The Senior Commissioner, Community Transformation replied that she wanted to highlight these issues to the Panel as the number of older people needing care is increasing year on year and the funding associated with that is not likely to keep pace. She added that most of the staff are on the minimum wage for what is a skilled role. She stated that good terms and conditions need to be in place for these members of staff alongside an understanding of what their needs are so that all parties can get the most out of their role.

Councillor Wright asked if staff within this workforce had appropriate access to be part of the Local Government Pension Scheme.

The Senior Commissioner, Community Transformation replied that this was an important to raise in terms of supporting people and enabling our provider organisations to do the same. She added that they have received additional funding recently through the Market Sustainability Fund which shows that the Government has recognised a need to put additional measures in place. She said that providers need to work positively with their staff on this matter.

The Assistant Director – Operations added that B&NES pays above the real living wage and will continue to do so for these members of staff. She stated that they also have access to the Council's pensions scheme and staff benefits.

Councillor Paul Crossley asked what the definition was of a prime or anchor provider.

The Senior Commissioner, Community Transformation replied that this would be significant organisations within the locality such as RUH, HCRG Care Group,

B&NES Council and the Integrated Care Board. She added that these are seen as bodies that influence and engage with others.

Councillor Crossley asked if we have a list of all providers of care within B&NES and asked how they are reviewed and evaluated.

The Senior Commissioner, Community Transformation replied that we do and that it was her role to assess any new providers to assure that they meet the requirements of our framework. She added that each provider is subject to an annual review and are reviewed through RAG (Red, amber, green) ratings when this has been carried out.

Councillor Crossley asked how our pay rates compare to that of the anchor providers.

The Senior Commissioner, Community Transformation replied that it was slightly above and that our terms and conditions are also favourable in terms of pensions and annual leave.

Councillor Crossley asked though why was this still resulting in not being able to recruit enough staff.

The Senior Commissioner, Community Transformation replied that it was not solely always about pay and that timing of shifts, number of hours and locality were also factors that staff would want to consider.

The Assistant Director – Operations added that she believed that all agencies were struggling to recruit and that recently a review of some shift patterns had been carried out for care staff with changes due to be implemented.

Councillor Liz Hardman praised the honesty of the report and said that she was particularly concerned with the following wording - “ongoing risks to the Council in meeting its statutory obligations to provide care and offer this at best value to the individual, the Council and the ICA. The lack of capacity and particularly the growing number of people who need care will continue to bring pressures”. She asked how great are the risks of the Council not meeting its statutory responsibilities.

The Senior Commissioner, Community Transformation replied that it was a real challenge, not just for B&NES, but across the country. She said that care needs to be assessed from both a social care and health perspective. She added that the work that has already been done has seen a reduction in the number of people now waiting in hospital.

Kevin Burnett asked if a point had yet been reached where a package of care had not been able to be delivered and if so, what action was taken.

The Assistant Director - Integrated Commissioning replied that elements such as this were part of ongoing live discussions with national policy makers and funders. She added that last year all Local Authorities were asked to develop a Market System Ability Plan and within that they were asked is there enough money to meet the demands of the market, and the answer nationally was no.

She stated that we need to be clear with the market what we can and can't afford and identify our high risk points. She said that we are paying comparably high figures for our home care, but have chosen to do so as it is better for people to be in their own home for as long as possible. She added that she would welcome input in making self-funding residents aware of when they should begin the process of seeking a formal assessment.

Councillor Alison Born commented that she takes part in regular meetings, arranged by the LGA, with colleagues across the South West and so the issues raised should be fed back to the Government.

The Panel **RESOLVED** to note the report.

#### **41 PANEL WORKPLAN**

The Chair introduced this item and noted that the following subjects had been raised during the course of the meeting.

- Invite the Chair of the B&NES, Swindon & Wilshire ICB to a future meeting.
- School Meals (Provision / Cost / Free School Meals take-up)
- Sustainable Care Workforce
- Dental Health
- Pharmacies
- Children with complex needs
- EHCPs (focus on time to access / delivery in place)
- Role of the ICB SEND member across B&NES
- Community Resource Centres consultation
- Adult Social Care self-funders

The meeting ended at 12.20 pm

Chair(person) .....

Date Confirmed and Signed .....

**Prepared by Democratic Services**

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<b>Bath &amp; North East Somerset Council</b>		
<b>MEETING:</b>	<b>Children's, Adults, Health and Wellbeing Policy Development &amp; Scrutiny Panel</b>	
<b>MEETING DATE:</b>	<b>13<sup>th</sup> November 2023</b>	EXECUTIVE FORWARD PLAN REFERENCE
<b>TITLE:</b>	<b>Independent Reviewing Officer (IRO) Annual Report 2022-23</b>	
<b>WARD:</b>	<b>All</b>	
<b>AN OPEN PUBLIC ITEM</b>		
<b>List of attachments to this report:</b>		
Independent Reviewing Officer (IRO) Annual Report 2022-23		

## **1 THE ISSUE**

- 1.1 An annual report of the Independent Reviewing (IRO) Service for Looked After Children is required in accordance with the Children and Young Persons Act 2008 and subsequent statutory guidance published by the Department for Education. The report is produced to provide the Director for Children's Services, the Lead Member for Children and the Corporate Parenting Board with information pertaining to the work of the Independent Reviewing Service (IRS), which is responsible for monitoring and reviewing the care provided to children and young people for whom the Local Authority are Corporate Parents.
- 1.2 The Children's Health and Wellbeing Panel review the annual report to ensure members are appraised on the care provided to children for whom the Local Authority are responsible.

## **2 RECOMMENDATION**

**The Panel is asked to;**

- 2.1 Note the growing pressures on the IRO service as a result of the increasing numbers of children being placed in the care of Bath and Northeast Somerset and the continued work and commitment of IROs to maintain contact with children in

care, regularly reviewing the plans for these children to ensure their needs are being met.

2.2 Recognise and value the impact of the IRO role in providing scrutiny and at times, challenge when there are concerns that the needs of children are not being met or plans progressed.

### **3 THE REPORT**

3.1 Please see attached the Independent Reviewing Officer (IRO) annual report for 2022-2023, which sets out how the IRO Service supports and monitors the function to ensure that Bath and Northeast Somerset Council are meeting the needs of the children and young people for whom it is Corporate Parent.

### **4 STATUTORY CONSIDERATIONS**

- 4.1 The appointment of an Independent Reviewing Officer (IRO) for a child or young person in the care of the Local Authority is a legal requirement under section 118 of the Adoption and Children Act 2002. Since 2004 all local authorities are required to appoint an IRO to protect children's interests throughout the care planning process.
- 4.2 The IRO Handbook was introduced in 2010, providing statutory guidance for IRO's and setting out the local authority's functions in terms of case management and review for looked after children.
- 4.3 The Care Planning, Placement and Case Review (England) Regulation 2010 applies specifically to children who are looked after by a local authority. These Regulations aim to improve outcomes for children in care by improving the quality of the care planning processes.
- 4.4 IROs are required to oversee and scrutinise the Care Plan devised for every child or young person placed in the care of the Local Authority. The IRO will ensure that everyone involved in the child or young person's life fulfils the responsibilities placed upon them. IROs are expected to ensure that;
- Review meetings are held for all children and young people who are being cared for by the Local Authority,
  - The views and wishes of children and young people in care are heard and considered when decisions are being made about them,
  - Children and young people understand their care plan and any changes to this,
  - The Local Authority is a good corporate parent to all children and young people in care by ensuring they get the same opportunities, support and care outcomes that other children living within their families receive.

## **5 RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS (FINANCE, PROPERTY, PEOPLE)**

5.1 The IRO service is aware of the increased pressures across the Council with finances. Being acutely aware of this, the IRO service has a statutory duty to fulfil its function in relation to the children of Bath and Northeast Somerset by offering a service that includes Quality Assurance, ensuring its Corporate Parents meet their statutory responsibilities. To support the pressures on the service, a request for funding for an additional IRO has been made in next year's council budget.

## **6 RISK MANAGEMENT**

6.1 A risk assessment related to the issue and recommendations has been undertaken in compliance with the Council's decision-making risk management guidance.

## **7 EQUALITIES**

7.1 An Equality Impact Assessment was completed in October 2020 and can be found on the Children's Services Equality Impact Assessment Web Page.

## **8 CLIMATE CHANGE**

8.1 The Independent Reviewing Service uses various methods of travel, which will contribute towards reducing the service's carbon footprint and financial costs. It is normal practice within the service to send correspondence via email, reducing the need to print documents.

## **9 OTHER OPTIONS CONSIDERED**

9.1 None

## **10 CONSULTATION**

10.1 The report was shared with the Director for Education and Safeguarding, Mr Christopher Wilford and approved on 3<sup>rd</sup> November 2023.

<b>Contact person</b>	Michelle Mckay Interim Head of Service for Safeguarding and Quality Assurance (Children and Young People) Tel: 01225 396810
<b>Background papers</b>	None
<b>Please contact the report author if you need to access this report in an alternative format</b>	

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**Bath & North East  
Somerset Council**

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**Improving People's Lives**

**Independent Reviewing Officer (IRO)**  
**ANNUAL REPORT**  
**2022-23**

**Author: Michelle McKay Interim Safeguarding and Quality Assurance, Children and Young People Directorate.**

**Date: 3<sup>rd</sup> of November 2023**

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## **1. Introduction and Purpose of the Annual Report**

- 1.1 This report provides the Director of Children's Services, the Lead Member for Children's Services and the Corporate Parenting Board with information about the children and young people currently placed in the care of the Local Authority.
- 1.2 The Independent Reviewing Officers (IRO) Handbook (2010) provides statutory guidance to all local authorities regarding children placed in the care of a local authority. The guidance seeks to ensure improved outcomes for children in care so that they can reach their full potential. Section 7, paragraph 11 states that the IRO Service manager must provide an annual report on the delivery of the IRO Service, which members of the Corporate Parenting Board can then scrutinise.
- 1.3 This annual report provides information on the profile of the children for whom the Local Authority is the corporate parent and how the IRO service maintains oversight of the plans for these children. The report is compiled in line with GDPR, so when a small number of children are described under a certain characteristic that could cause identification, the number will be converted to a percentage.
- 1.4 Following presentation to Board, this report will be placed on the Council website as a publicly accessible document and disseminated across children's social care for further consideration.

## **2. Reporting Period**

- 2.1 This report covers the period from 1 April 2022 to 31 March 2023. Some of the data sets may vary slightly from those published by Council Children's Services due to minor variations in the timeframe for data capture and the uploading of data onto various systems. The author of this report came into the post as an interim arrangement from April 2023; the information in this report has been gleaned from data records and management files.

## **3. The Legal, Statutory and National Context of the IRO Role**

- 3.1 The appointment of an Independent Reviewing Officer (IRO) for a child or young person in the care of the Local Authority is a legal requirement under section 118 of the Adoption and Children Act 2002. Since 2004, all local authorities have been required to appoint an IRO to protect children's interests throughout the care planning process.
- 3.2 The IRO Handbook was introduced in 2010, providing statutory guidance for IRO's and setting out the local authority's functions in terms of case management and review for children in care. IRO practice handbook:

[https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/media/5a7e2b2740f0b623026899c6/iro\\_statutory\\_guidance\\_iros\\_and\\_las\\_march\\_2010\\_tagged.pdf](https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/media/5a7e2b2740f0b623026899c6/iro_statutory_guidance_iros_and_las_march_2010_tagged.pdf)

3.3 The Care Planning, Placement and Care Review (England) Regulation 2010 applies specifically to children in the care of a local authority. These Regulations aim to improve outcomes for children in care by improving the quality of the care planning processes.

3.4 IROs are required to oversee and scrutinise the Care Plan devised for every child or young person placed in the care of the Local Authority. The IRO will ensure that everyone who is involved in the child or young person's life fulfils the responsibilities placed upon them to achieve good outcomes for the child, along with permanency.

3.5 IRO's statutory responsibilities and functions are to ensure:

- Review meetings are held for all children and young people to consider their care plan, which is a key component for those in the care of the Local Authority, within a set time frame.
- The views and wishes of children and young people in care are listened to and central when decisions are being made about them,
- The Local Authority is a 'good corporate parent' to all children and young people in care by ensuring they get the same opportunities, support, love, and care that other children living within their families receive.
- Raising disputes is a key aspect of IROs role if they disagree with care planning aspects.
- Quality Assurance is a core function of the IRO.

#### **4. Bath and Northeast Somerset Council as Corporate Parent**

4.1 IROs are required to oversee and scrutinise the Care Plan devised for every child or young person placed in the care of the Local Authority. The IRO will ensure that everyone involved in the child or young person's life fulfils the responsibilities placed upon them to achieve good outcomes for the child, along with permanency.

4.2 Children who are deemed looked after by a local authority are known or referenced by differing words or titles. It is worth respectfully advising that the children of Bath and Northeast Somerset to whom Council members are accountable would like to be known as Children in Care, CiC for short.

4.3 All Officers and Councillors of Bath and Northeast Somerset have a duty to ensure that the needs of children in care are being met and that children grow up feeling loved, cared for, safe, and have the same opportunities as their peers. All council members should be committed to advocating for the needs of children in care and promote and provide opportunities that allow children to develop and grow, overcoming the adverse experiences they may have experienced before entering local authority care.

4.4 Upon election, all Councillors take on the role of 'Corporate Parent' to children in the care of Bath and Northeast Somerset Council and those young people with care experience. Corporate parents have a duty to take an interest in the well-

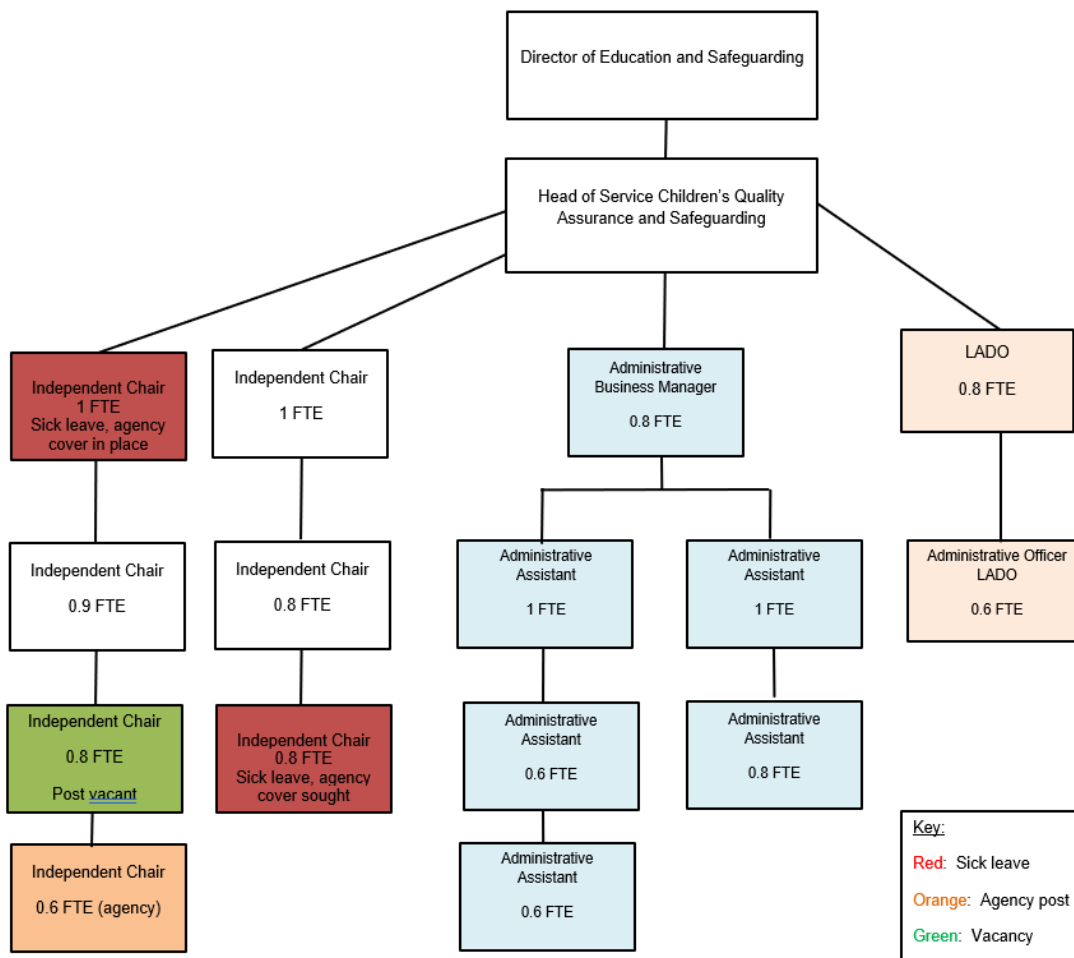


being and development of these children as if they were their own. Whilst the lead member for children's services has responsibilities, the role of corporate parent is carried by all councillors, regardless of their role in the Council (Corporate Parenting: Terms of Reference, Sept 2022).

4.5 Within Bath and Northeast Somerset, the Corporate Parenting Group (CPG) is open to all Councillors and all members of the CPG must ensure they have a comprehensive overview of the progress of the children in the care of the local authority, scrutinising the quality, effectiveness and performance of the services provided. CPG meetings are held four times a year and the arrangements are intended to ensure all Councillors can attend. As a result of changes in working practices, two meetings a year are held virtually again to support the attendance of members. A representative from Education and Safeguarding attends the CPG to support its members and to bring to life the issues faced and the progress made by children in care.

## 5. The Bath and Northeast Somerset Council IRO Service

### 5.1 Establishment of Safeguarding and Quality Assurance Service



5.2 The IRO service continues to sit within the Safeguarding and Quality Assurance (SQA) Service for Children and Young People, which is part of the Education and Safeguarding directorate.

5.3 The SQA service has three core business areas, these are highlighted below: delivered by the role of Independent Chairs.

- i. The appointment of an Independent Reviewing Officer (IRO) for a child or young person in the local authority's care. This is a legal requirement under Section 118 of the Adoption and Children Act 2002. All local authorities must appoint an IRO to protect children's interests throughout the care planning process.
- ii. The delivery of Child Protection (CP) Conferences within statutory timescales. The Service must review and monitor the progress of all children subject to a child protection plan. The timeliness of conferences and the duration of child protection plans are key areas of performance that form part of statutory returns and regional benchmarking. This area has significantly improved in the first two quarters of this year.
- iii. A Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO) to address allegations of abuse against a person in a position of trust working with children (0-18 years old). The LADO is responsible for ensuring allegations are responded to in a timely fashion, that where the threshold is met, an investigation by the employer is carried out and that the child's welfare is foremost. Working Together to Safeguard Children (2018) (Chapter 2, paragraph 4) set out the role of LADO and remains governed by the Local Authorities duties under Section 11 of the Children Act 2004.

5.4 As stated in previous reports, B&NES delivers the IRO and the CP function through the role of an Independent Chair. This role is unique to this local authority and was created in 2017 to provide greater flexibility and capacity within the Service. It is worth noting that both roles are significantly different and work under the guise of different legislation and differing escalation processes. The Service had responsibility and oversight of approximately 370 children at the end of the reporting year, whose plans were either CP or CiC.

5.5 In March 2022, an agreement was given for a market supplement to be attached to the role of Independent Chair, aligning the functions with that of team manager across children's social care and the pay awarded similar to roles within other local authorities. This has assisted with better recruitment when to advertised vacancies.

5.6 The Head of Service for SQA had taken early maternity leave in February 2023, earlier than expected, leaving the post vacant for two months. I came into the post in April 2023 to oversee the Service in their absence and have focused on service delivery, including CiC and CP. It is worth noting that there may be slight discrepancies in data, given the number of data and trackers used in previous years.

5.7 Sickness and vacancies have had and continue to impact service delivery significantly. There were two independent chairs with long-term sickness absences for the given reporting period; this has carried through to the 2023-24

period. There is currently a permanent vacancy being advertised for the second time. Two experienced agency workers continue to support the Service.

5.8 The SQA has a dedicated LADO role. The LADO officer now has dedicated business support and has increased their workdays from 3 to 4. Two identified IROs provide additional LADO support during annual leave and/or sickness.

## 6. IRO Service Provision Performance

6.1 The manager of the IRO service is responsible for appointing an IRO within good practice guidelines of five days of a child coming into care, this continued through the reporting period. Whilst the average caseload of an IRO has increased consistently, there has been an increase of more children coming into care than leaving and for a small IRO service which is working multiple roles, this creates additional pressure on IROs and, in turn, impacts on IRO's being able to review care plans within 20 working days of the child coming into care. Caseloads of IROs are mixed between CP and CiC, which can impact planning timescales. As set out in the IRO handbook, the average caseload is between 50-70 children per IRO; case allocations rarely exceed this number. There are no intentional changes to a child's IRO unless the IRO were to leave their role or the child requested a new IRO. This allows positive relationships to be developed between the IRO, the children, their carers, and family. During periods of long-term sickness, which has impacted and continues to impact the IRO service, children are reallocated temporarily to another IRO. This does cause the workload to increase to the IROs, as a result, the quality assurance element is not fully met and has been unable to develop.

6.2 Table 1: Total Number of CiC over five-year period

	March 2023	March 2022	March 2021	March 2020	March 2019
No. Children in Care	<b>231</b>	197	181	181	192
CLA start	<b>95</b>	77	52	75	96
CLA end	<b>63</b>	61	53	86	81
% Increase of children in care from previous year	<b>+17%</b>	+9%	0%	-6%	+14%

Source: Children's Social Care Powerbi

6.3 As the above data shows, the number of children and young people in care in this reporting period has increased by 17%, with 231 children in care at the year-end of March 2023. Once again, the number of children entering care was higher than that of children leaving care. It is worth considering the figure of 231 children in reporting quarters for the year to give further insight. Q1-203, Q2-215, Q3-227 & Q4-231. There was a considerable increase in the second half of

the reporting quarter, this figure increased again in the following reporting period. Given this trajectory, an additional post of IRO has been requested, this will ensure the children coming into care will be allocated an IRO immediately to oversee the care planning function and to notably support and develop the quality assurance element of the Service.

#### 6.4 Table 2: Reason for leaving care

Reason for leaving care	2022-23	2021-22	2020-21	2019-20
Turned 18	29%	35%	34%	31%
Returned to family	27%	23%	17%	33%
Placed under SGO	18%	23%	19%	17%
Adoption	9%	7%	30%	15%
Other	18%	8%	0%	4%

Source: Childrens Services Data, Previous years parameters unclear. Parameters for 22-23 defined by Powerbi as E- codes leaving care. Rounded up to nearest %.

6.5 The number of children leaving care to return to living with their family has increased by 4% in the last reporting year and this figure accounts for children who returned in a planned way (16 children) and those who returned home unplanned (21). The increase in adoption has slightly improved; however, it is nowhere near as high as in previous years and it is believed that this will level off at about 12% within the next three years based on intelligence available with forecasting. Children are returning to birth families with additional support and under the guise of orders, assisted by the reunification framework, explained in further detail below. 'Other' includes a number of factors such as - ceased for any other reason, transferred to adults' Service, etc.

6.6 In November 2021, the local authority approved and implemented the NSPCC reunification framework. This framework can be used for all children in care up to 18, where a return home is an option. Permanency for children is the focus of all IROs and central to the care planning process. Any practitioners involved with children and young people can identify them to be considered for reunification, e.g., social worker, social work manager, the IRO. This would be part of the IRO reviews where the care planning is considered. The child's IRO will be informed when a decision is made to explore reunification and progress a return home assessment. The IRO if not in support of this decision, will discuss it directly with the child's social worker and social work manager. At the assessment's mid-point stage (approximately six weeks from the start), a networking meeting will include the child, family, foster carer, supervising social worker, family therapist, connecting family's practitioner and the IRO.

6.7 Once the assessment has been completed, should reunification be proposed, the IRO will hold a child-in-care review to consider reunification plans and the support available to the child and their family. The IRO will need to be in support of the plan for reunification before this can proceed. Should the IRO's views not be aligned with the assessment outcome, the IRO would be expected to discuss

this with the social work team responsible for the child's care plan. The dispute resolution protocol would be utilised in instances where an IRO and social work team continue to have opposing views.

6.8 Children within the local authority have returned home for several reasons, some in a planned way via the reunification process, others not. The reunification process has then supported the children who have returned home in an unplanned way to ensure the carer can parent safely, with positive outcomes for the child. This then prevents a breakdown later, requiring them to re-enter the care system again. Repeat accommodations have been a concern over previous years and this is now observed more closely.

6.9 Children are being considered for reunification and are at varying stages of the reunification process; the IRO for these children will continue to review and ensure the reunification framework is being followed. Data is not fully available for 2022-2023, given the beginning of the process, however, it is moving in a positive direction given the data available for Q1 & Q2 of 2023-24, this will be provided in next year's report. A comparison of reunification, children re-entering care and child-in-care figures will need a deeper analysis.

6.10 Table 3: Children entering and leaving care by quarter

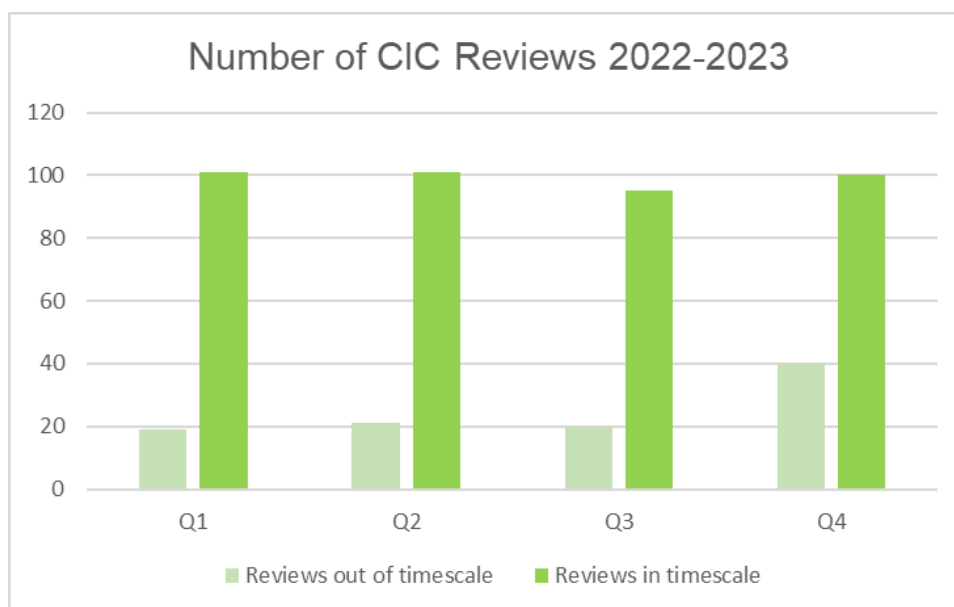
	Q1 22-23	Q2 22-23	Q3 22-23	Q4 22-23
Children coming into care	24	24	27	22
Children leaving care	18	11	15	19

Source: Children's Social Care Powerbi actual number

6.11 As the above shows, this reporting year showed a higher number of children coming into care than leaving and this pattern has continued into the next reporting period. This evidences the need to request an additional IRO for the Service.

6.12 The IRO Service chaired a total of 497 child-in-care review meetings in the reporting year of 2022-23; this is an increase of reviews from the previous year.

### 6.13 Graph 1: Timeliness of CiC reviews



Source: figures taken from Children's Social Care data powerbi

6.14 Between the reporting period of 2022-23 of the 497 reviews held, 397 (69%) were held in timescale and 100 (31%) were out of statutory timescale. This is a significant number of overdue reviews and a decline from the previous year's figures of 92% in timescale. To analyse further, a breakdown into quarters has been produced below.

### 6.15 Table 4: Quarterly timeliness of CiC reviews

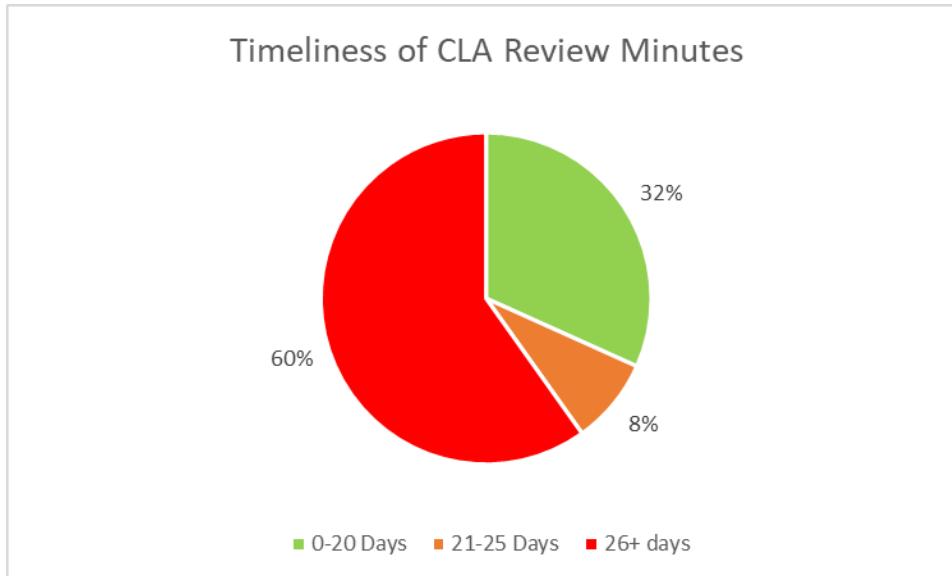
	Reviews out timescale	Reviews in timescale	% out of time	% on time	Total reviews held
Q1	19	101	16%	84%	120
Q2	21	101	17%	83%	122
Q3	20	95	17%	83%	115
Q4	40	100	29%	71%	140

Figures taken from Children's Social Care data powerbi

6.16 There are several reasons why a review would not proceed within the timescale or on the date initially scheduled. Of the reviews not in timescale, Q4 saw a significant number of overdue reviews, 40 in total (29% of total reviews), this was possibly due to the manager going on immediate unplanned leave, therefore no clear oversight of allocations and compounded by staffing gaps caused by ill health. There have been some reporting data issues with systems used; for example, when a pre-meeting review report is not completed by the social worker for CiC review, then this causes a problem for the IRO Service to keep a review in timescale. Should a review be held out of time scales, this then has an automatic detrimental effect on the timely distribution of the review minutes. It is worth highlighting that as interim service manager, I have sought to prioritise this area of poor performance. I am pleased to report that this figure

has improved considerably over the past two reporting quarters of 2023, with Q2 now being 86% on time.

6.17 Graph 2: Timeliness of distribution of CiC Review minutes



6.18 Following a child's review, the IRO must provide a written record of the decisions or recommendations within five working days of the completion of the review. A full record of the review is expected to be distributed within 20 working days.

6.19 During this reporting period, 32% of review records were completed and circulated within 20 working days, 8% were sent between 21-25 days, 60% were sent 26+ days after the review. The Service has not met its target of ensuring 85% of review records are sent within the statutory timescale.

6.20 This performance area has been impacted by IRO sickness, an increase in reviews and late social work reports. Whilst some of the reasons are understandable, we keenly know that this performance area needs to be addressed. As mentioned previously, this is an area that will improve as more reviews are held within statutory timescales.

## **7. Profile of children in care in Bath and Northeast Somerset on 31 March 2023**

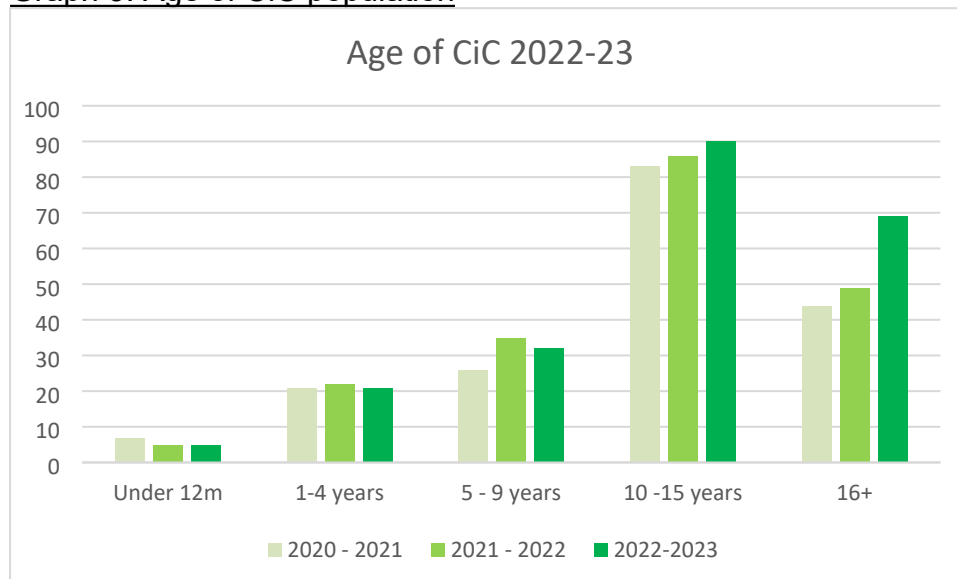
### Gender:

7.1 The Government's most recent publication of statistics of looked after children nationally in England evidence that males continued to account for 56% of children in care and females 44%; this has been the trend from 2018 to 2022 with no deviation. The gender breakdown in Bath and Northeast Somerset has

continued to be in line with previous years, if somewhat below the national average for males, with 50.5% of children in care being male and 48% female. A small discrepancy in figures exists due to identification as nonbinary, which is accepted as a gender norm.

7.2 Note: DfE plans to change the collection of data to 'sex' from the 2024 to 2025 onwards. Until this point, all are advised they may continue reporting sex or gender as done in previous collections.

### 7.3 Graph 3: Age of CiC population

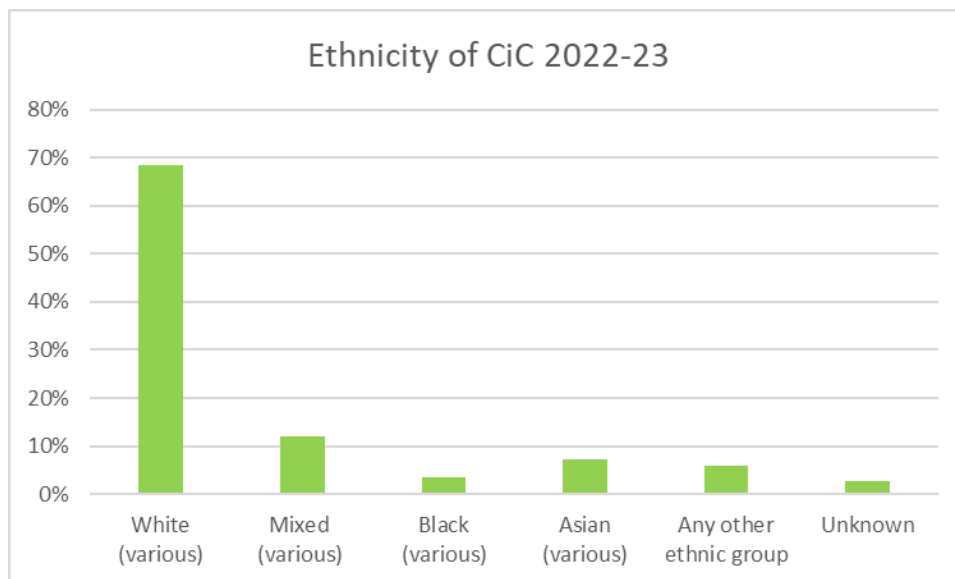


Source: Children's Social Care data powerbi

7.4 The above shows the age ranges of children in care within Bath and Northeast Somerset over a three-year period. This highlights the consistency over the years that most of the children in care are aged 10+ years. There has been an increase of 20 young people in the 16+ age range, this is due to the increase in unaccompanied asylum-seeking children as part of the national transfer scheme.



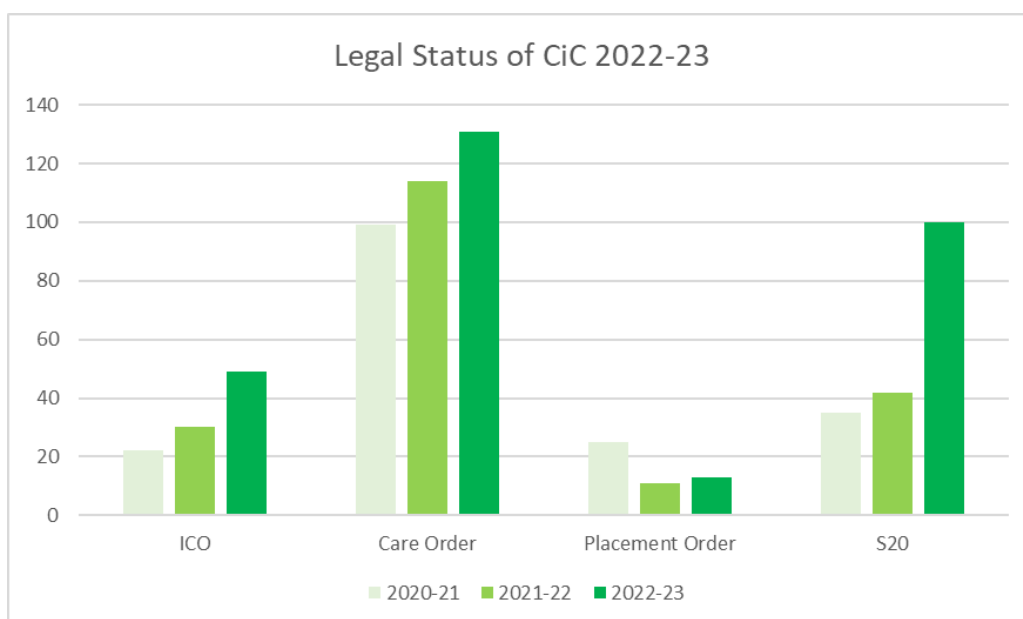
7.5 Graph 4: Ethnicity of CiC:



Source: Children's Social Care Powerbi

7.6 Most children in the care of the authority are of White ethnicity, almost 70%. The cultural and identity needs of CiC is an area that IROs consider and promote in their decisions or recommendations from a child's review. The ethnicity of the CiC cohort is mixed, as stated and includes a variety of ethnicities. The groupings have been compiled into six groups to prevent identification under GDPR and presented in percentages.

7.7 Graph 5: Legal status of CiC



Source: Children's Social Care Powerbi actual figures

7.8 The above shows that there has been an increase in CiC who have a permanence plan for the child to remain as a CiC. Plans for these children will be closely reviewed by their IRO, with reviews held at least once every six months. Children in long-term care benefit from the longevity of the IRO role's relationship, with IROs being able to bring to life a child's journey and ensuring their voice is heard, especially when changes in care arrangements are necessary.

7.9 The above shows that there has been an increase in CiC who have a permanence plan for the child to remain as a CiC. Plans for these children will be closely reviewed by their IRO, with reviews held at least once every six months. Children in long-term care benefit from the longevity of the IRO role's relationship, with IROs being able to bring to life a child's journey and ensuring their voice is heard, especially when changes in care arrangements are necessary.

7.10 There has been a slight increase in the number of CiC whose care plan is adoption, from the previous reporting period last year. This is to be considered along with CiC, who are being placed with a relative or connected person under an SGO, which can be seen in the reasons for children leaving care in Table 2. Age is a significant area that IROs will consider; if they identify a child has been left at risk of harm in the CP arena for too long, this will be raised directly with the social work team and the manager of the IRO service, any themes identified will be reported back to senior managers in children's social care.

7.11 Table 5: Ages and legal status CiC 2022-23

Age category	Interim Care Order	Full Care Order	Placement order granted	Accommodated under Section 20	Total
Under 12m	19	0	6	2	27
1-4 years	13	4	4	3	24
5-9 years	12	28	3	3	46
10-15 years	5	75	0	34	114
16+ years	0	22	0	56	78
<b>Total</b>	<b>49</b>	<b>129</b>	<b>13</b>	<b>98</b>	<b>289</b>

Source: Children's Social Care PowerBi Int Report

7.12 The above table shows the legal status and ages of children in care at the end of this reporting period on 31.03.2023. What is noticeable is a significant increase in children under 12 months made subject to interim care orders compared to the previous year. There were four in the previous reporting year for children under 12 months compared to the 19 reported in the table above. In addition to this, the number of 16+ children accommodated under section 20

rose considerably from 27 to 56. This is due to several factors, including the increase in UASCs allocated to the council, discussed later in this report.

7.13 There has been a slight increase in placement orders being granted for children, which is positive, given that they will now be placed for permanency with a new adoptive family. The IRO is involved intrinsically in this process, ensuring that any new placement is their forever home. Should an adoption placement not be located, alternative plans are considered via the reviewing process.

7.14 The figures in Table 5, include children with a disability and are likely to require an assessment by adult social care to consider what support they may need as they become adults. For these children aged 16+, IROs will continue to make referrals to the Adult Social Care transition panel. The panel must consider whether a young person is entitled to a transition assessment under the Care Act 2014. The assessment will consider the young person's needs regarding care and support post-18, including accommodation for all over 18. In this reporting period, IROs have identified delays in completing transition assessments, which has left, for some children, plans post-18 uncertain.

## 8. Children placed at distance from Bath and Northeast Somerset

### 8.1 Table 6: CiC placed Out of Area

<i>Type of placement</i>	<i>2022-23</i>
<i>Family</i>	3
<i>Foster Care</i>	134
<i>Residential / Children's home</i>	24
<i>Residential School</i>	1
<i>Mother and Baby</i>	3
<i>16+</i>	33
<i>Other</i>	16
<i>Adoption</i>	8

*Source: current year Children's Social Care collective data from back end of powerbi*

8.2 Local authorities are expected to place children in accommodation that meets the CiC needs and allows them to live near their family home. It is acknowledged that there is a national shortage of suitable placements for children; therefore, securing a placement within the local authority cannot always be achieved. In Bath and Northeast Somerset, there was an increase in the reporting period of CiC being placed in a provision which was out of the local authority and a considerable distance from their birth parents or corporate parent.

8.3 It is known from research that children's needs are better met within a family-type household unit, especially for younger children. However, some children need a residential placement or a residential school to meet their needs and

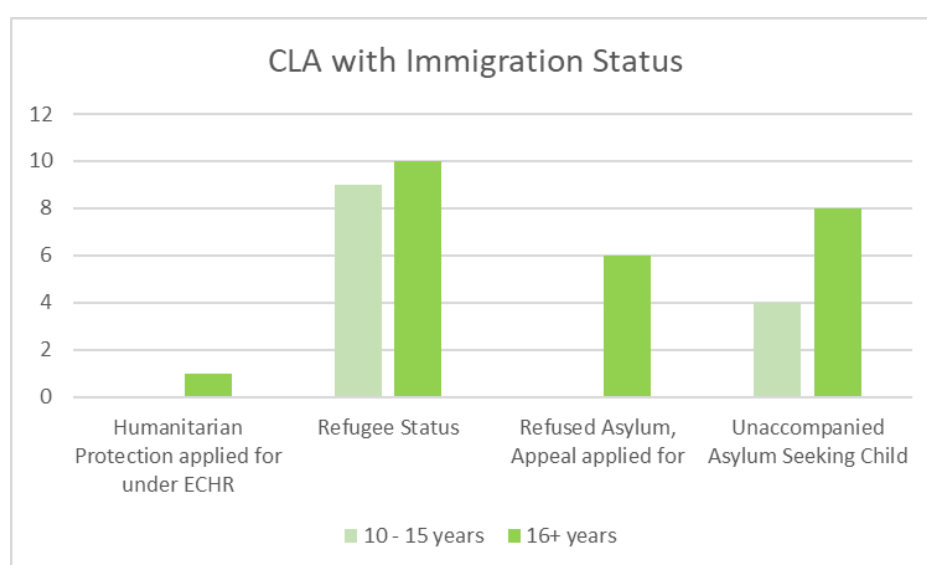
keep them safe. These types of placements will often be out of county and not in-house.

## 9 Unaccompanied, Asylum Seeking and Trafficked Children:

9.1 In the UK, a person becomes a refugee when the government agrees that an individual who has applied for asylum meets the definition in the Refugee Convention. In turn, they will 'recognise' that person as a refugee and issue them with refugee status documentation. Usually, refugees in the UK are given five years' leave to remain as a refugee. They must then apply for further leave, although their status as a refugee is not always limited to five years. Children become unaccompanied asylum-seeking children (UASC) if they do not have a parent or caregiver with them. Often a child can be brought into the country to secure asylum from an unrelated adult who will then abandon them.

9.2 In this reporting period, Bath and Northeast Somerset Council have seen an increase in the number of CiC seeking asylum or refuge. The placement of these children across the country is overseen by the National Transfer Scheme (NTS) protocol, which has been established to ensure the safe placement of unaccompanied children in the UK. In November 2021, all local authorities were given legal notice to accept transfer of children into their care, providing crucial placements and services for these children. The allocation numbers of children to local authorities across the country have increased, and within Bath and Northeast Somerset, the number has doubled. This figure will increase with conflicts predicted to escalate within the Middle East.

### 9.3 Graph 6: Immigration status



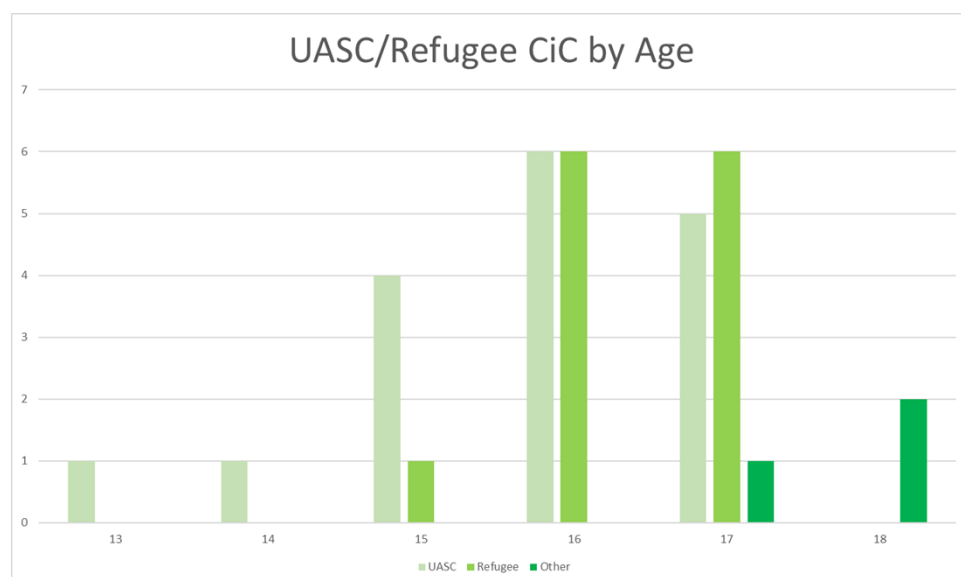
Source: Children's Social Care data powerbi annual IRO report

9.4 The graph above shows the significant increase in the number of CiC seeking asylum within Bath and Northeast Somerset. Thirty-two UASCs have been accommodated, an increase from last year's reporting period of eleven UASCs. The majority of UASCs are not placed locally or are already residing

in larger cities across the country, often a placement they have been in before Bath and Northeast Somerset became the corporate parent. A number of children who have a placement within the local area say they would like to move to larger cities where they can maintain contact with friends they already know or be part of the community they feel they can fit within. Many UASCs speak little or no English, which makes integrating into a predominantly white English-speaking area difficult. When UASCs are placed out of county in large cities, the vulnerability to them increases, especially around modern slavery and further trafficking. The increase in UASC has also increased travel burdens on the IRO service, affecting the service capacity. A UASC working group has been established to address the abovementioned issues. For B&NES, this is an issue that we will need to work creatively to ensure we can be as efficient as possible with our resources.

9.5 The IRO service has recognised the importance of continuing to develop the skills, knowledge, and expertise in working with the cohort of UASCs. IROs introduce themselves to the children and young people, providing translated documents that explain their role, how they can be contacted and the purpose of a child-in-care review. Minutes of the reviews are also translated into the first language. It can often be daunting for UASCs as they feel that the IRO is part of the system and feel threatened or at risk of deportation, so additional time is required to develop meaningful relationships. IROs will meet all children in person ahead of their reviews in order to reassure them and ensure the use of interpreters to enable the CiC to participate fully.

#### 9.6 Graph 7: Ages of unaccompanied asylum-seeking



Source: Children's Social Care UASC tracker

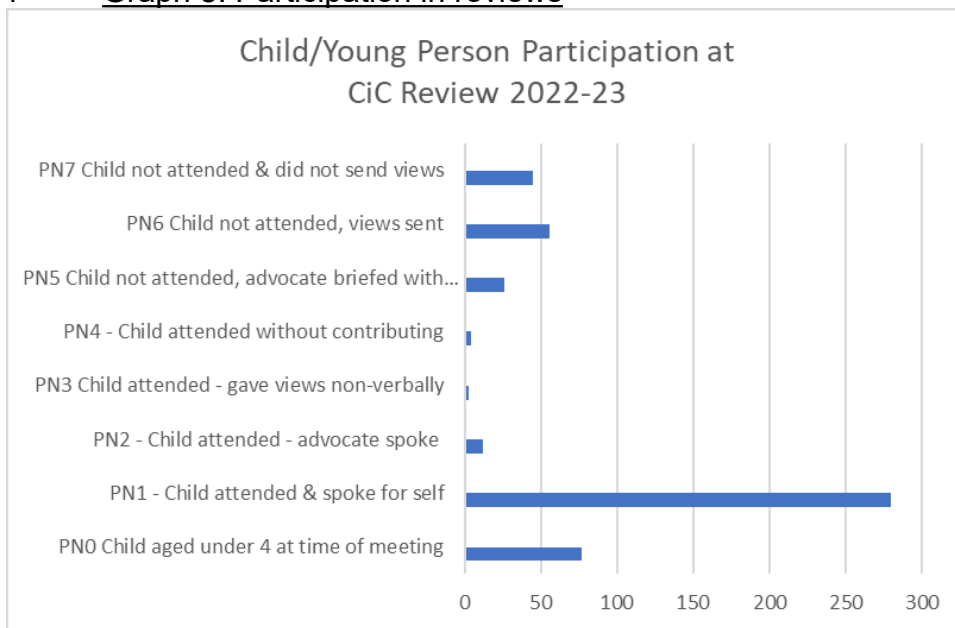
9.7 As advised in the reporting period of 2022-23, 32 unaccompanied children or children with refugee status were placed in the care of Bath and Northeast

Somerset. The majority of these children are older, between the ages of 15 & 18.

9.8 The number of UASC continues to grow and is anticipated to continue to do so. This has a significant impact on the IRO service and the IRO's ability to fulfil their statutory responsibilities. As a result and as already advised in this report, the SQA service requires additional capacity to support its work. The Service will also continue to work alongside other LA social care teams to consider the complexities of this cohort and how we best meet their needs.

## 10 Child-focused reviews, participation, and feedback

### 10.1 Graph 8: Participation in reviews



Source: Children's Services Data ICS system numbers of CiC

10.2 IROs oversaw 497 reviews in this reporting period, with 56% of reviews seeing a child attend and speak for themselves, have their advocate speak for them, or attend but choose not to contribute. Children aged four and under will continue to be seen by their IRO in their placement with their carers. IROs will observe the relationship between the child and carer, how at ease the child is in their environment and how the child interacts with other members of the family/household, recording this as the child's voice. Some children choose not to attend their reviews; whilst they are encouraged to attend, it is acknowledged that some children do not wish to attend, and the IRO service respects this. All CiC are sent a consultation document before their review and are offered independent advocacy by the IRO service as a matter of process.

## 11 CiC Voice and feedback:

**11.1** This area has not progressed as well as we hoped during the reporting period despite being recognised as a service priority. The Service can see that the child's voice is more evident in documents provided to the IRO and the IRO service is making a conscious effort to ensure that the child's voice is included in all review minutes. However, there is much more work to do in this area for the Service.

## **12 Dispute resolution and escalation:**

12.1 IROs continue to work together with social work teams and other professionals. Inevitably, issues do arise where IROs disagree with plans being proposed for children; they will always seek to resolve this at the lowest level, often discussing matters with the child's social worker in the first instance and the social work manager. IROs, as part of their day-to-day practice, will offer views, question plans and decisions being made for children. IROs encourage open dialogue with social work teams and promote the importance of regular contact with a child's social worker in between child-in-care reviews.

12.2 The dispute resolution protocol provides a framework for IROs to utilise when disagreements about plans for children have not been resolved between the IRO and Social Worker. The protocol has three stages: informal (IRO raises concerns directly with Team Manager responsible for child), formal (IRO has not been able to reach a resolution at the informal stage and so concerns raised with the relevant Head of Service for Children's Social Care) and Director level (in rare instances where resolution at formal stage hasn't been achieved and concerns relate to welfare and safety of the child, these will be escalated to the Director or Assistant Director of Children's Social Care). The escalation process is currently being reviewed after identifying several anomalies in practice and the policy is overdue its review date. It is important to acknowledge that the IRO role sits independently from Children Services in that they can escalate directly to CAFCASS if no resolution is reached within the process.

12.3 In the reporting period of 2022-23, there were approximately 52 informal escalations raised by a child's IRO, similar reasons as evidenced in previous reporting periods. Three noticeable themes are highlighted below-

- i.* Non-completion of Social Work pre-meeting report for a child's review. A pre-meeting report is required before the child in care review to provide evidence of how the child is doing and the progression of the care plan. This issue significantly impacted the Service provided to children in terms of care planning. Despite numerous informal escalations during the reporting period, it did little to change the practice. On several occasions, two or more child-in-care reviews had been held without the pre-meeting report being completed. Since this reporting period, the practice has improved, and this will be more evident in the next reporting period.
- ii.* Completion of needs assessment and pathway plan: IROs will make recommendations at every child in-care review about the need for relevant children to have an updated needs assessment and/or pathway plan. At

subsequent reviews, where there is no evidence the recommendations have progressed, the IRO will informally raise and seek a timescale for completion by the social worker's manager. The lack of pathway plans significantly impacts post-18 children in care. This creates uncertainty around their post-18 accommodation, etc. Children in care are to have their final child-in-care review 4-6 weeks before their 18<sup>th</sup> birthday to ensure recommendations from previous reviews have been completed.

- iii. Suitability of placement meeting the CiC needs, whether out of county or being close to education.

12.4 In the reporting period of 2022-23, there were seven formal escalations made by IROs due to unresolved informal escalations and the level of concern identified. A formal escalation can proceed without instigating the informal part, generally due to immediate concerns of safeguarding and planning. In data report systems, there is no real control over the raised/resolved dispute dates, leading to inaccuracies in reporting; what is acknowledged is that IROs have raised several escalations without resolutions reported, as evidenced on a child's electronic file. Most of the data previously presented to the scrutiny committee was collated into a manual spreadsheet tracked by the IRO Manager. This practice has ceased and movement to a child's electronic file began in the reporting period.

### **13. Quality Assurance by the IRO**

13.1 IROs must maintain close oversight of the care planning for children and young people in care; this means that they must keep oversight of the progress of children in care in between their reviews. Social Workers must inform a child's IRO of significant changes/events in the child's life. Any proposed changes in the care plan should be discussed with the IRO before implementation.

13.2 The IROs ensure the minimum quality assurance around the child's care planning by completing the quality assurance and recommendations document on a child's file following the review. No midpoint reviews are undertaken on a CiC electronic file to ascertain the progression of care planning. This leaves the potential for drift, especially around transitional stages from children to adult services, requiring a pathway plan and multi-agency cooperation.

13.3 The IRO service manager reports to the Service Improvement Board every quarter, this includes reports on CiC and the IRO role. This presents an opportunity for the Service manager to be held to account for service delivery and raise issues that impact the Service's ability to deliver as effectively as it would wish.



## 14. Areas for development within IRO service

14.1 Each year, the IRO service identifies areas of practice that require further development or improvement, updates to the progress of these are set out below.

Area for development/ improvement	Update
Feedback from children, young people, their families, and carers. (Outstanding from 2019)	The child's voice is more evident in documents provided to the IRO and the IRO, including the child's voice. The child's voice allows for a measure in terms of being listened to and identifying service areas. Feedback forms will be developed and disseminated with minutes of review to advise on the process and IRO. This will further include how to complain about the IRO service and rating their review.
Children in care will have access to life story work delivered in an age-appropriate way. (Outstanding from 2019 – 2021)	The IRO service is awaiting the completion of a life story policy by Children's social care. This work has been outstanding since 2019 and the IRO manager has raised it at the children's social care improvement board.
Improving the number of children in care review records disseminated within 20 working days of the child's review, achieving at least 85% compliance in this area.	As in previous years the target of 85% has not been met, the reporting period for 2022-23 being 46%. The current performance is still low and acknowledged, given the service deficit.
IRO's to have input and oversight of any plans for reunification.	This ongoing process appears to work well at the early reporting stages. IROs are supporting this project.
Themed audits are to be undertaken, identified by the themes emerging from the quality assurance activity within the Service and the data reports. (Area for development 2021-2022)	The thematic audit process is underway after successful recruitment to the vacant post.

## **15. Areas of focus for IRO Service**

15.1 For the reporting period 2023-24, the interim manager's focus has been to ensure every child in care has an allocated IRO when they enter the process, regardless of IRO capacity. The Service has also been focused on ensuring social work pre-meeting reports for CiC reviews and pathway plans are available. Timely provision of both documents is essential to support and map a clear path for CiC.

15.2 Improving timeliness of reviews and ensuring the child's records are updated is improved. This will assist the IRO role in meeting its statutory function more effectively. The quality assurance of midpoint reviews is an aspect of CiC, which is currently under development, this would enable the Service to tackle better drift and delay in the transition to adult services.

15.3 The escalation protocol/ policy is being reviewed to ascertain its effectiveness and how it can be improved to ensure that data is better captured and unresolved problems are addressed and recorded on the CiC files.

15.4 The CiC voice is critical to service development and improvement. The SQA Manager will continue to ensure innovative ways to capture this feedback are delivered within the service area.

15.5 This is a time of increased service demand for children's social care, coinciding with difficulties in recruiting social workers. While being mindful of this, the quality assurance development aspect and scrutiny of CiC and their plans must continue to ensure the 'corporate parent' is meeting its statutory responsibilities. The relationships between the IRO service and other areas across the council remain positive, and what is to be highlighted is the dedicated relationships between social workers and the CiC they work with, as are the relationships between CiC and their IROs.

M.Mckay  
03.11.23

<b>Bath &amp; North East Somerset Council</b>		
<b>MEETING/ DECISION MAKER:</b>	<b>Children, Adults, Health and Wellbeing Policy Development and Scrutiny Panel</b>	
<b>MEETING/ DECISION DATE:</b>	<b>13<sup>th</sup> November 2023</b>	<b>EXECUTIVE FORWARD PLAN REFERENCE:</b>
<b>TITLE:</b>	<b>Bath &amp; North East Somerset Community Safety &amp; Safeguarding Partnership (BCSSP) Annual report 2022-2023</b>	
<b>WARD:</b>	All	
<b>AN OPEN PUBLIC ITEM</b>		
<b>List of attachments to this report:</b>		
Attachment 1: BCSSP Annual Report 2022-2023		
Attachment 2: BCSSP Annual Report Executive Summary 2022-2023		

**1 THE ISSUE**

1.1 The B&NES Community Safety & Safeguarding Partnership (BCSSP) is introducing its Annual Report for 2022-2023, alongside its priorities to be actioned in its Strategic Plan for 2023-2024.

**2 RECOMMENDATION**

**The Panel is asked to;**

2.1 **Proposal 1:** Note the Annual Report and Executive Summary for the BCSSP

2.2 **Proposal 2:** Raise any queries in respect of community safety and/or safeguarding activity

2.3 **Proposal 3:** Recommend any additional areas it would like the BCSSP to give consideration to in 2023-2024

**3 THE REPORT**

3.1 The report contains information covering the following areas:

- The current community safety and safeguarding context for B&NES
- The new Partnership governance arrangements
- Achievements against strategic plans for community safety, safeguarding children and adults

- The work of the sub-groups during the year
- Adult and children's safeguarding activity data
- Priorities for the year ahead

### **Activity and Information Highlights**

- 2022-2023 is the third full year of reporting for the BCSSP since it was established in 2019
- Within the year, the Local Government Association (LGA) have conducted an overarching review into the effectiveness of the partnership. An action plan has been developed to integrate a number of the recommendations made.
- Despite physical and financial resource pressures, continuity has been maintained, the statutory duties met, and strategic objectives of the partnership have been delivered
- The BCSSP has published three Safeguarding Adult Reviews (SARs) and continued to undertake work towards recommendations from previous SARs
- The Practice Review Group has received five referrals for SARs, of which two met the criteria, two were still under consideration at the time of writing this report and one was agreed to be addressed through a learning briefing.
- The Practice Review Group has received four serious incident notifications for consideration and a Rapid Review was deemed appropriate for each case. A Local Child Safeguarding practice Review (LCSPR) was recommended for three of the notifications.
- The BCSSP has continued to update and revise key policies and procedures, including the joint Multi-agency Safeguarding Adults Policy and a B&NES, Swindon and Wiltshire Non-accidental Injury in Under 1's Policy.
- The BCSSP has carried out multi-agency audits including a Section 11 Audit, Section 175 Audit, Safeguarding Adults Audit and a Self-neglect audit

## **4 STATUTORY CONSIDERATIONS**

4.1 Four reasons can be considered in terms of the statutory basis for the BCSSP annual report being shared with the Children, Adults, Health and Wellbeing Policy Development and Scrutiny Panel.

- (1) Safeguarding is everyone's business and the BCSSP would like the Panel to consider the information contained in the report on this basis and because it meets the outcomes the Health and Wellbeing Board set out to achieve through its Strategy.
- (2) The BCSSP has set out in its Terms of Reference the requirement for the BCSSP Annual Report to be presented to the Panel. By delivering this presentation the

BCSSP is meeting its responsibilities and raising awareness of safeguarding concerns.

- (3) Although the Council is responsible for establishing the BCSSP jointly with its statutory partners, Avon and Somerset Constabulary, B&NES, Swindon & Wiltshire ICB, National Probation Service and Avon Fire and Rescue Service, the BCSSP is not accountable to the Panel – it is independent. Therefore, the relationship is one of mutual challenge and scrutiny. It is also on this basis the BCSSP would like to present their work.
- (4) There is also a requirement for the BCSSP to present its Annual Report to the Health and Wellbeing Board for consideration and the Care Act 2014 Schedule 2 requires a copy to be shared with the Chair; there is no requirement to share with Panels however the Partnership welcomes the scrutiny and challenge from the Panel as well, in order to ensure the widest breadth of views are heard and considered.

## **5 RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS (FINANCE, PROPERTY, PEOPLE)**

- 5.1 B&NES Council, BaNES, Swindon and Wiltshire ICB, and Avon and Somerset Constabulary contributed to the running costs during the period with smaller contributions being made by the Probation Service.
- 5.2 The BCSSP is funded through multi-agency partners. The budget is managed by the BCSSP Business Manager and budget reports submitted to the Executive Group annually. There is regular discussion regarding partner contributions and resourcing of the BCSSP.
- 5.3 Following agreement with B&NES Council, BaNES, Swindon and Wiltshire ICB, and Avon and Somerset Constabulary contribute equally to any Child Safeguarding Practice Reviews (CSPRs) or Safeguarding Adult Reviews (SARs).

## **6 RISK MANAGEMENT**

- 6.1 A risk assessment related to the issue and recommendations has been undertaken, in compliance with the Council's decision making risk management guidance.
- 6.2 The BCSSP developed its own Risk Register in 2020 which is regularly monitored.

## **7. EQUALITIES**

- 7.1 An Equality Impact Assessment is not required for the BCSSP Annual Report.

## **8. CLIMATE CHANGE**

- 8.1 The BCSSP (and sub-groups) ensure that meetings have dial in facilities available where possible to reduce officers travelling and reduce carbon emissions

## **9. OTHER OPTIONS CONSIDERED**

None

## 10. CONSULTATION

10.1 The BCSSP Annual Report was approved by the BCSSP in August 2023.

10.2 The Report was presented to the Health and Wellbeing Board on the 26<sup>th</sup> September 2023.

<b>Contact person</b>	Kirstie Webb 01225 396350
<b>Background papers</b>	None
<b>Please contact the report author if you need to access this report in an alternative format</b>	

**Bath & North East Somerset Community  
Safety & Safeguarding Partnership**



**Annual Report  
2022-2023**

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## 1. Welcome from Fiona Field, the Independent Chair of the B&NES Community Safety & Safeguarding Partnership

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Welcome to the Annual Report for 2022-2023 for BCSSP. I am the new Chair for BCSSP having taken up the role in January 2023. I am delighted to be writing the forward to this report looking back over the past 12 months.

Firstly, I would like to thank Sian Walker, the previous Chair, for all her hard work and championing the safeguarding and community safety issues locally. Sian is a well respected Chair in several areas of the country and I know she found the partnerships in BCSSP to be very strong, with the partners always wanting to improve local services to ensure people are kept as safe as possible. Sian also saw the formation of the unique integrated approach to both safeguarding children and adults and community safety through the BSCCP Board that she chaired.

In June 2022, an independent review of these integrated arrangements was held as agreed with all the partners. The results of this review were shared in September, positive outcomes were identified, as well as areas to improve or change in order to ensure that community safety issues were prioritised alongside safeguarding, in forthcoming years. This review formed the basis of the BCSSP Board coming together in 2023, with myself as the new Chair, to plan some changes to both the structure of the Board and the sub groups, and also to consider our priorities over the following 3 year strategic plan. This work is on going in 2023.

Looking back over the past 12 months, there have been 3 safeguarding adult reviews (SARs) published, no children's reviews and no domestic homicide reviews. Whilst there may not be agreement to a formal review being undertaken, there is always detailed discussion in the sub group of BCSSP in order to establish whether a review is necessary or not – the purpose always being to identify lessons and change practice or services in order to prevent a similar event from happening again. There is strong partnership working in evidence in the Practice Review sub group, with challenge across partners in order to ensure the correct decision is reached. I have questioned why we have not had any domestic homicide reviews for some time- this is being followed up at a local level in order to ensure we examine circumstances in families where domestic abuse was known to be an issue.

Training and workforce development is a key element of a partnership Board, the past 12 months has seen a reduction in the number of, and breadth of opportunities locally for staff to learn together. Primarily this was due to the loss of an identified lead trainer; however, I am pleased that this post has been replaced in April 2023 so new plans are in place to deliver a greater number of opportunities again. Despite the loss of the lead for most of the year, safeguarding was still given priority as a learning need across the partners.

Section 7 of this report highlights the work of the sub groups of BCSSP in 2022-2023 and I would like to thank all partners for their input into these groups. We are reviewing all the groups in 2023 in order to create some capacity, recognising the current pressure on staff. As a statutory partnership, we need to ensure that we meet our responsibilities and work is shared fairly and equitably across the local organisations. Again, this will form part of our own reorganisation of BCSSP in 2023.

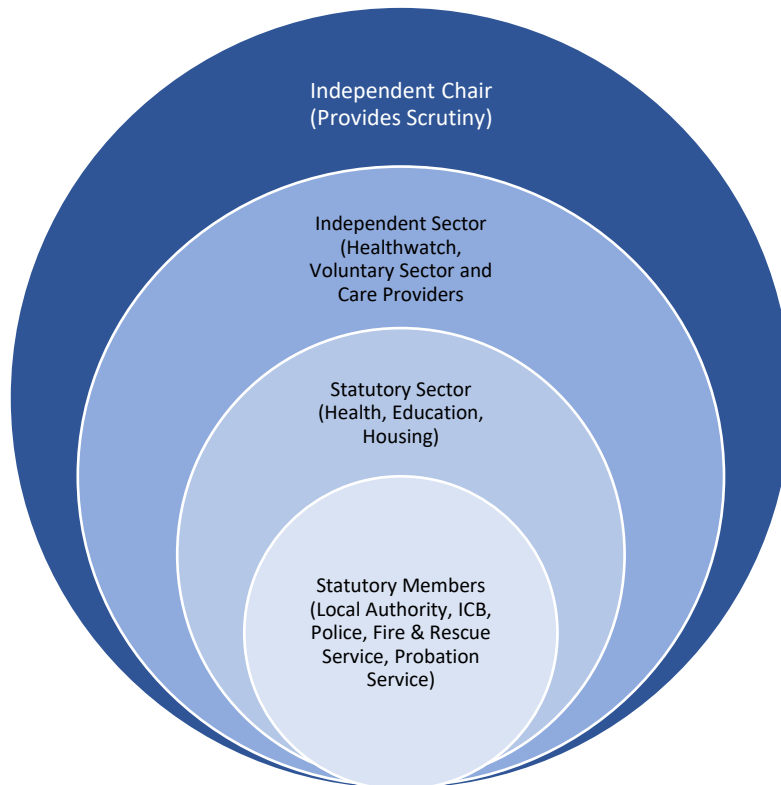
Appendix 10 demonstrates the data across our statutory partners for the activity in safeguarding children and adults as well as police data for missing and exploitation of young people. The numbers continue to rise for safeguarding both children and adults. Although this can be read as a "bad thing", I also see this as a positive message - in that more people are aware of the need to "do something" about a concern they have for a child or vulnerable adult, so they make a referral expressing their concern. This can then trigger an assessment of need and prevent further escalation of a difficult situation leading to possible harm.

I hope you find the report interesting and informative, especially as we have included some case studies of people living in our area who have been supported by local services. I recommend this report to you.

## 2. About the B&NES Community Safety & Safeguarding Partnership

### Safeguarding is everyone's business.

The BCSSP is made up of the five statutory agencies with responsibility for safeguarding and community safety; B&NES Council, Avon and Somerset Constabulary, the B&NES Swindon and Wiltshire Integrated Care Board, Avon Fire & Rescue Service, the Probation Service and other statutory organisations (e.g. Health and Care providers) as well as independent sector organisations (e.g. Voluntary groups) to enable us to work effectively and with joint purpose to protect children, adults, families and communities who most need our help.



Partners in B&NES continue to work together to identify and respond to the needs of children, adults at risk and communities, with the core purpose of:

**Safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children**  
**Safeguarding adults with care and support needs**  
**Protecting local communities from crime and helping people feel safer**  
**Ensuring the effectiveness of what partners do both individually and together.**

## How we work

We work in **partnership** to safeguard children, young people and adults at risk; ensuring that effective systems are in place to promote their wellbeing.

We **support communities** to live free from the fear of crime and anti-social behaviour, enhancing the overall safety of communities.

We **listen** to people who use our services, professionals and our communities to keep learning.

We **learn** from case reviews to improve services.



## What we do

Through our collective arrangements, we:

- Seek to ensure that the partnership delivers enhanced safeguarding arrangements across B&NES
- Strengthen the voice of children, families, adults at risk and communities
- ‘Think Family, Think Community’
- Improve strategic decision making and leadership by having one cohesive conversation
- Focus on shared strategic objectives to achieve the greatest impact and improve outcomes for children, adults, families and the community
- Reduce duplication, therefore enabling us to use resources more effectively.



## Our Statutory Duties

As the BCSSP was formed from merging three different statutory areas of work, we must ensure that our practice is compliant with the responsibilities set out in the legal frameworks for each of these areas.

### Community Safety:

Community Safety Partnerships (CSPs) aim to reduce crime and the fear of crime, address risk, threat and harm to victims and local communities and facilitate the empowerment and strengthening of communities through the delivery of local initiatives. CSPs are a statutory body required under the Crime and Disorder Act 1998 (and subsequent amendments). The ‘relevant authorities’ that form the CSPs are the Local Authority, Police, Health, Probation and the Fire and Rescue Service.

Their function is to:

- Act as a legal body for CSP work, ensuring compliance with statutory duties and addressing community safety issues
- Ensure systems and processes are in place amongst partners to deliver their duties and address arising issues
- Set priorities, determine policy and strategic direction.

### Safeguarding Children:

Working Together to Safeguard Children 2018 sets out that the three safeguarding partners should agree on how to co-ordinate their safeguarding services, act as a strategic leadership group in supporting and engaging others and implement local and national learning, including from serious child safeguarding incidents.

Safeguarding arrangements must include:

- Arrangements for the safeguarding partners to work together to identify and respond to the needs of children in the area
- Arrangements for commissioning and publishing local child safeguarding practice reviews
- Arrangements for independent scrutiny of the effectiveness of the arrangement.

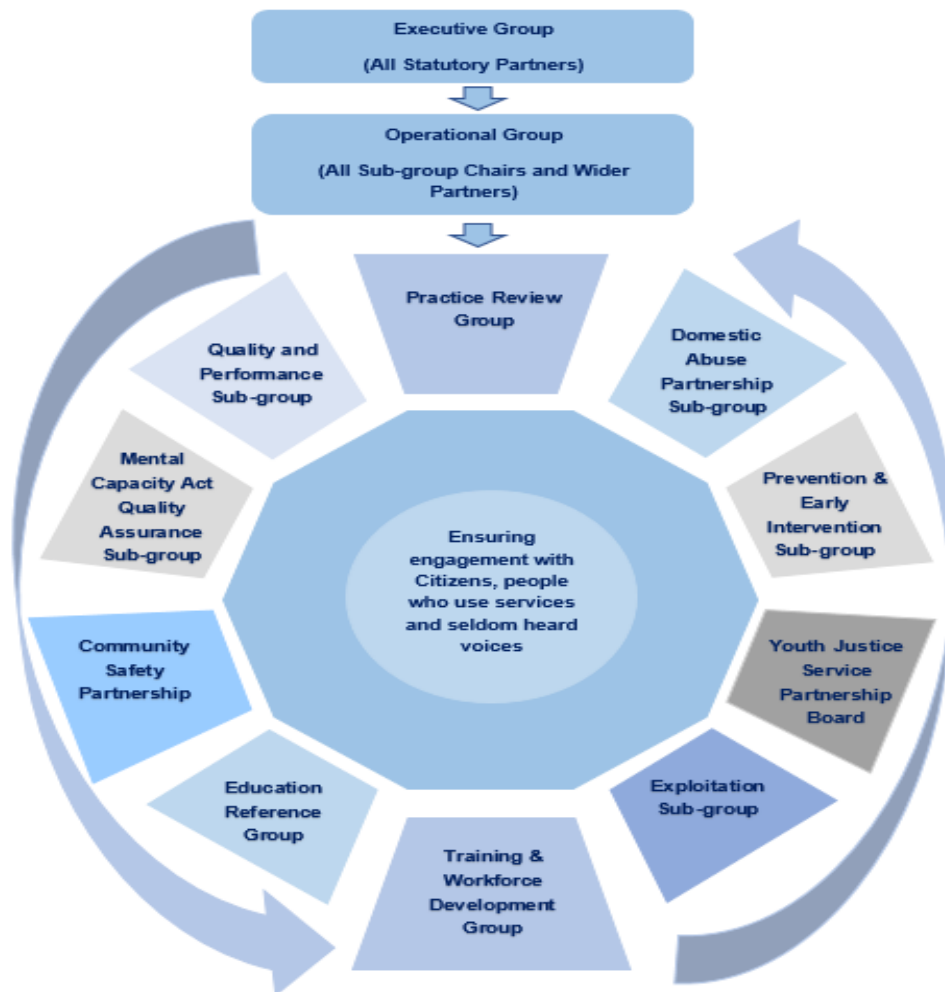
**Safeguarding Adults:**

The Care Act 2014 sets out a clear legal framework for how local authorities and other parts of the system should protect adults at risk of abuse or neglect.

The overarching purpose of is to help and safeguard adults with care and support needs. The BCSSP should:

- Assure itself that local safeguarding arrangements are in place as defined by the Care Act 2014 and statutory guidance
- Assure itself that safeguarding practice is person-centred and outcome-focused, working collaboratively to prevent abuse and neglect where possible
- Ensure agencies and individuals give timely and proportionate responses when abuse or neglect have occurred
- Assure itself that safeguarding practice is continuously improving and enhancing the quality of life of adults in its area.

**Partnership Structure**



### 3. Multi-agency Learning and Practice Development

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In this reporting period, the BCSSP has not published any Child Safeguarding Practice Reviews or Domestic Homicide Reviews but has published three Safeguarding Adult Reviews and work has been taking place on commissioned reviews due for publication in 2023-2024.

#### Child Safeguarding Practice Reviews and Rapid Reviews

The purpose of reviewing serious child safeguarding cases is to identify improvements that can be made to safeguard and promote the welfare of children. Serious incidents are those in which abuse, or neglect of a child is known or suspected, and the child has died or been seriously harmed. Once the B&NES Community Safety & Safeguarding Partnership (BCSSP) receives a serious incident notification, it has fifteen days to complete a Rapid Review and submit it to the National Child Safeguarding Practice Review Panel.

This process is managed through the Practice Review Group. Four serious incident notifications have been received for consideration by the BCSSP between 1<sup>st</sup> April 2022 and 31<sup>st</sup> March 2023. A Rapid Review was deemed appropriate for each notification and a local Child Safeguarding Practice Review (CSPR) recommended in three of the cases. At the time of writing this report, one case is awaiting a publication date, one is still being written and the third has been sent to national panel, with the recommendation for a CSPR. Partners have shown significant commitment to ensure the notifications were reviewed and required report completed to a high standard and within timescale.

Key learning identified from the reviews included:

- The need for a clear pathway and threshold for information sharing around safeguarding and extended services
- The need to ensure fathers are engaged and supported
- Health recording systems include an holistic assessment of a child's needs which includes contextual maternal and paternal family factors.

These recommendations are actioned and monitored through the Practice Review Group.

#### Safeguarding Adult Reviews (SARs)

The BCSSP must arrange for a SAR to review a case involving an adult in its area (with needs for care and support). It can do this if there is reasonable cause for concern about how agencies or other persons with relevant functions worked together to safeguard the adult and either the adult has died and the BCSSP knows, or suspects the death resulted from abuse or neglect, or the adult is alive and the BCSSP knows or suspects that the adult has experienced serious abuse or neglect.

The BCSSP can arrange for there to be a discretionary review of any other matter involving an adult in its area with needs for care and support.

The purpose of a review is to identify the lessons to be learned from the case and apply those lessons to future cases.

The BCSSP Safeguarding Adult Reviews are managed through the Practice Review Group. During the period covered by this report, three SAR reports have been ratified (Cooper, Angus and Levi), five referrals for SARs were received, of which two met the SAR criteria and will be progressed in 2023-2024, two are still under consideration. One did not meet the criteria and it was agreed a learning briefing would be produced about Korsakoff Syndrome.

#### *Adult 'Cooper'*

Cooper was 71 years old at the time of his death. He had a learning disability and had lived in residential care homes for a number of years. Cooper was admitted to hospital a little over a week after the first Covid-19 lockdown began. He was not tested for Covid-19 at the time of discharge back to the care home, but this was consistent with practice at the time. An assessment of needs to inform the discharge destination was incomplete, but 'Discharge to Assess' arrangements had recently been introduced. Cooper was isolated for 14 days following discharge, which was necessary, but may have adversely

affected his already low mood and emotional wellbeing. His daily routine was also disrupted by restrictions introduced during lockdown.

Key learning from this review included:

- The impact of Covid-19 on service provision
- Mental Capacity Act Assessments and Best Interest Decisions are appropriately recorded
- consider consulting with adults with learning disabilities and organisations which support them over how effectively adults with learning disabilities feel that professionals communicate with them

#### *Adult 'Angus'*

Angus was a divorced man with two sons, with whom he had little contact. For a number of years, Angus was supported by his niece, but this support declined due to his niece's own commitments. He had a history of chronic alcohol abuse and presented with signs of self-neglect. He had a diagnosed cognitive impairment and had been resident in a care home under a Deprivation of Liberty Safeguard (DoLS) in 2019. Angus returned to living in the community with a support package but a pattern of self-neglect, alcohol abuse and regular falls in his home followed. Angus developed an infected leg and pressure sores. Angus died as a hospital inpatient, aged 72

Key learning from this review included:

- Reviewing Best Interest Decisions in light of emerging risks
- When making best interest decisions for those who lack capacity, others close to that person or an independent advocate should be consulted
- Adhering to the self-neglect policy

#### *Adult 'Levi'*

Levi died unexpectedly in November 2019 following a cardiac arrest. He was age 36 years old at the time of his death. He left family including his mother, who was involved in his support, and a sister. He also had children with whom contact was variable over the years. He was of Black Caribbean heritage.

Levi had been known to mental health services intermittently since 2007. He had care

and support needs arising from his mental health challenges. The Coroner's Report states that the cause of death was accidental overdose, likely triggered by a previously unknown underlying health condition.

Learning from this review included:

- Identification of those service users who are "hardest to reach" and on supporting and enabling front-line staff to be effective in working with individuals who live chaotic lifestyles and/or are self-neglecting
- Race and culture in the world of mental health
- Concerns of Cuckooing and professionals response

#### **Domestic Homicide Reviews**

A Domestic Homicide Review (DHR) means a review of the circumstances in which the death of a person aged 16 or over has, or appears to have, resulted from violence, abuse or neglect by a person to whom they were related or with whom they had been in an intimate relationship, or a member of the same household as themselves, held with a view to identifying the lessons learned from the death.

Domestic violence and abuse are defined as: *Any incident or pattern of incidents of controlling, coercive or threatening behaviour, violence or abuse between those aged 16 or over who are or have been intimate partners or family members regardless of gender or sexuality.*

The BCSSP has had no DHR referrals in this reporting period.

#### **What has happened as a result of these three review arrangements?**

- Promotion of the 'Think Family, Think Community' agenda
- Improving how we capture and reflect the voice of the child/adult/parent/carer
- A multi-agency Mental Capacity Act Discharge to Assess audit
- A knife crime audit
- Investment in a database to manage B&NES Multi-agency Risk Assessment Conference (MARAC)
- Development of an Education Reference Group to enhance links with education settings



- A new Escalation Policy has been developed
- A new Managing Allegations protocol has been developed
- A joint piece of work into non-accidental injury in non-mobile children has begun across B&NES, Swindon and Wiltshire
- Initiating a task and finish group to look at extra-familial harm pathways

### **Case Study:**

Case study from the Adolescent and Child Exploitation (ACE) Team

The ACE team receive concerns about a number of younger people in the B&NES area. One example of this is when they were notified about a 13 year old male and his 13 year old girlfriend who were felt to be at risk from an older peer group who resided outside of the B&NES area.

The ACE team were allocated this case and conducted an assessment of the concerns, identifying the needs of the individuals involved. The concerns escalated quickly and were mainly focussed on Anti-social behaviour in the city centre and the increased risk of exploitation.

The police reported that the older group were accessing the homes of the younger children and this was also having an impact on the parents. The group were accessing the females house and focus on this established that the female was at risk both inside and outside of the home, and was placed on a Child Protection Plan.

The males mother reported that the group were also breaking into her home and staying in the garage. She was concerned for her sons safety and allowed further monitoring of this situation.

Multi-agency meetings were convened including relevant agencies from across 3 local authority areas, who all reviewed the young people involved from their respective areas and each child was put on an individual plan to reduce the risks. This included supporting them back into education, reviewing ASD needs and supporting parental involvement.

3 months on, and the risks had reduced greatly. The children are all still being supported, but the multi-agency early intervention has effectively reduced the risks in this situation.

## 4. Multi-agency Quality Assurance

### Section 11 Audit

Section 11 of the Children Act 2004 places duties on a range of organisations, agencies and individuals to ensure their functions, and any services that they contract out to others, are discharged having regard to the need to safeguard and promote the welfare of children.

For 2022-2023, the five children's Partnerships across the Avon and Somerset region worked together to audit organisations working with children and families. The audits took place in a series of workshops and the findings and learning will be shared across the children's Partnerships. By working across the Avon and Somerset region, it was possible to hold workshops for 15 organisations and ensure that no organisations were approached more than once.

B&NES chose to hold workshops for Children's Social Care, DHI and AWP. Key professionals from each organisation were invited as well as senior safeguarding staff and managers.

The specific areas the audit focussed on were:

- Safeguarding Structure
- Learning and Development
- Listening to Children
- Information Sharing
- Child Exploitation
- Children's Partnerships

All organisations approached participated excellently and were very open and transparent in the conversations.

A full report will be produced and shared across the five children's Partnerships.

### Section 175 Education Audit

All educational establishments have a legal responsibility to safeguard and promote the welfare of children and young people.

Keeping Children Safe in Education is the statutory guidance from the Department for Education issued under Section 175/Section 157 of the Education Act 2002, the Education (Independent School Standards) Regulations 2014, the Non-Maintained Special Schools (England) Regulations 2015, and the

Education and Training (Welfare of Children) Act 2021.

Schools and colleges in England must have regard to it when carrying out their duties to safeguard and promote the welfare of children.

Regular monitoring is essential to ensure that the educational establishment has strong policies, procedures and mechanisms in place to safeguard children and young people; it also helps establishments to prepare for safeguarding aspects of inspections by Ofsted or other relevant inspectorates.

The mechanism by which the BCSSP established assurance was through individual schools self-evaluating their performance under an agreed framework. An audit tool was circulated to 84 education establishments and considered responses were received from 78 of them, a 93% return rate. This is a reduction on 2021-2022 (95%), and previous years when a 100% return rate has been achieved. All those who didn't respond were contacted on more than one occasion, and it seems that capacity, staff sickness and Covid caused issues in completion.

Responses did show that there have been improvements on last years responses across all criteria. The majority of ratings were green, but where any 'amber' ratings were given, for example, where a policy is written and in the process of going to parents for consultation, schools establish and implement individual action plans to address these areas for development.

The action plans will be monitored against the following years returns.

### Safeguarding Adults Audit

The BCSSP has worked regionally with the four other Safeguarding Partnerships in Bristol, South Gloucestershire, Somerset and North Somerset to develop one combined safeguarding adults' self-audit.

The combined safeguarding adults audit was proposed and agreed by the BCSSP Executive Group in March 2021, and an audit tool was then developed to cover the following themes:

- Leadership



- Evidence of Policy in Practice
- Safer Recruitment, including People in Positions of Trust
- Learning and Development, including learning from SARs
- Making Safeguarding Personal
- Exploitation
- Transition

Longer term, the aim is to develop a 3-year audit cycle in line with the Section 11, in which year one has a full audit and years two and three are reviewed via agency 'walkabouts' or short, focussed audits.

The self-assessment audit was sent to 24 organisations and 16 completed and returned it, although two were returned after the report had been written, so were not included in the overall analysis.

Recommendations for the BCSSP from the audit included:

- seeking further assurance on organisational understanding of their responsibilities in relation to the Mental Capacity Act
- consider what further support the partnership can provide to assist organisations in embedding MCA principles and Best Interest Decision Making
- promote the Escalation Policy to partners and seek assurance that it has been shared
- promote the Persons in Positions of Trust (PiPoT) policy to partners and seek assurance that it has been shared
- develop and publish Professional Curiosity guidance

## 5. Multi-agency Training and Workforce Development

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The BCSSP training and development programme is designed to help ensure the continuing development of all staff in order to safeguard and promote the welfare of children and adults at risk and to keep our communities safe.

The BCSSP employs an Inter-Agency Safeguarding & Community Safety Trainer who is responsible for the development, and in many cases the delivery of courses. The BCSSP Trainer is managed by B&NES Organisational Development Business Partner who specialises in Safeguarding and Multiagency training. Where there is a need for specialist input the BCSSP Trainer and the Business Partner will work with colleagues from partnership organisations or external independent trainers, to ensure the most appropriate knowledge and expertise is gained for course creation and delivery.

Regrettably since October 2021 the BCSSP Inter-Agency Safeguarding & Community Safety Trainer post has been vacant. The post was initially paused for a period of seven months to enable several reviews to take place regarding training delivery options available to the BCSSP. These reviews explored different models, the cost implications and cost effectiveness of the proposals and the potential outcomes for the workforce on adopting the different options. At

the beginning of this financial year it was agreed that the training programme would be funded for 12 months and the recruitment process was undertaken, unfortunately without success. Extended funding was secured and a trainer was appointed to join the partnership at the end of April 2023 on a fixed term contract.

The absence of a BCSSP trainer led to a smaller number of courses being offered on the Partnership programme, due to the reliance on external training providers and the cost implications of commissioning this provision. Consequently, priority was given to ensuring 'core' safeguarding courses were provided at regular intervals, alongside promoting other quality assured training events to the workforce. The continued absence of a trainer also led to a number of developmental pieces being paused, so it is positive that these projects will be re-established shortly.

This year it was possible to reintroduce a number of training sessions back into the 'classroom', unfortunately this has not been at the initial pace envisaged due to practical issues relating to venue availability and also a number of external trainers being situated outside of the local area. However, following feedback received from delegates it was planned that many courses would remain



online to provide flexibility and meet the evolving needs of the workforce.

From 1<sup>st</sup> April 2022 – 31<sup>st</sup> March 2023, the following has been achieved:

- 64 BCSSP training sessions taking place comprising of 26 different courses
- 1,269 Inter-agency training places made available
- 984 Inter-agency training places booked
- 818 Inter-agency training places attended\*
- 798 Professionals trained\*
- Approximately 70 % completed evaluations received and these are demonstrating impact.
- 5 Single agency training courses provided, training over 655 individuals.
- An additional 6 BCSSP Courses were cancelled across the financial year, 5 due to low numbers and 1 due to personal circumstances of the trainer.

\*Attendance figures outstanding for one course so this figure may increase by up to 75

It is regrettable that five courses needed to be cancelled this year due to low numbers of bookings, and in response the session content or format has been adapted to meet the presenting needs of the workforce and ensure necessary information and guidance remained available.

Work undertaken with neighbouring authorities has highlighted that low attendance appears to be a theme in relation to a number of subjects and consequently exploration is taking place about how these topics can be offered multi regionally going forward.

### **Evaluation & Quality Assurance**

To evaluate the effectiveness of BCSSP training a variety of methods were employed to achieve four goals:

- Ensure the learning outcomes for each course are met, and reflect evidence based 'best practice'.
- Ensure the continual evaluation to confirm courses are meeting the needs of staff, with transparent overview and accountability to the Training and Development sub group.

- Ensure that evaluations inform the planning and development of future training
- Ensure that messages from training are being embedded in practice.

The evaluation forms remind attendees of the expected learning outcomes and delegates are asked to scale pre and post course their confidence in these areas to assess the effectiveness of the training in addressing the identified aims and objectives on the day, with space for additional comments. If a common theme emerges around objectives not being met this will trigger a review of the course content/ delivery style so that adjustments can be made.

The ongoing working with external training organisations has continued to allow additional layers of quality assurance to take place, with a wider pool of trainers being utilised to assess course content and the benefit of information and practical tools back into practice. Additionally, this year a number of peer reviews of courses have taken place across organisations and authorities to enable benchmarking exercises to take place regarding course depth and detail.

However, the reliance on external trainers or utilising national training events has caused some challenges. Occasionally feedback has raised that the trainers lack of knowledge about specific issues relating to B&NES or B&NES processes and procedures has weakened debates about current issues. Action has been taken to mitigate this issue as much as possible through pre meets with trainers, using local cases and learning and ensuring delegates are provided information signposting them to local supports and relevant agencies.

In line with last year, significant feedback was received about individual preference regarding the practicalities of training delivery. The information gained continued to be conflicting with regards to the use of digital platforms and the preferred length of courses when using this method. The requirement of independent study alongside some learning events has also continued to receive a conflicting response. Some delegates have shared that they appreciate the opportunity to reflect on the information gained in the session before

building on this knowledge with the activities set. Other delegates have advised that they find it challenging to find time in their diary to undertake the necessary work and would find it easier for all learning to be trainer led; with the length of the session being extended.

This year's programme has tried to offer as varied programme as possible with regard to implementing a blended approach to learning, with e-learning, webinars, conferences, videos, online training and classroom based sessions all being made available. Additionally, variation of course timings has been provided. It is hoped that going forward there will be more scope to record some sessions and thus make them available to members of the workforce who have limited opportunities to join daytime events.

Research into the effectiveness of inter-agency training suggests that for participants to gain the most from training they need to be able to make direct links to their own practice and consider how the knowledge gained in training can improve their practice. All delegates are therefore invited at the end of training to consider an action plan for changing their behaviour in the workplace and thinking through the impact that this change will have on those with whom they work.

The methods of evaluation used have evidenced:

- An increase in practitioner's confidence in applying knowledge and skills back into practice, following training.
- Additional learning gained through attending a multi-agency event.
- A greater understanding of legislation, policy, procedure and guidance and how to apply this into practice.
- The training and trainer to be of high quality and beneficial in increasing delegates knowledge in the subject matter.

#### **Examples of delegate feedback:**

*"I am pleased to be able to report that the knowledge gained was used immediately the following day. .... I felt more confident because of my training which aided my communications with the person at the centre of the concerns raised."*

#### **Team Manager (Adult Exploitation)**

*"I have more confidence in my decision making and feeling that I can add value to discussions around safeguarding and child protection."*

#### **Key Worker (Introduction to Child Protection)**

*"Good to discuss issues and challenges relating to multi-agency work as well as the opportunity to reflect on my own current practises and how these can be refined to support children and young families."*

#### **Detective Constable (Advanced Update)**

## 6. Key Performance Indicators

The BCSSP agreed the following performance indicators for partners for 2022-2023. It was agreed that it is each agencies responsibility to determine which of their staff members fall into the category of 'relevant'. Relevant means to their role and responsibilities and awareness training can be face to face, e-learning or equivalent.

Indicator 1: Training	Target %	Outcome % Average
Relevant staff have undertaken Prevent training (WRAP or equivalent)	85%	75%
Relevant staff have undertaken Prevent awareness training	85%	74%
Relevant staff have undertaken FGM awareness training	80%	69%
Relevant staff have undertaken Domestic Abuse awareness training	80%	77%
Safeguarding leads have awareness of Modern Slavery/Human Trafficking	100%	87%
Relevant staff have undertaken complex (toxic) trio awareness training	80%	64%
(ADULT) Relevant staff have undertaken self-neglect training	80%	75%
(ADULT) Relevant staff have undertaken MCA/DOLS training within 6 months of taking up post	90%	72%
(ADULT) New staff have undertaken safeguarding adult's awareness training within 3 months of starting in post	95%	98%
(ADULT) Relevant staff have completed SA level 2 training within 6 months of taking up post and completed refresher training every 3 years thereafter	90%	88%
(ADULT) Relevant staff have completed SA Level 3 training	90%	76%
(CHILDREN) Relevant staff have undertaken child protection standard training	90%	88%
(CHILDREN) Relevant staff have undertaken child protection advanced training	90%	67%
(CHILDREN) Relevant staff have undertaken CSE awareness training	80%	71%
<b>Recruitment</b>		
Relevant staff have an up-to-date DBS check at a level appropriate to their role	100%	91%
Two written references to be required before work commences	100%	91%

## 7. The Work of the Partnership Subgroups

The BCSSP Executive Group and Operational Group are chaired independently by Fiona Field. The Executive leads the production of the strategic plan, supported by the Operational Group and the subgroups. The Operational Group provides support and challenge to the subgroups to improve performance outcomes and gain assurance of good community safety and safeguarding practices. The subgroups have each developed a delivery plan to assist in delivering against the BCSSP strategic plan. The groups provide reports to the Executive which will consider whether guidance, and assistance or direct action is needed to remove barriers to achieving outcomes. In June 2022, a Peer Review was held by the Local Government Association (LGA) and the report recommended that BCSSP examine its

findings and take forward suggested recommendations to improve the functioning and clarity of BCSSP. The report highlighted the high number of partnership subgroups, so this work has been taken forward into 2023-2024.

### Practice Review Group

The purpose of the Practice Review subgroup is to enable the Partnership to carry out reviews of cases that meet statutory and non-statutory requirements. This enables lessons to be learned and practice improvements to be made, to ensure better outcomes for children, adults and families.

This is an 'all-age' subgroup which focusses on the following key areas:

- Child Safeguarding Practice Reviews (CSPRs), including Rapid Review reports to the National Panel
- Safeguarding Adult Reviews (SARs)
- Domestic Homicide Reviews (DHRs)
- Learning/Discretionary Reviews

This subgroup has had strong commitment from all statutory partners and has:

- Ensured statutory compliance
- Identified key themes to review and explored preventative training options
- Developed and agreed a process for rapid review decision making
- Re-written the CSPR protocol in line with the new notification process and guidance from National Panel

The group has identified a number of priorities for 2023-2024, including, ensuring appropriate membership of the group, that the criteria for all reviews is fully understood, ensuring that practice remains focussed on the most vulnerable and monitoring the statutory review action plans and their application in practice.

### **Domestic Abuse Partnership**

The purpose of the Domestic Abuse Partnership (DAP) is to promote partnership coordination of universal and targeted education about healthy relationships, protection of victims, provision for survivors and disruption of perpetrators related to adult and children.

In 2022-2023 it has:

- Continued the work against the DA Act action plan and developed a DA Act assurance plan
- Supported the completion of the B&NES DA Needs Assessment
- Completed a MARAC self-assessment
- Continued development of the MARAC online system

For 2023-2024, the subgroup has prioritised rolling out The QES MARAC system and updating the MARAC protocol, supporting the development of an AWP training package for suicide prevention, understanding more about the perpetrator programme landscape in B&NES following the closure of the RSVP scheme.

### **Prevention & Early Intervention**

The purpose of the Prevention & Early Intervention subgroup is to ensure the provision of a holistic approach across the whole life course to ensure the quality and effectiveness of prevention and early intervention services for children and adults across the B&NES Service area. The subgroup aims to reduce the demands and needs for social care and specialist services and it does this by understanding what services are available and raising awareness of them.

In 2022-2023, the subgroup has:

- Received presentations on raising awareness of poverty, Warm Spaces, Children Affected by Parental Imprisonment and Royal United Hospitals Hope Boxes
- Reviewed the implications of parental Alienation
- Preparedness for Joint Targeted Area Inspection (JTAI)
- Collated feedback on the Early Help App survey

For 2023-2024, the group has prioritised children's emotional health and wellbeing, awareness of CAMHS referral criteria and reviewing the Sudden Unexplained Death in Infants (SUDI) audit findings.

### **Youth Justice Service Partnership Board**

The Youth Justice Service Partnership Board (formerly the Youth Offending Service (YOS) Management Board) is formally constituted and accountable to the BCSSP and the Health & Wellbeing Board. Its purpose is to manage the performance of the prevention and youth crimes agenda and ensure the delivery of the statutory principal aim of preventing youth offending at a local level. It provides governance for the Youth Offending Service (YOS) and ensures it can fully contribute to achieving positive outcomes for young people in accordance with the local Children and Young Peoples plan.

Staff have remained committed and shown great perseverance and creativity in offering support to children and their families and the impact of this is a continuing reduction in first time entrants to the system, the custody rate remains 0 and re-offending is reducing.

Achievements for 2022-2023 include:

- Ratification of the anti-racism plan
- The first instalment of Turnaround Programme funding has been drawn down, systems are being developed and the first child being assessed and a key worker appointed.
- There has been agreement to fund continued partnership with pan-Avon Enhanced Case Management, trauma recovery programme for another year

Looking forward, the group will conduct a self-audit and exploration of the new contextual safeguarding toolkit, continue to encourage Partnership Board members to observe work and/or meet with individual staff. Carry out peer case audits with 2 neighbouring authorities.

### **Exploitation**

The purpose of the Exploitation subgroup is to develop, monitor and evaluate the effectiveness of the strategic and operational multi-agency response to exploitation. Its focus is all age and on the key areas of Missing Children and Adults, County Lines, Modern Slavery/Trafficking, Forced Marriage, Female Genital Mutilation, Honour Based Violence, Mate and Hate Crime.

Key achievements for 2022-2023 include:

- Progression from partners around the Child Exploitation Risk Assessment Framework (CERAF)
- Progression of the Extra Familial Harm pathway
- Developed a good structure for multi-agency auditing work
- Education sector have become more involved in relation to the identified links between exclusions and exploitation
- Improved join up linking the exploitation agenda into other subgroups

Going forward, the subgroup wants to continue focussing on transitional safeguarding, review available training, embed learning from CSPR's and focus on participation and hearing the lived experience.

### **Community Safety Partnership (formerly Vulnerable Communities)**

The purpose of the Community Safety Partnership is to ensure the provision of a holistic approach to those communities identified as 'vulnerable' across the B&NES service area. Whilst Community Safety is embedded in all of the subgroups, this subgroup predominantly focusses on the areas that would have been covered by the previous 'Responsible Authorities Group', which was brought into the BCSSP.

The subgroup focusses on identifying trends, risk factors and mitigations for the following areas:

- Night-time Economy
- Drug and Alcohol Use
- Regulation (licensing, MAPPA, Trading Standards)
- Community triggers
- 'Prevent'\* – Violent Extremism
- Serious and Organised Crime – 'Disrupt'
- Serious Violent Crime
- Anti-Social Behaviour
- Violence Reduction

In 2022-2023, the subgroup has:

- Improved statutory partner attendance
- Completed the Joint Community safety Plan with the Office of Police and Crime Commissioner
- Reviewed its scope against statutory requirements
- Secured a new Chair and Vice Chair
- Focussed on agency service provision at each meeting

In 2023-2024, the CSP will conduct an audit of the National Referral mechanism (NRM), review Community Triggers, and review anti-social behaviour data and produce a report of actions in response to the issues.

### **Mental Capacity Act Quality Assurance**

The Mental Capacity Act Quality Assurance subgroup was established as a subgroup in September 2020. Its purpose is to provide assurance to the BCSSP, that health and social care providers across B&NES apply the Mental Capacity Act 2005, including Deprivation of Liberty Safeguards.

In 2022-2023, the subgroup has:

- Appointed a Co-chair

- Reviewed MCA polices from partner agencies
- Completed an MCA learning briefing
- Reviewed the relevant actions from SAR's against the groups objectives
- Contributed to the Liberty Protection Safeguards consultation

Going forward, this group will support and contribute to the self-neglect policy review in relation to MCA, agree a follow on audit of MCA application in the Discharge to Assess (D2A) process.

### Quality & Performance

The purpose of this subgroup is to quality assure, on behalf of the BCSSP, aspects of safeguarding and community safety work that is delivered to the population of B&NES. This includes themed quality assurance of key issues which present a risk to children, adults, families, and communities.

The subgroup focusses on safeguarding standards for children and adults, audit reporting, single and multi-agency data and implementing the Scrutiny and Assurance Framework.

In 2022–2023 the subgroup has:

- Continued to seek greater clarity on quality and performance across B&NES and refined the data set – although the data scorecard is still in development
- Completed a case audit of Multi-agency risk management meetings (MARMMS) as one aspect of the self-neglect audit
- Reviewed police data and sought assurance around children being detained
- Discussed JTAI readiness

Going forward, the group will complete the audit of self-neglect and complete any actions arising and create a task and finish group to ensure agency data flow for the scorecard.

### Training & Workforce Development

The purpose of this subgroup is to deliver a programme which enables the Partnership to discharge its responsibility to either directly provide or commission training and development opportunities for the workforce in B&NES. The programme ensures local and national standards are delivered and that emerging needs are identified, and appropriate training provided to meet these.

In 2022-2023, this subgroup has:

- Supported the design and development of the Stop Adult Abuse Week campaign, with attendance figures doubling from previous year
- Reviewed and agreed the key performance indicators in relation to training and submitted a proposal to the Executive Group
- Engaged with other sub-groups to establish training needs
- Reviewed outcomes from learning reviews to ensure areas for development are captured in future training
- Had significant change in membership

Its priorities for 2023-2024 are to ensure membership is appropriate, develop webinars for Stop Adult Abuse Week 2023, support the appointment to the BCSSP trainer post and seek further assurance on training currently being delivered outside of the BCSSP.

## 8. Reflecting on Partnership Achievements

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2022-2023 saw a return to a 'new normal' following the impact of the Coronavirus Pandemic, but already busy services are stretched to capacity. Following consultation with BCSSP partners via the subgroups, it was agreed that meetings would remain virtual as it reduced the impact of travel time and parking. It is noted that this in itself causes pressures as often agency representatives are in back to back virtual meetings. The BCSSP is pleased to note that commitment to the partnership and the delivery of objectives has remained high and would like to thank partners for their continued support.

Within its previous Annual Report, the Partnership documented its key priorities for 2022-2023:

What we said we would do	What we did
Develop a 'Think Family, Think Community' approach	Transitional safeguarding remains a focus and Children's Social Care and Adult Social Care are working more closely, recognising that needs do not stop when a young person reaches the age of 18
	Continued work on participation and encouraged partners to share case studies
	Worked closely with partners providing community assurance following knife crime incidents
Learning from experience to improve how we work	Continued to receive feedback from Adults supported by the safeguarding process
	Promoted awareness of domestic abuse and the new DA Act. Through the Domestic Abuse Partnership, developed an action plan to ensure we aligned with statutory requirements
	Reviewed available programmes for perpetrators of domestic abuse and continue to look at commissioning
Recognising the importance of prevention and early intervention	Worked with safeguarding boards across the Avon & Somerset footprint to deliver Stop Adult Abuse Week webinars, promoting awareness of adult safeguarding
	Developed a number of new learning briefings on areas of concern and made them accessible on the BCSSP website
Providing executive leadership for an effective partnership	Recruited a new Independent Chair for the BCSSP following completion of tenure by the previous Chair.
	Commissioned a peer review from the Local Government Association (LGA) to conduct a review of the BCSSP structure and functionality
	Re-initiated the BCSSP newsletter, including a 'spotlight' section on current and emerging themes

## 9. Our Commitments for 2023-2024

The BCSSP reviewed its performance for 2022-2023 and is firmly committed to working in partnership to achieve the objectives as set out in the 2021-2024 strategic plan. The Peer Review of June 2022 and subsequent BCSSP Away Day in April 2023 agreed that further development of BCSSP will require some significant change in order to achieve strategic objectives in the 2021-2024 strategic plan but also to develop a new strategic plan 2024-2027. In particular, community safety needs a greater focus given the breadth of areas of work it has to consider. For 2023-2024, the four priorities will continue but there will also be a focus on the theme of domestic abuse within these four priorities.

### 1. Develop a 'Think Family, Think Community' approach

Services working with adults and children have a shared understanding and holistic view of the needs and capabilities of the whole family and take these into account during assessment and planning. There will be greater co-ordination between children's and adult's services.

reflective, improve, and implement change to deliver best practice. We will capture the experience for children, young people and adults at risk where possible to better measure outcomes and benefits as perceived by the individuals concerned.

### 2. Learning from experience to improve how we work

Everyone learns through continuous development and assurance. We will work with our partner agencies and support them to be

### 3. Recognising the importance of prevention and early intervention

We will make effective use of data and intelligence available from all of our partners to inform prevention and early intervention work and ensure that prevention and early intervention is timely and effective and referral pathways are clear and accessible.



#### 4. Providing executive leadership for an effective partnership

Professional accountability underpins all of our work and we will seek assurance that safeguarding, and community safety services are delivered effectively and professionally.

We will support our partners to demonstrate that appropriate systems and processes are in place to discharge their statutory duties in relation to safeguarding children, adults and community safety.



#### How we will achieve this

Each of the subgroups has developed an action plan to support the BCSSP Strategic Plan 2021-2024.

The action plans have been developed for a 12 month period and progress is monitored quarterly. The work of the subgroups and of individual organisations contributes to the plans and evidence of outcomes is sought to provide assurance to the Executive Group and Operational Group.

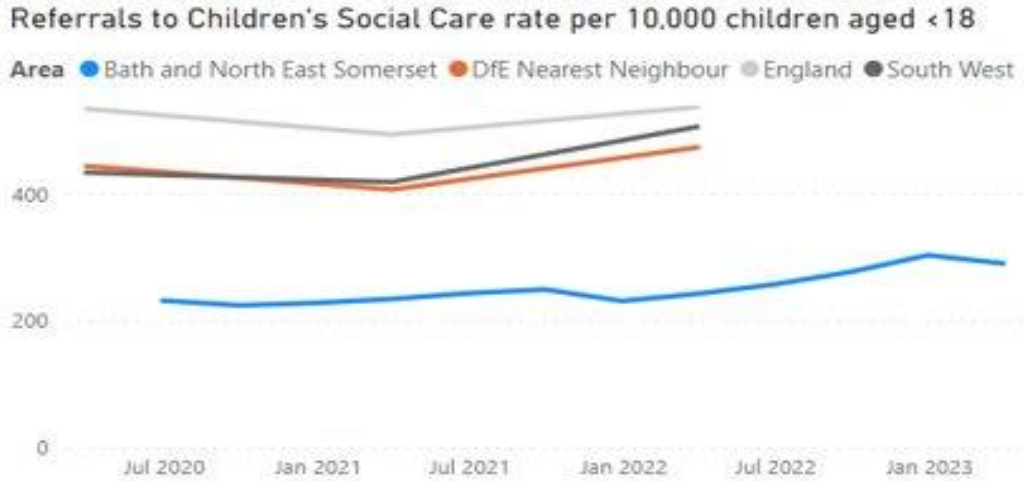
Alongside this, data submitted by our partners is monitored and analysed by the Quality & Performance subgroup, allowing the BCSSP to remain agile to the community safety and safeguarding needs of B&NES.



## 10. Appendices

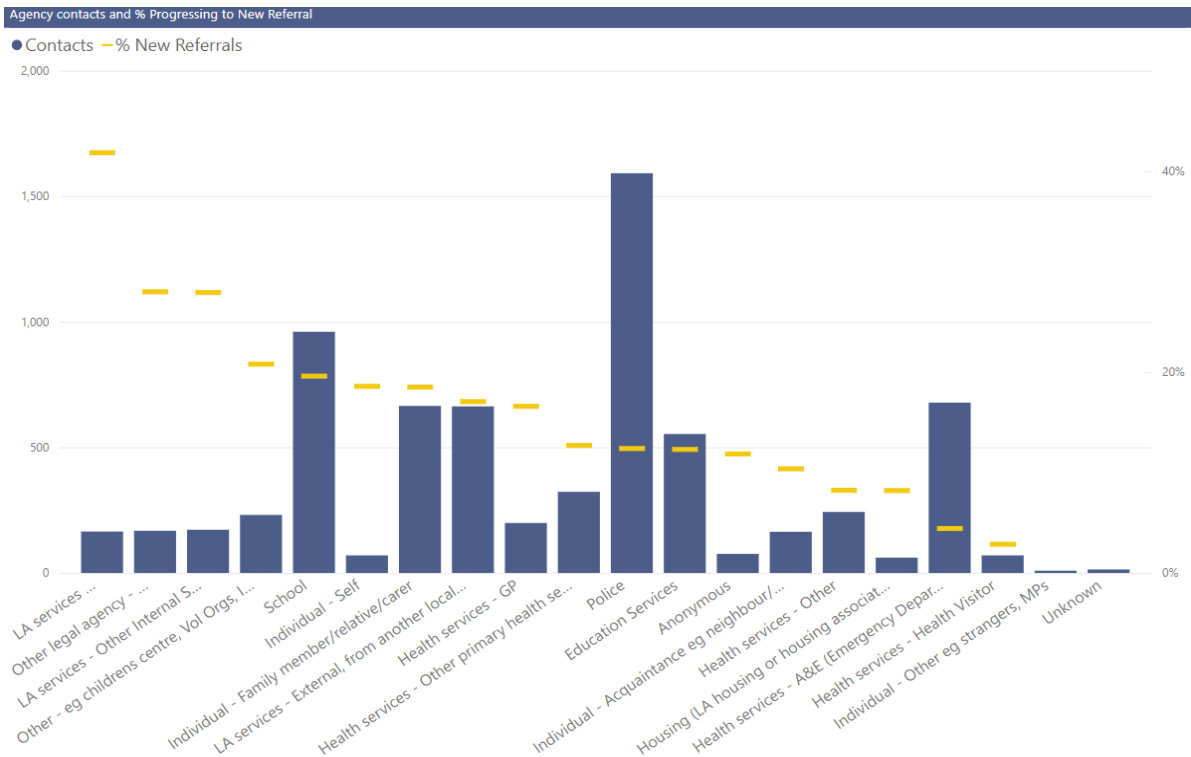
### 10.1 Children's Social Care

#### Referrals

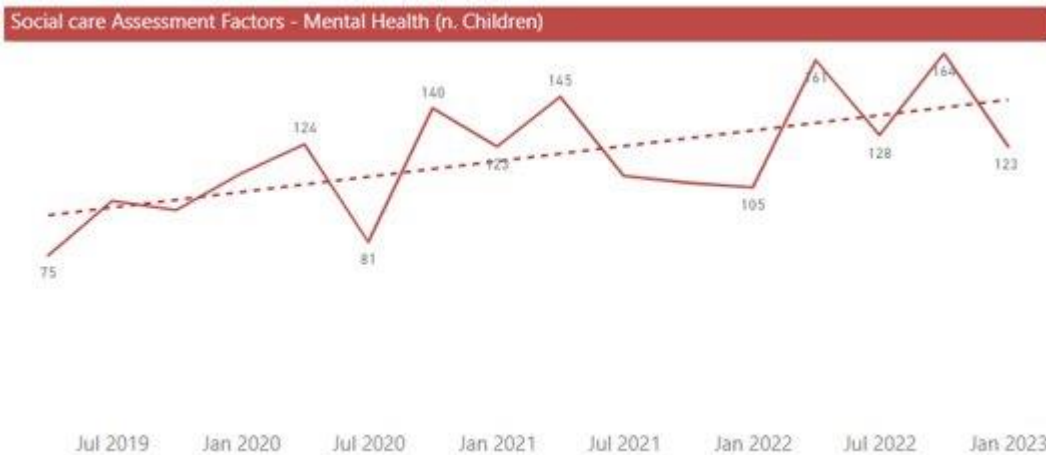
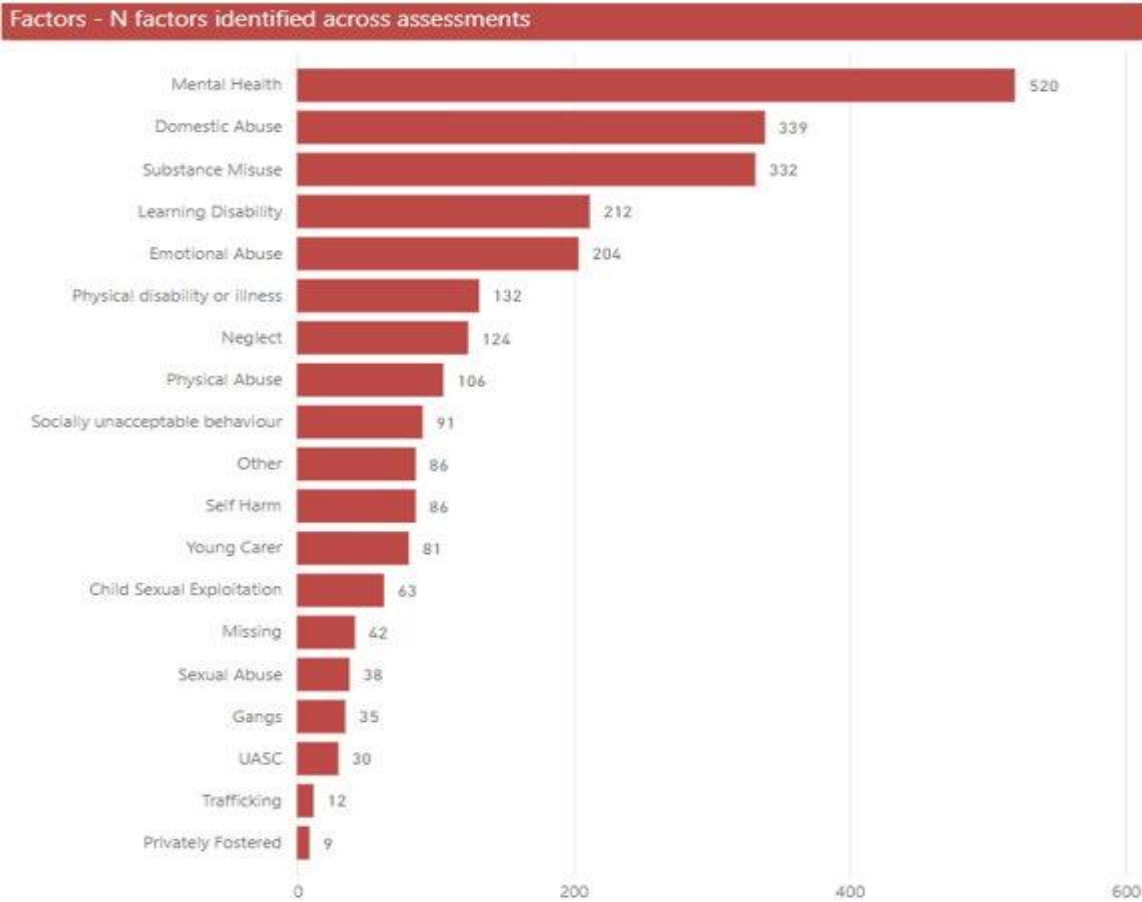


Referral rates have remained low compared to other local areas and national rates. This can in part be attributed to a sustained focus on ensuring cases are referred into Early Help services. Threshold audits continue to demonstrate that need is being effectively identified.

#### Contact Sources



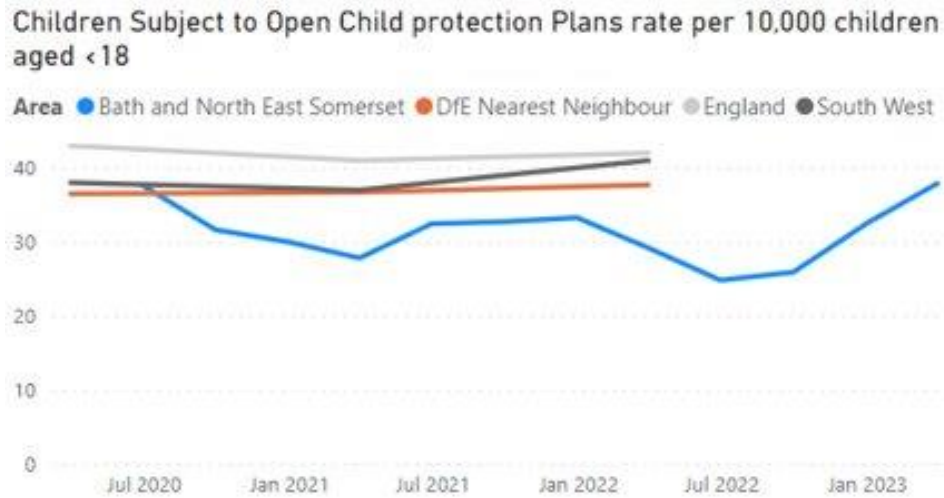
Schools and police remain the most common source of contacts for 22/23. 50% of contacts resulted in no further action (Q4, 22/23).



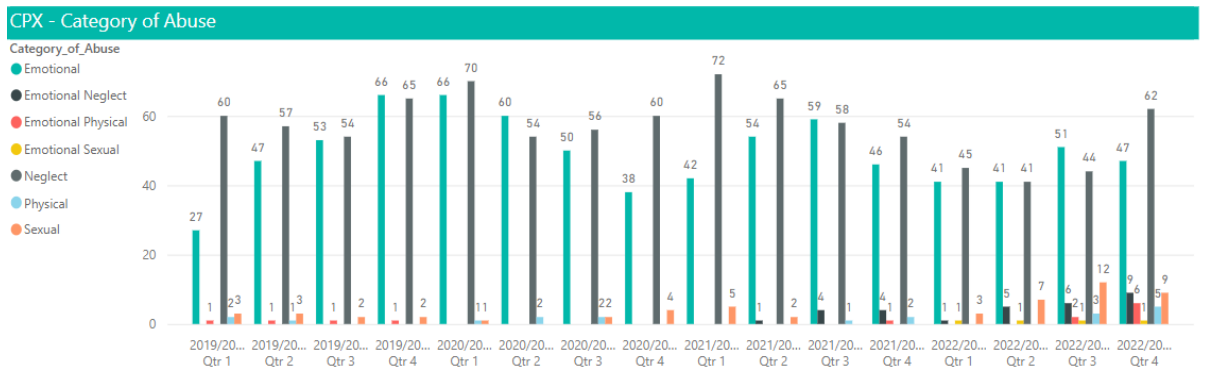
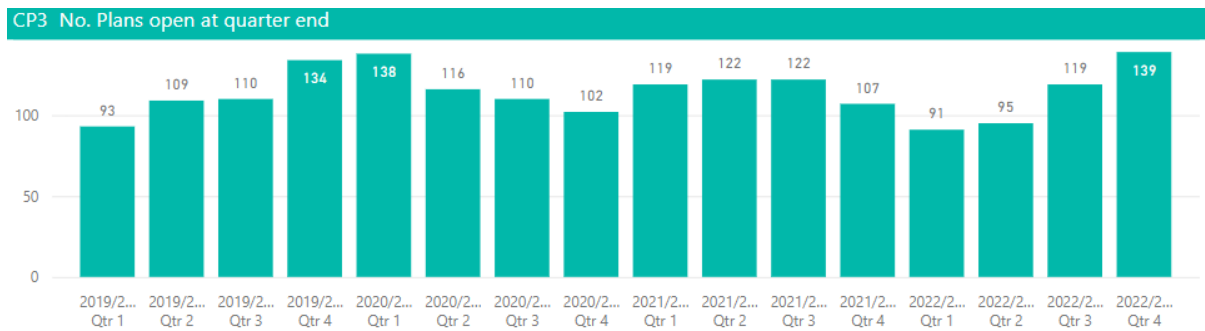
Assessment factors are captured at the point at which a child reaches the threshold for social care involvement. Multiple factors can be identified per case. Therefore, the chart presented relates to the number of children with each individual factor identified.

As has remained a consistent trend over time, **mental health, domestic abuse and substance misuse** for child or family are the most common factors recorded, with 50% of cases recording one or more of these factors. This remains consistent with the findings of the Munro review in 2011. Mental health related factors have increased consistently over time, affecting both children and parents/family.

### Child Protection Plans



Child Protection Plan rates are subject to fluctuation in part due to the relatively small cohort size. However, recent trends have moved rates in line with statistical neighbours.

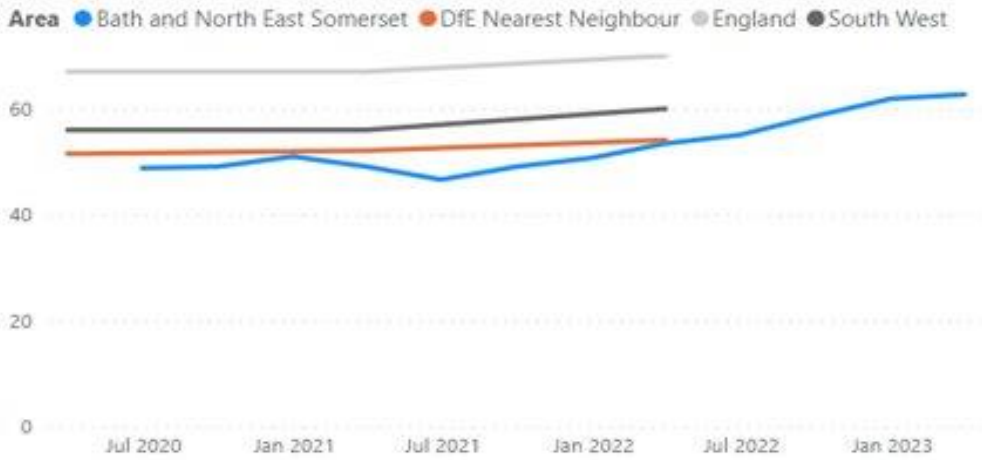


The rise in the child protection numbers reflects the increased complexity that families are presenting to Children’s Social Care

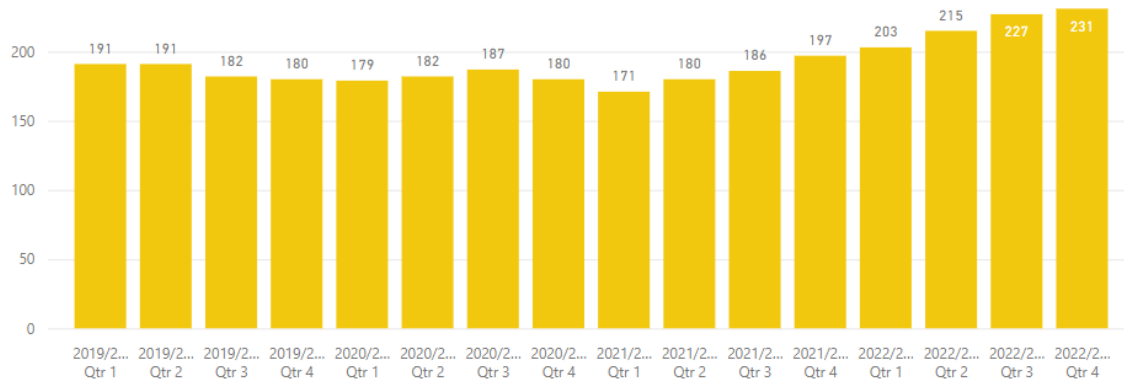
Emotional abuse and neglect have remained consistently the most notable category of need for children on child protection plans. These trends are in line with those noted nationally and from comparable local authorities.

### Children Looked After

Children Looked After rate per 10,000 children aged <18



LAC1 - Looked After Children at quarter end (n)



Looked After Children rates had remained stable for several years. However, pressures associated with the Covid-19 pandemic and lockdowns have increased the volume complexity of cases. More recent increases in numbers are associated with this complexity and an increase in unaccompanied asylum-seeking children, a pattern which is expected to be repeated nationally.

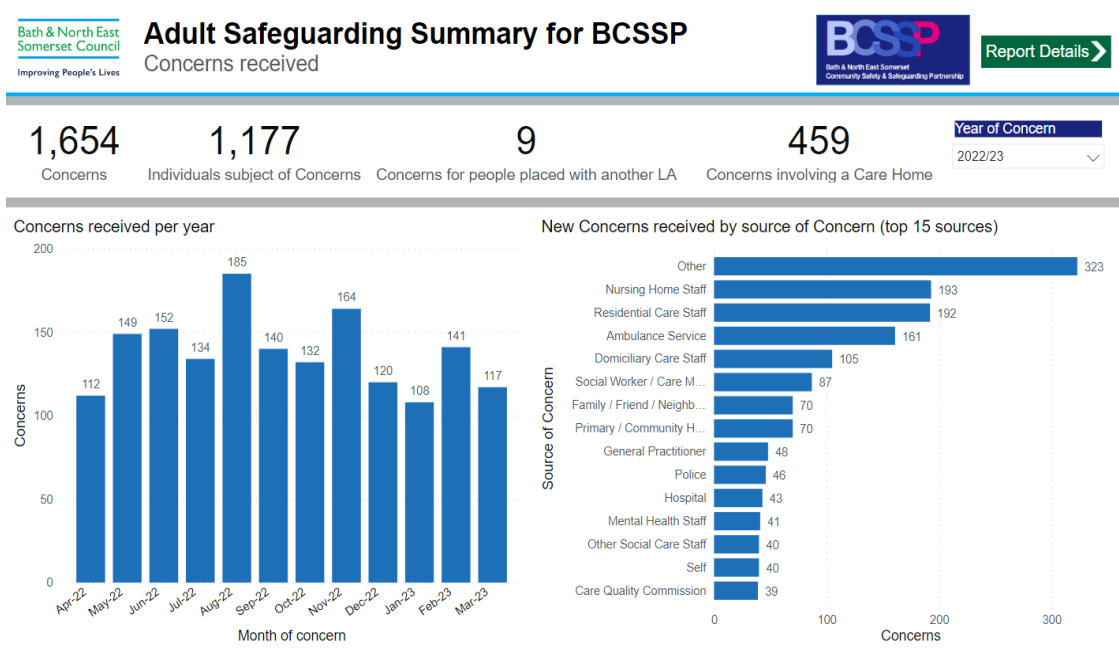
## 10.2 Adult Social Care Data

The analysis undertaken in this section has been produced for the purposes of providing information for the Partnership Board, for the period of Q1-Q4 of 2022-2023 (April 2022- March 2023).

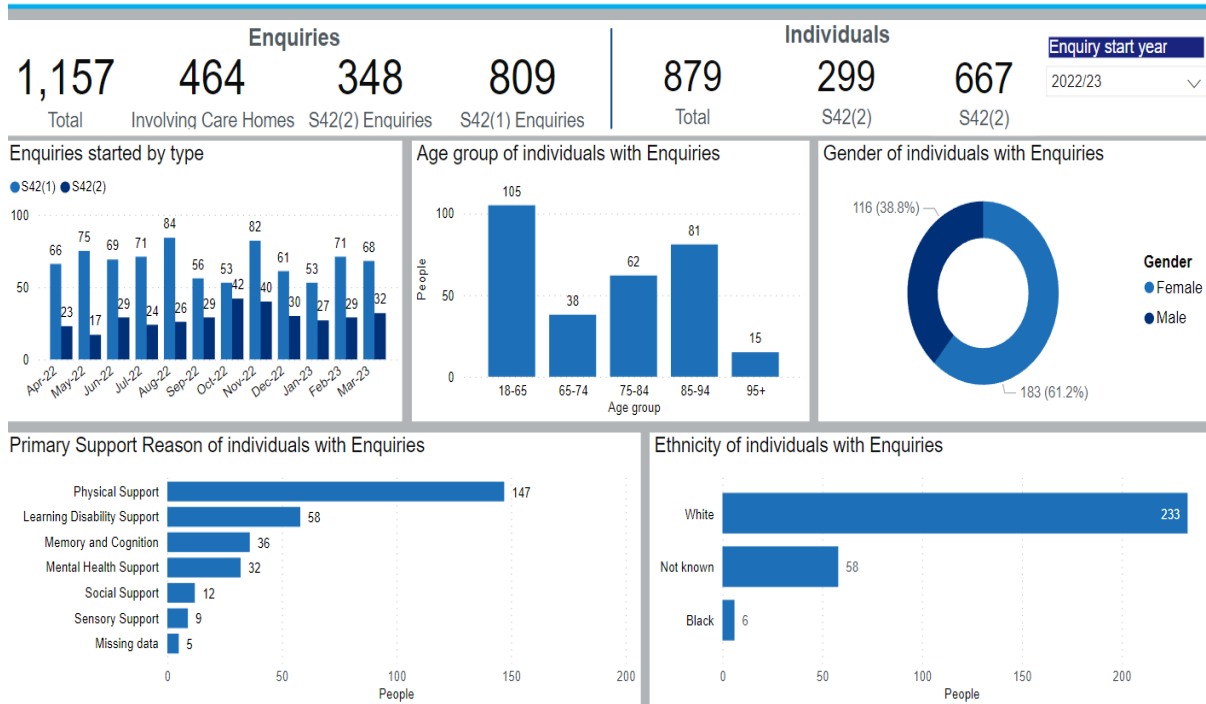
For 2022/23 the reporting is based on the number of safeguarding concerns raised with B&NES Council that met the Care Act description of a safeguarding concern [Reasonable cause to suspect the risk of abuse or neglect].

These are then described as S42 (1) and S42 (2) enquires. S42 refer to the Section of the Care Act that relates to safeguarding activity. S42 (1) concerns are concerns that fit the Care Act description, but alternative actions can be set, that will address the concern being raised, without a need for further enquiries. Actions are monitored by the Council Safeguarding and Quality Team and are not closed until assurance is received that all actions have been completed. A S42 (2) enquiry is an enquiry where; further enquires and actions are required. These enquiries ordinarily lead to a Safeguarding Planning Meeting, an enquiry report being recording and an action plan to reduce the risk to the person, developed.

### Concerns Received



During the reporting period April 2022 – March 2023, 1654 concerns were raised relating to 1171 people. In addition to this, there were also 618 referrals which were “screened out” before a threshold decision, as the concern did not relate to a safeguarding issue [Reasonable cause to suspect the risk of abuse or neglect]. This is a 61% increase in safeguarding alerts (from 1021 in 2021-22 to 1654 in 2022-23). The type of organisations, marginally reporting the highest number of concerns, are nursing homes. This is in comparison to last year being residential care settings. Reporting under ‘other’ continues to be high. As reported last year, the Local authority are continuing to review the data set and Liquid Logic (the council case management system), whereby consideration is being given to altering this option for 2023-2024.



Of the 1654 concerns, 348 have progressed to S42(2) enquiries. This is a conversion rate of 21% which is marginally lower than the reported 28% within last years' reporting. The reporting this year also shows the S42 (1) concerns which relate to concerns that fit the Care Act description, but where it is assessed that alternative actions can be set, that will address the concern without a need for further S42(2) enquiries. To date 809 concerns have been supported in this way. The remaining concerns received have not met the Care Act criteria and therefore have not required safeguarding actions. There have been 497 of these contacts received. The Safeguarding Team continue to monitor these referrals to see if there are organisations or types of issues that are reported that do not meet the Care Act criteria.

Primary Support Reason. There continues been an increase in the reported number of people with a physical disability, mirroring what was reported in last annual report. As part of the review of the data set and Liquid Logic, consideration around data captured relating to ethnicity, continues to be made, around trying to reduce the "no known" data.

Adults aged 18-65 continue to be the prevalent group, where enquires are being made, with enquires where the adult has been recorded as female, continue to be higher. As part of the review of the data set and Liquid Logic, consideration around data captured relating to gender, continues to be made.

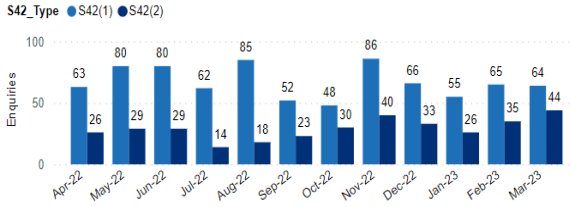
### Enquiries Ended

Of the enquiries closed during the year to date, the alleged person responsible continues to be reported as a social care and health staff member. It is thought that this correlates to the continued prevalence of care home concerns that are received and progress into the enquiries. Neglect continues to be the type of abuse most frequently identified during the safeguarding process.

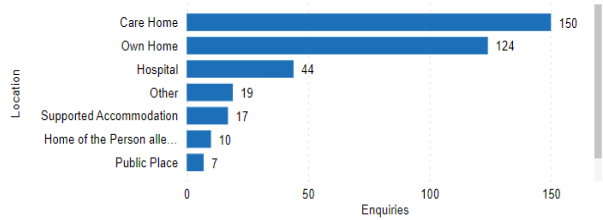
1,153 Closed Enquiries    347 S42(2) Enquiries    806 S42(1) Enquiries    893 Individuals with Enquiries    307 Individuals with S42(2)    661 Individuals with S42(1)

Enquiry end year  
2022/23

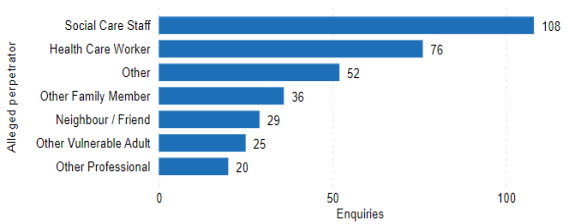
Enquiries ended per month



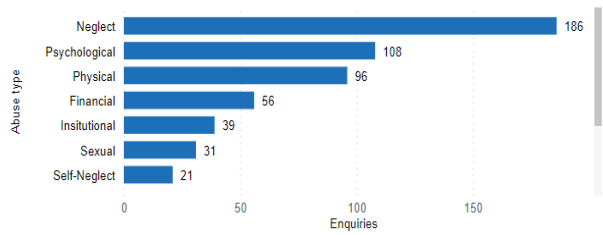
Enquiries by Location



Enquiries by Alleged perpetrator

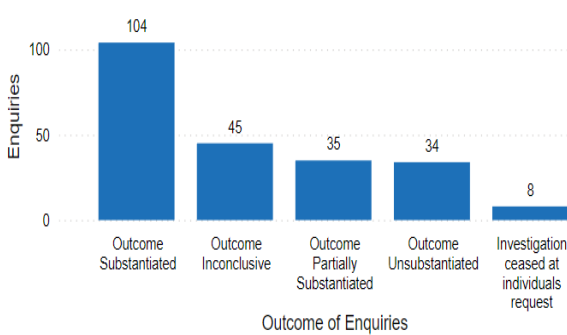


Enquiries by Abuse type

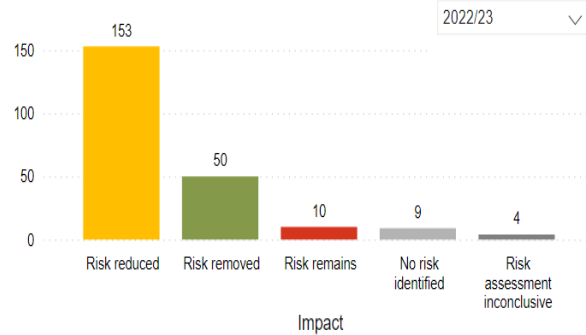


## Outcomes of Closed Section 42(2) Enquiries

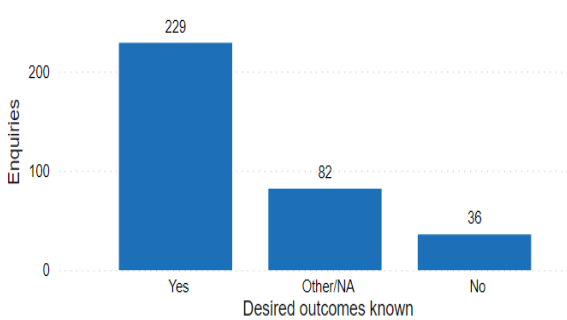
Outcome of Enquiries



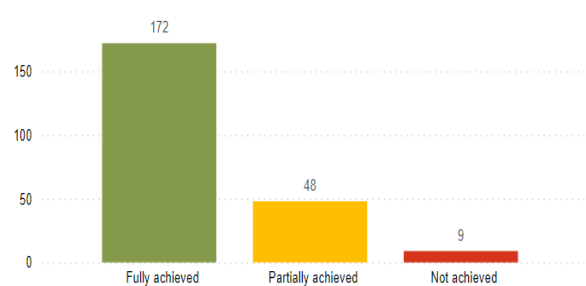
Impact on Risk



Were the desired outcomes of the adult at risk known?



Where the desired outcomes of the adult at risk were known, were they achieved?





Although we have seen a decrease in adults being asked and outcomes being expressed [from 70% in 2021-22 to 57% in 2022-23]. We have seen an increase in outcomes being fully achieved [from 71% in 2021-22 to 77% in 2022-23] Where the desired outcomes of the person are known, they said in 54% of enquiries that the outcomes had been fully achieved, 44% were partly achieved and 2% felt that their outcomes had not been achieved. We have seen an increase percentage in risk being reported to have been removed [17% in 2022-23 compared to 13% in 2021-22]. In 73% of enquiries the level of risk experienced by the person is reduced during the safeguarding process.

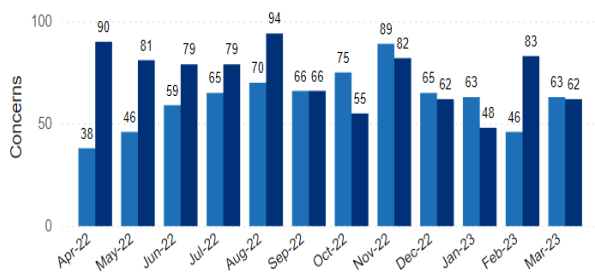
### Processing Performance

## Adult Safeguarding Summary for BCSSP

### Processing performance

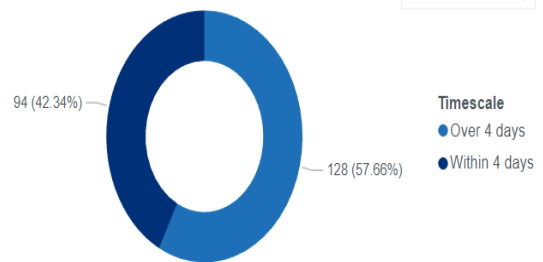
Decision timescales for new Concerns

Timescale ● Over 4 days ● Within 4 days



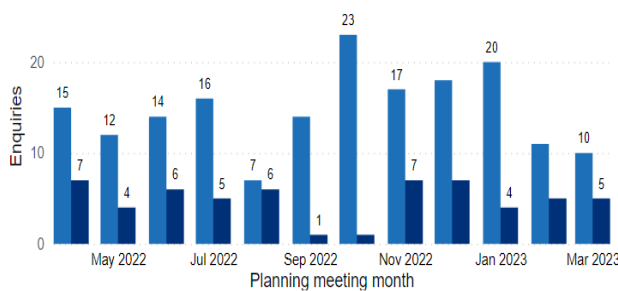
Decision timescales - overall rate

Decision year  
2022/23



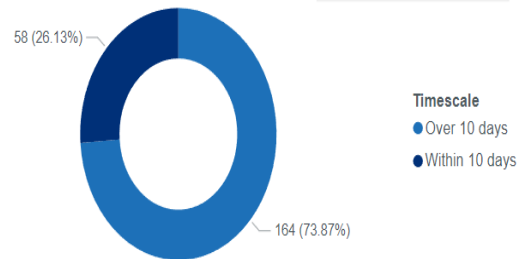
Planning meeting timescales for new S42(2) Enquiries

Timescale ● Over 10 days ● Within 10 days



Planning meeting timescales - overall rate

Planning meeting year  
2022/23



Although we have seen a drop from 100% of decisions being made within 4 days of the concern being raised to 42%, this is attributed to several factors. The increase in referrals, with no comparable increase in resources to manage this demand. And the fact that more “enquires” are being made earlier in the process, influencing the 7% reduced conversion rate figure, despite the increased number of referrals. The performance for planning meetings was previously reported at being 100%, but there were “a number of blanks” being reported. Whereby we anticipated it to be a “lower figure due to pressures in the social care teams”. We have worked hard in ensuring the data we provide is accurate. We continue to work towards these performance measures.

### 10.3 Avon & Somerset Constabulary Data

Missing Children	12 Month Rolling			
	Current	Previous	Chg	% Chg
Number of Missing Children	95	61	+34	+55.7%
Number of Missing Children Reports	202	92	110	119.6%
Number of Repeat Missing Children	48	39	+9	+23.1%
Number of Children Missing from Care	3	10	-7	-70.0%
Number of Repeat Children Missing from Care	1	4	-3	-75.0%

95 children were reported missing in Bath and North East Somerset in the last 12 months, rising by 34 children or by 55.7% compared with the previous 12 months. 48 of these children were reported missing repeatedly, 9 more children than were reported missing repeatedly in the previous 12 months. The number of missing children reports rose to 202 in the last 12 months compared with 110 in the previous 12 months, an increase of 119.6%, significantly above the 23.5% rise recorded across the force area as a whole.

By contrast, there were falls in both the number of children missing from care, falling to just 3 children in the last 12 months from 10 children in the previous 12 months, and the number of children going missing from care repeatedly, falling to just 1 child from 4 children.

Safety and Anti-Bullying	12 Month Rolling			
	Current	Previous	Chg	% Chg
Number of Child Suspects of Crimes	539	494	+45	+9.1%
Number of Domestic Abuse Incidents (Excluding Crimes)	1,048	1,116	-68	-6.1%
Number of Domestic Abuse Crimes	1,685	1,838	-153	-8.3%
Number of Domestic Abuse Crimes - Victim Age 16 - 17	35	30	+5	+16.7%
Number of Child Victims of Crimes	711	742	-31	-4.2%
Number of Child Victims of Race Hate Crimes	28	21	+7	+33.3%

The overall number of child victims of all crime types fell by 31 victims to 711 victims in the last 12 months, or by 4.2% compared with the previous 12 months. This fall contrasts with the 3.5% increase recorded across the force area as a whole. The number of child suspects of all crime types in B&NES in the last 12 months rose by 9.1% to 539 child suspects. This rise is well above the 2.7% increase recorded across the force area as a whole.

The number of Domestic Abuse Crimes with a victim aged 16 or 17 rose by 5 crimes in the last 12 months compared with the previous 12 months. The numbers recorded in B&NES are relatively small. However, the increase does contrast with the 7.7% fall recorded across the force area as whole.

The number of child victims of recorded Race Hate Crimes rose to 28 victims in the last 12 months from 21 victims in the previous 12 months. All forms of Hate Crime are subject to a high degree of under-reporting and it can reasonably be concluded that the actual levels are greater than the levels reported.

Child Sexual Exploitation	12 Month Rolling			
	Current	Previous	Chg	% Chg
Number of Child Sexual Exploitation Crimes	128	203	-75	-36.9%

Child Sexual Exploitation (CSE) is not a Home Office “offence type” and CSE offending is made up of a wide range of offences. A CSE flag is therefore attached to qualifying offences on police systems through an automated process. The number of Child Sexual Exploitation tagged offences in B&NES fell in the last 12 months, compared with the previous 12 months, by 36.9% or by 75 crimes to 128 crimes in total. This fall is 9.1 percentage points greater than the 27.8% fall recorded across the force area as a whole. Changes in this measure can be difficult to interpret, given that it measures both the effectiveness of activity to reveal this often “hidden” form of abuse and increase recognition and reporting, and the effectiveness of activity to prevent sexual exploitation, including repeat victimisation. This measure shows wide fluctuations in identified offences and the reductions reported here should not be interpreted as indicating a decline in the prevalence of CSE.

Child Protection	12 Month Rolling			
	Current	Previous	Chg	% Chg
Number of Child Protection Crime (excluding Domestic Abuse Crimes)	295	347	-52	-15.0%
Number of Child Protection Serious Sexual Offences	58	101	-43	-42.6%
Number of Non-Familial Sexual Crimes - Child Victim	100	143	-43	-30.1%
Number of Child Protection Crimes for Cruelty and Neglect of Children	60	75	-15	-20.0%

The “Child Protection Crimes (excluding Domestic Abuse Crimes)” are recorded crimes where there are child protection concerns (Child Abuse, Child Sexual Exploitation, Child Safeguarding), with this particular measure excluding Domestic Abuse Crimes where there are child protection concerns. The measure also includes peer-on-peer crimes where both the victim and suspect are children. The measure includes non-recent child abuse allegations, regardless of whether the victim was a child or adult at the time of reporting.

The data shows that the volume of recorded “Child Protection” crimes in Bath and North East Somerset fell by 15.0%, or by 52 crimes, in the last 12 months compared with the previous 12 months, falling to 295 crimes. This fall should be viewed in the context of sustained increases across the last decade and is greater than the 7.3% fall recorded across the force area as a whole. These falls are not the result of changes in recording practices and represent an actual decline in identified offences.

The fall in recorded offences in 2022/23, compared with 2021/22, is most likely to be attributable to the marked increase in volumes recorded in 2021/22 as children had increased contact with professionals following the removal of measures to slow the spread of COVID-19 within the population. Care should be taken not to conclude that the prevalence of child abuse has fallen in the last 12 months. Demand on the system from Child Abuse offences remains high and the long-term trend remains one of significant growth. The volume of reported Child Abuse offences is expected to continue to increase at a moderate to high rate.

Within the broad measure of “Child Protection” crimes, there were falls in recorded offences in all 3 of the offence groups. Recorded Child Protection Serious Sexual Offences showed the largest rate of reduction, falling by 42.6% (by 43 crimes), a larger rate of reduction than the 18.1% fall recorded across the force area as a whole. Non-familial sexual offences against children in B&NES fell by 43 crimes; this 30.1% fall is more marked than the 8.0% decrease recorded across the force area as a whole. Recorded child neglect offences fell by 15 crimes, representing a 20.0% fall, contrasting with the 7.6% increase across the force area as a whole.



### **Initial Child Protection Conferences**

The Police were invited to 23 Initial Child Protection Conferences (ICPCs) in the fourth quarter of 2022/23 and attended all 23. The police attendance rate at ICPCs in 2022/23 was 100% with all 87 ICPCs having been attended.

### **Use of Police Protection Powers**

Across the force area as a whole, the Constabulary used police protection powers under Section 46 of the Children Act 1989 on 318 occasions in the last 12 months, compared with 320 occasions in the previous 12 months. Whilst the volume remains high compared with historical levels, the data shows that the volume has stabilised when viewed at the level of the Force area as a whole.

The reporting of the use of police protection powers at local authority area level is subject to data quality issues whereby 17 records in the last 12 months were not linked to a beat code. By contrast with the force-wide picture, the number of occasions when the Constabulary used police protection powers linked to beat codes in Bath and North East Somerset rose to 44 in the last 12 months, compared with 11 occasions in the previous 12 months; an increase of 33 occasions or 300.0%. The Avon & Somerset Strategic Safeguarding Partnership established a Task and Finish Group to examine the possible causes of the increases in circumstances giving rise to the need to use these emergency powers and possible solutions. A baseline report from police data has been produced as part of this work and has been shared with the Directors of Children's Services.

### **Children in Custody**

In the last 12 months, 48 children and young people aged under 18, whose latest recorded address was in Bath and North East Somerset, were arrested and brought into custody, none of whom were charged and detained. Of these 48 children and young people, 11 were arrested and brought into custody in the fourth quarter of 2022/23.

Term	Meaning
ACEs	Adverse Childhood Experiences – traumatic events occurring before age 18. Includes all type of abuse and neglect, as well as parental mental illness, substance misuse, domestic violence.
ADASS	Association of Directors and Adult Social Services – a charity representing Directors and a leading body on social care issues.
AMHP	Approved Mental Health Professional – approved to carry out certain duties under the Mental Health Act
ASSSP	Avon and Somerset Strategic Safeguarding Partnership – Avon area multi-agency group focussed on children’s safeguarding
AWP	Avon & Wiltshire Mental Health Partnership NHS Trust
B&NES	Bath & North East Somerset
BCSSP	B&NES Community Safety & Safeguarding Partnership
BIA	Best Interest Assessor – ensure that decisions about patients/service users which affect their liberty are taken with reference to their human rights
BSW	B&NES, Swindon Wiltshire area
CAMHS	Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services
Care Act 2014	Sets out the duties of the local authority in relation to services that prevent people developing needs for care and support or delay people deteriorating such that they would need ongoing care and support.
Community Triggers	This is related to anti-social behaviour. Where anti-social behaviour has been reported and it is felt not enough action has been taken, a community trigger can be used, which means the case will be reviewed by those agencies involved.
Contextualised Safeguarding	An approach to understanding and responding to, young peoples experiences of significant harm beyond their families. It recognises that the different relationships that young people form in their neighbourhoods, schools and online can feature violence and abuse.
CP	Child Protection
CSE	Child Sexual Exploitation – a type of sexual abuse. When a child is exploited, they are given things like gifts, money, drugs, status in exchange for performing sexual activities

Term	Meaning
CSPR	Child Safeguarding Practice Review – should be considered for serious child safeguarding cases where abuse or neglect is known or suspected and the child has died or been seriously injured.
CQC	Care Quality Commission – regulates all health and social care services in England
Cuckooing	The practice of taking over the home of a vulnerable person in order to establish a base for illegal drug dealing, typically as part of a County Lines operation.
Dark Web	Is part of the Internet that isn't visible to search engines. It is used for keeping internet activity anonymous
DHR	Domestic Homicide Review – is conducted when someone aged 16 or over dies as a result of violence, abuse or neglect by a relative, household member or someone they have been in an intimate relationship with.
DHI	Developing Health & Independence
Discharge to Assess (D2A)	Where people do not require an acute hospital bed but may still require care services are provided with short term, funded support to be discharged to their own home or another community setting. Assessment for longer term care and support needs is then undertaken in the most appropriate setting and at the right time for the person.
Disrupt	Work to disrupt serious organised crime
DoLS	Deprivation of Liberty Safeguards – ensures people who cannot consent to their care arrangements in a care home or a hospital are protected if those arrangements deprive them of their liberty
ICB	Integrated Care Board
IDVA	Independent Domestic Violence Advocate – specialist professional who works with victims of domestic abuse

Term	Meaning
JTAI	Joint Targeted Area Inspection – of services for vulnerable children and young people
LADO	Local Authority Designated Officer – responsible for managing child protection allegations made against staff and volunteers who work with children and young people
LPS	Liberty Protection Safeguards – set to replace Deprivation of Liberty Safeguards
Local Safeguarding Adult Board	Assures itself that safeguarding practice is person centred and outcome focussed, working collaboratively to prevent abuse and neglect. Now part of the BCSSP
Local Safeguarding Children's Board	Assure itself that local work to safeguard and promote the welfare of children is effective and ensures the effectiveness of what member organisations do individually and together. Now part of the BCSSP
MARMM	Multi-agency Risk Management Meeting – convened regarding self-neglect and hoarding concerns
MARAC	Multi Agency Risk Assessment Conference – a victim focussed information sharing and risk management meeting attended by all key agencies
MASH	Multi Agency Safeguarding Hub – Information sharing where decision can be made more rapidly about whether a safeguarding intervention is required
MCA	Mental Capacity Act – designed to protect and empower people who may lack the mental capacity to make their own decisions about their care
Ofsted	Office for Standards in Education, Children's Services and Skills.
Prevent	Prevent is about safeguarding and supporting those vulnerable to radicalisation. It aims to stop people becoming terrorists or supporting terrorism
RAG	Responsible Authorities Group – the local strategic partnership delivery arm for community safety in B&NES, now part of the BCSSP
SAC Data	Safeguarding Adults Collection Data – NHS digital collate data nationally
SAR	Safeguarding Adult Review – may be carried out when an adult' dies or is seriously harmed as a result of abuse and/or neglect and there is concern that agencies could have worked together more effectively to protect the adult
SARI	Charitable organisation – Stand Against Racial Inequality – which provides training and advocacy services
SCR	Serious Case Review now replaced by Child Safeguarding Practice Review

Term	Meaning
SHEU	School Health Education Unit
SICC	Senior In Care Council – empowered to undertake projects to make the changes they want to see to improve the experiences of young people in care
Section 11 Audit (statutory)	A self-assessment audit designed to seek assurance that key people and agencies make arrangements to ensure their functions to safeguard and promote the welfare of children
Section 175 Audit (statutory)	A self-assessment audit that seeks assurance that education establishments make arrangements to ensure their functions are carried out with a view to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children
VAWG	Violence Against Women and Children (funded) project
VRU	Violence Reduction Unit – provides a local response to serious violence
WRAP	Workshop to Raise Awareness of Prevent



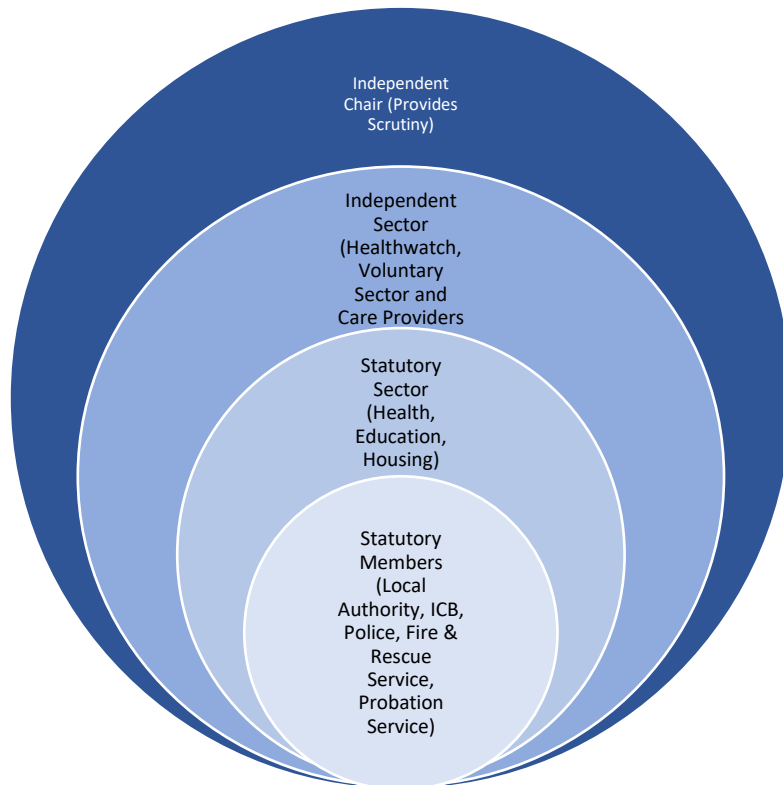
**Bath & North East Somerset Community  
Safety & Safeguarding Partnership**



**Annual Report  
Executive Summary  
2022-2023**

**Safeguarding is everyone's business.**

The BCSSP is made up of the five statutory agencies with responsibility for safeguarding and community safety; B&NES Council, Avon and Somerset Constabulary, the B&NES Swindon and Wiltshire Integrated Care Board, Avon Fire & Rescue Service, the Probation Service and other statutory organisations (e.g. Health and Care providers) as well as independent sector organisations (e.g. Voluntary groups) to enable us to work effectively and with joint purpose to protect children, adults, families and communities who most need our help.



Partners in B&NES continue to work together to identify and respond to the needs of children, adults at risk and communities, with the core purpose of:

- Safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children**
- Safeguarding adults with care and support needs**
- Protecting local communities from crime and helping people feel safer**
- Ensuring the effectiveness of what partners do both individually and together.**

## Our Statutory Duties

As the BCSSP was formed from merging three different statutory areas of work, we must ensure that our practice is compliant with the responsibilities set out in the legal frameworks for each of these areas.

### Community Safety:

Community Safety Partnerships (CSPs) aim to reduce crime and the fear of crime, address risk, threat and harm to victims and local communities and facilitate the empowerment and strengthening of communities through the delivery of local initiatives. CSPs are a statutory body required under the Crime and Disorder Act 1998 (and subsequent amendments). The 'relevant authorities' that form the CSPs are the Local Authority, Police, Health, Probation and the Fire and Rescue Service.

### Safeguarding Children:

Working Together to Safeguard Children 2018 sets out that the three safeguarding partners should agree on how to co-ordinate their safeguarding services, act as a strategic leadership group in supporting and engaging others and implement local and national learning, including from serious child safeguarding incidents.

### Safeguarding Adults:

The Care Act 2014 sets out a clear legal framework for how local authorities and other parts of the system should protect adults at risk of abuse or neglect. The overarching purpose is to help and safeguard adults with care and support needs.

## Partnership Structure

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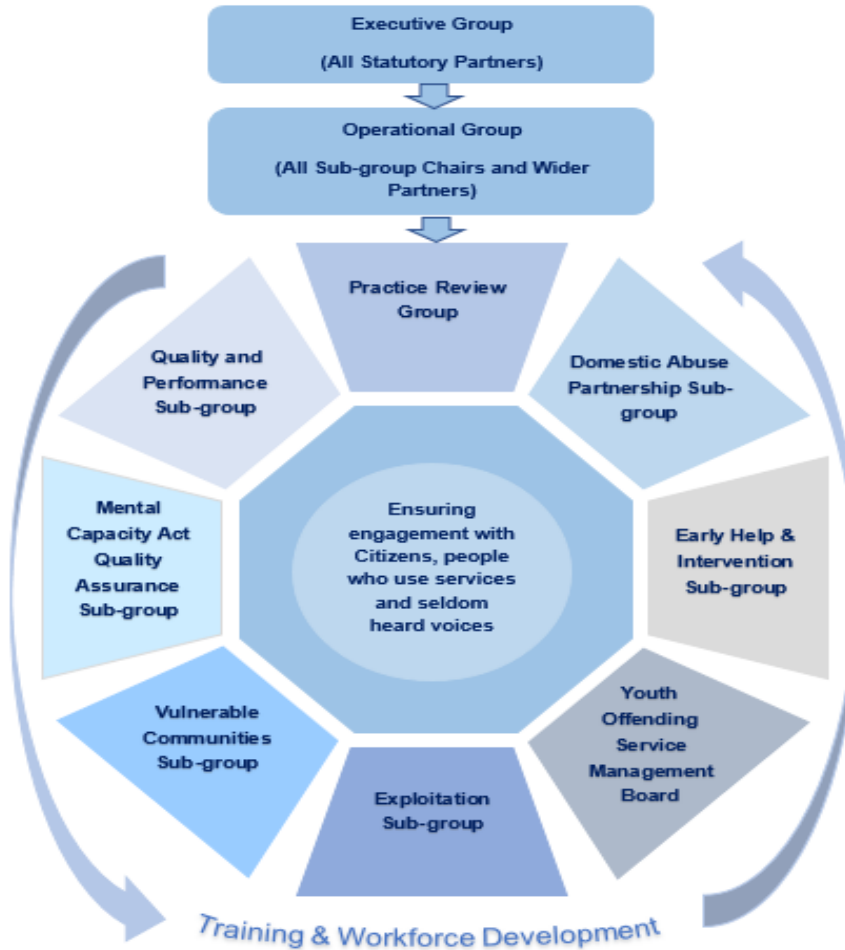
The Partnership is comprised of an Executive Group, Operational Group and nine thematic subgroups. Each subgroup develops its own workplan designed to progress the commitments within the BCSSP Strategic Plan. For 2022-2023, the BCSSP was working towards completing priorities identified in its 2021-2024 Strategic Plan. The full annual report reflects on the subgroup achievements and challenges.

Each subgroup has its own action plan linked to the strategic plan and reports quarterly to the Executive and Operational Groups on their progress towards the commitments set out in the strategic plan.

The plan has four commitments:

1. Develop a 'Think Family, Think Community' approach'
2. Learning from experience to improve how we work
3. Recognising the importance of prevention and early intervention
4. Providing executive leadership for an effective partnership

## Partnership Structure



## Multi-agency Learning and Practice Development

The BCSSP has published three Safeguarding Adult Review in this reporting period. The partnership has focussed on seeking assurance on previous identified learning and completion of reviews commissioned in this reporting period for publication in 2023-2024.

### Child Safeguarding Practice Reviews

The Practice Review Group has received four serious incident notifications and completed and submitted a rapid review to the National Panel for each. A Local Child Safeguarding Practice Review was recommended in three cases. For the fourth notification, the National Child Safeguarding Practice Review Panel agreed with our Practice Review Groups decisions, that the Rapid Review process had highlighted relevant learning, and nothing further could be gained from progressing to a full review.

### Safeguarding Adult Reviews

The BCSSP Safeguarding Adult Reviews are managed through the Practice Review Group. During the period covered by this report, five referrals for SARs were received, of which two met the SAR criteria, two were still under consideration at the time of writing this report and one was responded to via a learning briefing.

## **Domestic Homicide Reviews**

In the period covered by this report, the BCSSP has not completed any DHRs.

## **Quality Assurance**

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Statutory audits.

Section 11 of the Children Act 2004 places duties on a range of organisations, agencies and individuals to ensure their functions, and any services that they contract out to others, are discharged having regard to the need to safeguard and promote the welfare of children.

For 2022-2023, the five children's Partnerships across the Avon and Somerset region worked together to audit organisations working with children and families. The audits took place in a series of workshops and the findings and learning will be shared across the children's Partnerships. By working across the Avon and Somerset region, it was possible to hold workshops for 15 organisations and ensure that no organisations were approached more than once.

### **Section 175 Education Audit**

All educational establishments have a legal responsibility to safeguard and promote the welfare of children and young people.

Section 175 of the Education Act 2002 requires governing bodies of maintained schools and further education colleges to make arrangements to ensure that their functions are carried out with a view to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children.

The mechanism by which the BCSSP established assurance was through individual schools self-evaluating their performance under an agreed framework. An audit tool was circulated to all education establishments. With the newly formed Education Reference Group, the S175 Audit will be updated for next year and responses reviewed holistically through this group.

### **Safeguarding Adults Audit**

The BCSSP has worked regionally with the four other Partnerships of Bristol, South Gloucestershire, Somerset and North Somerset to develop one combined safeguarding adults' self-audit.

The combined safeguarding adults audit was proposed and agreed by the BCSSP Executive Group.

Whilst this audit is beneficial to the BCSSP in gaining oversight of member organisations and assurance on their community safety and safeguarding work, it is not a statutory audit and therefore not all organisation took part in the exercise.

## **Training and Workforce Development**

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During 2022-2023, the absence of a BCSSP trainer led to a smaller number of courses being offered on the Partnership programme, due to the reliance on external training providers and the cost implications of commissioning this provision. Consequently, priority was given to ensuring 'core' safeguarding courses were provided at regular intervals, alongside promoting other quality assured training events to the workforce. The continued absence of a trainer also led to a number of developmental pieces being paused, so it is positive that these projects will be re-established shortly.

From 1<sup>st</sup> April 2022 to 31<sup>st</sup> March 2023, the following has been achieved:

- 64 BCSSP training sessions taking place comprising of 26 different courses
- 1,269 Inter-agency training places made available
- 984 Inter-agency training places booked
- 818 Inter-agency training places attended\*
- 798 Professionals trained\*



- Approximately 70 % completed evaluations received and these are demonstrating impact.
- 5 Single agency training courses provided, training over 655 individuals.
- An additional 6 BCSSP Courses were cancelled across the financial year, 5 due to low numbers and 1 due to personal circumstances of the trainer.

\*Attendance figures outstanding for one course so this figure may increase by up to 75

### Evaluation & Quality Assurance

Training evaluation has evidenced:

- An increase in practitioner’s confidence in applying knowledge and skills back into practice, following training.
- Additional learning gained through attending a multi-agency event.
- A greater understanding of legislation, policy, procedure and guidance and how to apply this into practice.
- The training and trainer to be of high quality and beneficial in increasing delegates knowledge in the subject matter.

### Partnership Achievements

2022-2023 saw a return to a ‘new normal’ following the impact of the Coronavirus Pandemic, but already busy services are stretched to capacity. Following consultation with BCSSP partners via the subgroups, it was agreed that meetings would remain virtual as it reduced the impact of travel time and parking.

Within its previous Annual Report, the Partnership identified ten key priorities for 2022-2023:

What we said we would do	What we did
Develop a ‘Think Family, Think Community’ approach	Transitional safeguarding remains a focus and Children’s Social Care and Adult Social Care are working more closely, recognising that needs do not stop when a young person reaches the age of 18
	Continued work on participation and encouraged partners to share case studies
	Worked closely with partners providing community assurance following knife crime incidents
Learning from experience to improve how we work	Continued to receive feedback from Adults supported by the safeguarding process
	Promoted awareness of domestic abuse and the new DA Act. Through the Domestic Abuse Partnership, developed an action plan to ensure we aligned with statutory requirements
	Reviewed available programmes for perpetrators of domestic abuse and continue to look at commissioning
Recognising the importance of prevention and early intervention	Worked with safeguarding boards across the Avon & Somerset footprint to deliver Stop Adult Abuse Week webinars, promoting awareness of adult safeguarding
	Developed a number of new learning briefings on areas of concern and made them accessible on the BCSSP website
Providing executive leadership for an effective partnership	Recruited a new Independent Chair for the BCSSP following completion of tenure by the previous Chair.
	Commissioned a peer review from the Local Government Association (LGA) to conduct a review of the BCSSP structure and functionality
	Re-initiated the BCSSP newsletter, including a ‘spotlight’ section on current and emerging themes

These priorities will remain and the new strategic plan will be implemented in April 2024.

<b>Bath &amp; North East Somerset Council</b>		
<b>MEETING/ DECISION MAKER:</b>	<b>Children, Adults, Health and Wellbeing Policy Development &amp; Scrutiny Panel</b>	
<b>MEETING/ DECISION DATE:</b>	<b>13<sup>th</sup> November 2023</b>	<b>EXECUTIVE FORWARD PLAN REFERENCE:</b>
<b>TITLE:</b>	<b>Children’s Services Complaints and Representations Annual Report 2022 - 2023</b>	
<b>WARD:</b>	All	
<b>AN OPEN PUBLIC ITEM</b>		
<b>List of attachments to this report:</b>		
Children’s Services Complaints and Representations Annual Report 2022 - 2023		

**1 THE ISSUE**

- 1.1 This report provides the Panel with an overview of the operation of the statutory Complaints and Representations Procedure and the Corporate Complaints Procedure within Children’s Services.
- 1.2 It provides an analysis of all complaints received by the Service during 2022 – 2023.
- 1.3 The report also demonstrates how the management of the complaints and representations has provided the Service with learning which can be used to inform service improvement.

**2 RECOMMENDATION**

**The Panel is asked to note the content of the report.**

**3 THE REPORT**

- 3.1 Children’s Services received 134 complaints and 15 compliments between April 2022 and March 2023. Two complaints were referred to the Local Government and Social Care Ombudsman.
- 3.2 The report explains the type of complaint received, the response to the complaints and the actions taken by the Services to resolve the issue for the complainant and ensure learning is derived from the complaints and related feedback.

#### **4 STATUTORY CONSIDERATIONS**

The report provides assurance that the Council is meeting the regulatory standards set out in the Children Act 1989 Representations Procedure (England) Regulations 2006 for handling complaints, compliments and representations about Children's Services and demonstrates that the Service is being proactive where failings are identified.

#### **5 RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS (FINANCE, PROPERTY, PEOPLE)**

N/A

#### **6 RISK MANAGEMENT**

A risk assessment related to the issue and recommendations has been undertaken, in compliance with the Council's decision making risk management guidance.

#### **7 EQUALITIES**

An EIA has not been completed for this report as the report is to provide information only. However, the annual report notes that there is a need for improved monitoring, and this is identified as an area for service development in the coming year.

#### **8 CLIMATE CHANGE**

There are no direct impacts on climate change linked to the subject of this report. However, where appropriate complainants are signposted to on-line resources and if acceptable to the complainant communication is via email rather than letter, but this is not always possible or appropriate.

Complainants are always offered a virtual meeting as a first option in order to avoid unnecessary car journeys during complaint investigations.

#### **9 OTHER OPTIONS CONSIDERED**

None

#### **10 CONSULTATION**

None

<b>Contact person</b>	Sarah Watts, Complaints and Data Protection Team Manager <a href="mailto:Sarah_watts@bathnes.gov.uk">Sarah_watts@bathnes.gov.uk</a> 01225 477931
<b>Background papers</b>	None
<b>Please contact the report author if you need to access this report in an alternative format</b>	





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**Children's Services  
Complaints and Representations Procedure**

**Annual Report 2022 - 2023**

**Author: Sarah Watts  
Complaints and Data Protection Team Manager**

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## **1. Summary**

- 1.1 There is a duty on all local authorities to operate and maintain a complaints and representations procedure for children's social care services in accordance with Sections 24(D) and 26 of the Children Act 1989; the Children Act 1989 Representations Procedure (England) Regulations 2006; and, the accompanying statutory guidance, Getting the Best from Complaints.
- 1.2 The following report has been prepared in accordance with the above Regulations and statutory guidance and provides an analysis of compliments, complaints and representations received by Children's Services between 1<sup>st</sup> April 2022 and 31<sup>st</sup> March 2023. The report also considers emerging trends in complaints, the outcomes of the complaints and the learning derived by the services from the complaints, compliments and representations.
- 1.3 In addition to complaints about Children's Social Care, commonly referred to as 'statutory complaints' this report also considers complaints about the Young People's Prevention Service, the Children and Families Prevention Service and the Education, Inclusion and Children's Safeguarding Service which are dealt with under the Council's Corporate Complaints Procedure.
- 1.4 Complaints about schools are governed by separate legislation. All schools are required to have their own complaints procedures and this report does not therefore include information about school complaints.
- 1.5 Colleagues across Children's Services welcome all types of feedback and are committed to using it to improve practice and service delivery. During the year **67** complaints were processed under the Children's Social Care statutory complaints procedure, **67** were processed under the Council's Corporate Complaints Procedure and **2** new referrals were made to the Local Government and Social Care Ombudsman. In addition, **15** compliments were recorded.
- 1.6 The Complaints and Data Protection Team is also responsible for logging and monitoring enquiries from MPs and Councillors. During 2022 – 23, **37** enquiries for recorded. Three concerned Children's Social Care and the remainder were related to education and in particular the SEND Team and transport issues. Frequently the service will also be dealing with the same issue under the Complaints Procedure.

## **2. The Statutory and Corporate Complaints Procedures**

- 2.1 The statutory complaints procedure is a three-stage process which is described in Appendix 1. In addition to complaints, the local authority is also required to record and report on representations and compliments.

- **Complaint** – a complaint is defined as *an expression of dissatisfaction or disquiet in relation to an individual child or young person, which requires a response.*
  - **Representation** – a representation is *an enquiry or comment about the availability, delivery or nature of a service which is not a criticism*, for example, a child or young person can put forward ideas or proposals about the service they receive without having this framed as a complaint.
  - **Compliment** – a compliment is *positive feedback about a service or individual member of staff from a child or young person and their family or other agencies.*
- 2.2 The scope of the statutory complaints procedure is relatively limited and only covers certain aspects of the Childrens Social Care service, for example, it does not cover child protection matters including section 47 enquiries and conferences, Early Help, Section 7 and Section 37 court reports and assessment of foster carers.
- 2.3 Complaints about these areas of work are handled under the Council’s Corporate Complaints Procedure along with complaints about the Education and Inclusion Services such as the statutory SEND service, educational psychology, early years funding. The Corporate Complaints Procedure is a two stage procedure and more information can be found at: <https://beta.bathnes.gov.uk/make-complaint-about-other-council-services>
- 2.4 All complaints and representations are triaged by the Complaints and Data Protection Team and allocated to the appropriate procedure. Once this has happened, the complaint will be handled through that procedure until it has exhausted all stages or the complainant is satisfied their complaint has been resolved, the complaint cannot be transferred to a different procedure.

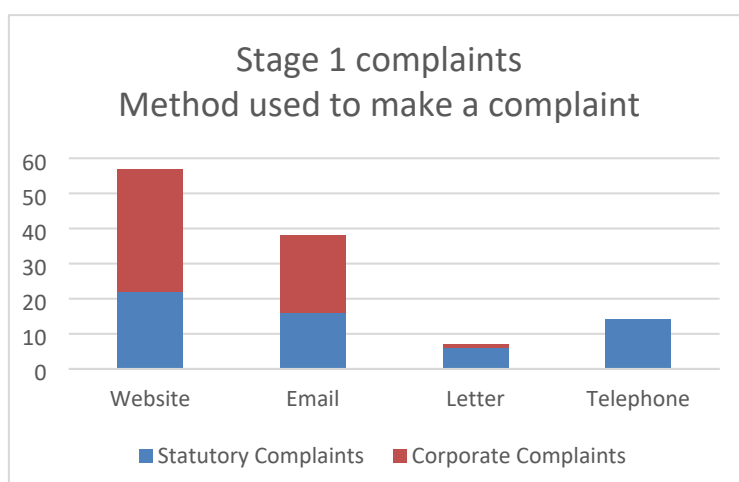
### 3. Accessing the procedure

- 3.1 Children’s Services welcomes feedback, including complaints and representations about its services and is committed to the following key principles of complaint handling:
- People who use services can tell the Council about their good and bad experiences of the service.
  - People who complain have their concerns resolved swiftly and, wherever possible, by the people who provide the service locally.
  - The procedure is a positive aid to inform and influence service improvements, not a negative process to apportion blame.
  - The Service has a ‘listening and learning culture’ wherever possible learning is fed back to people who use services – and fed into internal systems to drive improvement.

3.2 With this in mind, there are many ways available for young people, their families and carers to make a complaint or representation:

- Information is available on the Council's website and a complaint can be made using a simple on-line form.
- A link to information about the complaints procedure is included on the feedback form which is used by Children's Social Care and is promoted through a QR code on staff email addresses.
- Information about the complaints procedure is incorporated into the Single Assessment report form.
- A complaint can be made to an allocated worker and staff have an information sheet to share which explains the procedure.
- All looked after children have an opportunity to raise concerns with the Independent Reviewing Officer (IRO) at their regular review.

3.2 The move towards using the Council's website to make a complaint continues, particularly with Corporate Complaints. This helps the Complaints Team to triage the complaint quickly and accurately.



3.3 The majority of the complaints (71%) are made by a parent on behalf of, or in relation to, their child. Complaints were also received from foster carers and people in a formal caring role (6 complaints), grandparents (5 complaints) and other relatives such as aunts and uncles (6 complaints).

3.4 Of the 57 Stage 1 complaints made under the statutory procedure, 7 were made by a young person, 5 of these were made by a young person who is either in care or is care experienced. Two were made by young people who were not in receipt of a service from Children's Social Care.

3.5 Section 26A of the Children Act, 1989 requires the local authority to 'make arrangements for the provision of advocacy services to children or young people making or intending to make complaints under the Act'. 'Shout Out!' at Off the Record is commissioned to provide this service and the Complaints and Data Protection Team ensures information about advocacy is available to

all young people who contact about making a complaint if they are not already aware of it.

3.6 Three of the young people who were eligible for advocacy support made their complaint with the support of an advocate from Shout Out.

3.7 Advocacy is not available to parents and carers in the same way although there are organisations such as Citizens Advice Bureau which can offer some support.

3.8 The Council has set out its commitment to responding to the concerns of young people in care or who are care experienced in the Pledge which has been endorsed by the Council's Corporate Parenting Group and the In Care Council helps to monitor it. It says:

- ✓ We will work hard to sort out any problems or worries that you have
- ✓ If we can't do what you ask, we will explain the reasons why
- ✓ We will make sure you know how to get an independent advocate – that's someone who will listen to you and work with you to get things changed
- ✓ We will make sure you have all the information you need to make a complaint and we promise to always take your complaints seriously
- ✓ You can contact your IRO if you are worried or don't feel listened to, they will try to help and can support you should you wish to make a complaint

3.9 Information available indicates that for statutory complaints:

- Gender Identity - 71% of complainants were female and 29% were male. This is in line with previous years.
- Ethnicity - Two people identified themselves as Caribbean, one person as African and one person as 'Any other'. Where the information is known all other complainants were recorded as White British.
- One person recorded that they have a disability.
- 70% of complainants fell in the age bracket of 25 to 44 years. 10% of complaints were made by someone under the age of 25 and 20% by someone 45 years or older.

3.10 Providing improved monitoring information is an area for development.

#### **4. Complaints – analysis of the data**

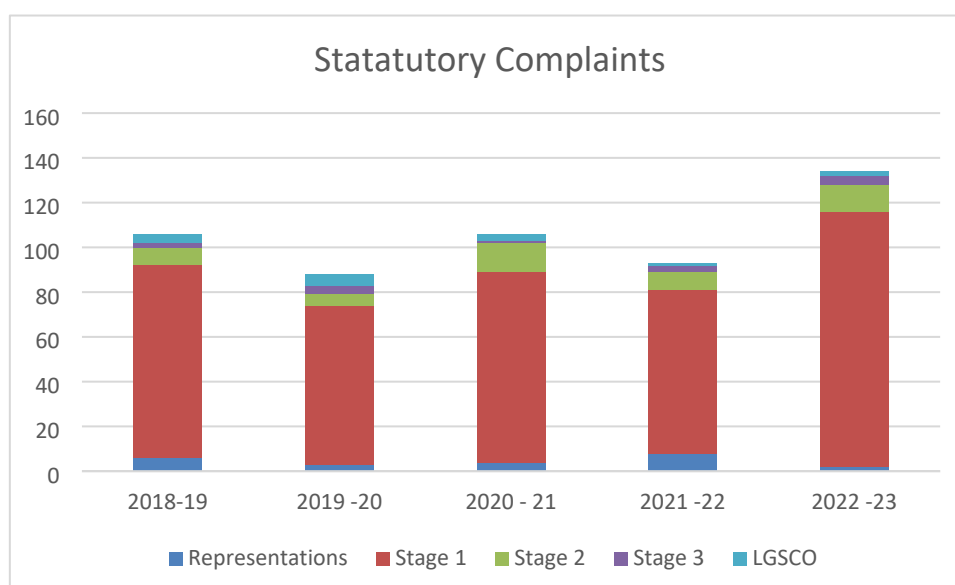
4.1 To provide some context to the number of complaints received in 2022/2023, Children's Social Care received 885 referrals per 10,000 children and young people in 2021/22. There were 102 children subject to a Child Protection Plan on 31 March 2022 and 196 were children looked after on this date. 1,967 children and young people with an Education, Health and Care Plan (EHC Plan) in January 2023.



4.2 The table below provides the number of complaints received and closed during 2022 – 23.

	Carried over 2021 - 22	Received 2022 - 23	Resolved	Outside Scope	Not pursued	Carried forward 2023 - 24
<b>Representation</b>	0	2	1	0	1	0
<b>Stage 1</b> (Statutory Procedure)	5	57	34	14	6	8
<b>Stage 1</b> (Corporate Procedure)	0	57	42	8	0	7
<b>Stage 2</b> (Statutory Procedure)	2	10	9	0	0	3
<b>Stage 2</b> (Corporate Procedure)	0	2	2	0	0	0
<b>Stage 3</b> (Statutory Procedure only)	1	4	3	0	0	2
<b>Referral to Ombudsman</b>	3	2	5	0	0	0
<b>Total</b>	<b>11</b>	<b>134</b>	<b>96</b>	<b>22</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>20</b>

#### 4.3 Comparison with previous years



4.4 The total number of complaints received is showing a significant increase from previous years. The number of Stage 1 complaints about Children's Social Care have not increased significantly year on year; however, there has been an increase in the number of complaints about the SEND Service from 17 in the 2 previous years to 33 Stage 1 complaints in 2022/23.

4.5 Escalation of complaints from Stage 1 to Stage 2 has remained at a similar level for the past 3 years. Further information about Stage 2 complaints can be found in Section 5.

4.6 The table below provides a breakdown of the number of complaints received by each Team. A full list of the Teams is given at Appendix 2.

Team	Rep	Stage 1	Stage 2	Stage 3	LGSCO
Admissions & Transport		2			
Attendance & Welfare		2			1
Connecting Families		2			
Safeguarding & QA		7			
SEND		33	2		1
SEND Transport		3			
Children in Care	1	18	1		
DCT		9	4	3	
FPT		1			
FST (1, 2 & 3)		26	2	1	
Triage		7			
YOS		1			
Other	1	3	1		

4.7 As mentioned above the number of complaints to the statutory SEND Service has increased significantly during the year. The issues raised include concern about the delay in issuing an assessment decision, disagreement with the decision following an EHC Needs Assessment, delay in issuing an EHC Plan, disagreement about provision named in the Plan, lack of suitable provision and the quality of provision.

4.8 Where a parent is dissatisfied with the initial Stage 1 response to their complaint, under the Corporate Complaints Procedure they can request clarification from the service and a second response is provided. This process has been used to successfully resolve the majority of complaints and only 2 were escalated to Stage 2 of the procedure.

4.9 Within Children's Social Care the largest increase in complaints is against the Children in Care Team although this has been gradual over recent years; there were 12 complaints in 2021 – 22 compared with 18 in the current year. There are no new themes emerging from these complaints and the increase in numbers is likely to be partly due to the number of young people who have made a complaint in the last couple of years. It is seen as a positive that they have felt able to raise their concerns in this way.

4.10 Attempts have been made to compare the number of complaints received by Bath and North East Somerset with its comparator authorities. Unfortunately, the figures for these authorities are not available.

4.11 The statutory guidance requires the local authority to monitor complaints against standard categories to identify the reason for the complaint. The table below shows how many complaints were upheld against each of these categories (Statutory complaints in Children’s Social Care only).

Category	Number of Stage 1 complaints	% of Stage 1 complaints	Upheld (UH) or Partially Upheld (PUH)	% of complaints Received UH or PUH by category
<b>Assessment, care management or review</b> <i>includes delays in completing an assessment, errors and perceived bias in an assessment</i>	1	2%	1	100%
<b>Attitude or behaviour of staff</b> <i>includes issues with poor communication</i>	10	16%	5	50%
<b>Concern about appropriateness of service</b> <i>includes dispute about whether the service should be involved with the family</i>	7	11%	0	0%
<b>Concern about quality of the service</b> <i>Where the service did not meet service user expectations</i>	29	46%	5	17%
<b>Delay in decision making or provision of a service</b>	1	2%	1	100%
<b>Unwelcome or disputed decision</b>	14	23%	2	2%
<b>Total</b>	62	100%	14	23%

4.12 The percentage of complaints in each category is consistent with previous years. 46% of complaints were recorded under the category of ‘Concern about the quality of service’. These complaints tend to be more complex, cover several issues and can be harder to resolve. Only 17% were upheld or partially upheld. 20% of these complaints were escalated to Stage 2.

4.13 23% of all complaints were either upheld or partially upheld. This figure is lower than previous years. Examples of complaints in the three categories with the highest number of complaints are given below.

**Complaint recorded under the category of Unwelcome or disputed decision** – a parent complained about the decision to hold a strategy discussion in respect of their child and then not inform them until after it had taken place. The parent believes this is against the agreed procedure.

**Response** – the complaint was partially upheld. It was accepted that there was no clear record or rationale for the decision not to inform the parent. The reasons for the decisions should have been explained to the parent at a later date.

**Complaint recorded under Concern about Quality of Service** – a grandparent complained about confusion caused by changes to contact arrangements with their granddaughter, the lack of interest from Children’s Social Care to support her relationship with their granddaughter and proposals for a possible move to a new placement.

**Response** – the complaint was not upheld and the manager reiterated how

**Complaint recorded under Attitude and Behaviour of Staff** – a parent complained that a social worker had been rude to their family at a meeting held in front of school staff and no minutes of the meeting were shared afterwards.

**Response** – the parent received an apology for social worker’s manner at the meeting. The manager confirmed that the incident was being taken seriously and a new social worker would be allocated.

## 5. Learning from complaints

- 5.1 The main purpose of the complaints procedure is to give the service an opportunity to put things right for the individual complainant wherever possible. The statutory guidance also states that all local authorities should provide a system for:
- The dissemination of learning from complaints to line managers;
  - The use of the complaints procedure as a measure of performance and means of quality control; and
  - Information derived from complaints to contribute to practice development, commissioning and service planning.

To achieve this there are processes in place to collate the learning at the conclusion of each stage of the procedure and disseminate this through regular meetings such as the Service Improvement Board. Learning does not always come from complaints which have been upheld; improvements can also be identified where the basis of the complaint is not upheld.

### Stage 1 complaints

- 5.2 Examples of improvements identified include:
- A training session to be held for the Team to consider plans to manage contact sessions where adoption is the care plan and the sessions are particularly emotionally difficult.
  - The guidelines for social workers when placing a child into foster care to be reviewed in the light of a complaint from a young person who shared the impact this situation had on him when he was younger.

### Stage 2 complaint investigations

- 5.3 During 2022 - 23, 10 requests for a Stage 2 complaint investigation under the statutory procedure were received. This is higher than the service used to receive but is in line with the previous 2 years. Two investigations were continuing from the previous year. Nine investigations were concluded.
- 5.4 Stage 2 investigations can generate a number of actions for the service and detailed action plans are developed to monitor progress. Many of the actions relate specifically to the child or young person or their family; however, examples of actions which provide wider learning for the service include:
- Managers and staff will continue to explore the issue of 'unconscious bias'
  - The Service will ensure that staff are fully aware of the procedures for the distribution of Child Protection Care Conference minutes.
  - The Service will ensure that additional training is available to staff on confidentiality, the law and BANES policy on data protection and that staff understand the process to follow in the event of a data breach.
- 5.5 In the same period, two requests for a Stage 2 Review under the Corporate Complaints Procedure were made. One complaint was not upheld and one was partially upheld. Both complainants were given information about making a complaint to the Local Government and Social Care Ombudsman.

### **Stage 3 Review Panel**

- 5.6 Three Stage 3 Review Panels were held during the year. Two further Review Panels were requested and arranged for 2023 -24.
- 5.7 The Review Panel can only consider complaints which were not upheld at Stage 2. The Panel does not re-investigate the complaint but makes recommendations to assist with the resolution of the complaint and learning for the Service.
- 5.8 Examples of recommendations made by the Review Panels include:
- Training to be made available to social workers to ensure they have an effective understanding of Pathway Planning.
  - Social workers to be aware that all children and young people in care have a right to advocacy support. This does not depend on where they live.
  - Advocates should be informed of meetings in a timely way.
  - The Commissioning Team to ensure they record all complaints about external agencies.
  - All children and young people in care to have access to the Emergency Duty Team.
  - Training to be made available to social workers on Equality, Diversity and Inclusion. This was a recommendation made by two of the Review Panels.

## **6. Complaints to the Local Government Ombudsman (LGSCO)**

6.1 Three complaints to the Ombudsman which were outstanding from the previous year were concluded during the year. Two further referrals were made during 2022 – 23. One was concluded and the other carried forward to 2023 – 24. The table below records the findings of the Ombudsman.

Summary of Complaint	Final Ombudsman decision
Miss D and Mr E complained about the Council's statutory complaint investigation. They said the Council did not take their complaint seriously or deal with it professionally. Miss D and Mr E said this left them distressed and without a financial remedy	The Council was at fault for a short delay in stage two of its complaint investigation. We do not consider this caused Miss D and Mr E significant injustice.  <b>Fault with no injustice</b>
Mr X complained about the outcome of his home to school transport appeal for his daughter. He said the panel did not properly consider all the information he provided when it denied his request for a taxi as school transport for his daughter. Mr X further complained the Council ignored his communication about the same matter.	There was fault in the Council's record keeping but this did not cause Mr X an injustice as it did not affect the outcome of the appeal.  <b>Fault with no injustice</b>
The complaint is about the Council's decision to carry out a child protection investigation, after contact from the complainant's employer. Ms X says the investigation was flawed and the report contained opinion and unevidenced statements.	The Ombudsman upholds the complaint, because of several administrative faults. We have asked the Council to apologise. But the faults did not affect the conclusions of the social worker's report, or the decision to start a child protection plan.  <b>Upheld</b>
The complainant complained the Council had failed to ensure her daughter (Y) received the Speech and Language Therapy (SALT) contained in her Education Health and Care Plan (EHCP)	There was no fault in how the Council assessed Ms X's daughter for autism and speech and language provisions for her Education, Health and Care Plan. Nor was there any fault in how it ensured these provisions were being delivered by the education provider.  <b>No fault</b>

6.2 The Ombudsman did not request any remedial action by Children's Services on any of the complaints.

6.3 The Ombudsman has launched an interactive map on its website with data about the annual performance of each council <https://www.lgo.org.uk/your-councils-performance/bath-and-north-east-somerset-council/statistics>

## 7. Compliments

- 7.1 Compliments are a very important way of reflecting good practice and provide valuable information which is used alongside complaints data to identify where the strengths and weaknesses of the service are. A total of 15 compliments were recorded during the year from children, young people and their families and colleagues working in partner agencies. This is far lower than in previous years and Teams are encouraged to continue to send through their compliments.
- 7.2 The Teams receiving the compliments were:
- The Administration Team – 2 compliments  
 Care Experienced Team - 4 compliments  
 Child in Care Team – 1 compliment  
 Connecting Families – 2 compliments  
 Disabled Children’s Team – 6 compliments
- 7.3 The table below captures examples of the compliments received. These compliments have been selected to show the range of feedback received. There are many more that could have been included.

<p>From the parent to her son’s social worker in DCT.</p>	<p>S has been a rock to me, allowing me to not feel I am failing as a mum. I have, with my family, tried our very best to care for C without any outside agencies. Now that C is older, stronger, with some behavioural challenges, S has been amazing in her support, advice and guidance on how best support C and our family. She keeps me updated on processes and checks in regularly with me and how C is, whether positive or negative. She is always at the end of the phone should there be a problem and will inform me when she is available should I need to contact her. What is great about Stacey is that she listens and I feel I am listened to and taken seriously without any judgement.</p>
<p>From the Chair of the Channel Panel to the minute taker</p>	<p>These minutes are extremely prompt. They are also very good. I understand it is largely a difficult and thankless task. What you’re doing is the standard that other Channel minutes should be achieving.</p>
<p>From a parent to her children’s social worker in the Children in Care Team</p>	<p><i>K shared that she feels she has a strong and positive relationship with S and feels she can trust her to keep her up to date about the needs and experiences of her children. She feels that communication is clear and timely and that as a result she feels confident about the service and communication and advocacy her children will also be getting which feels really positive to her’.</i></p>

<p>From young people in the Care Experience Council to a worker in the Care Experienced Team.</p>	<p>I just wanted to give a shout out to you from some of our young adults in the CEC. Your name is often mentioned in sessions, with the group referencing your dedicated and determined approach! They really value your style of working and say that it makes all the difference 'because you actually get stuff done'.</p>
<p>From a parent to the Team Manager of the Children in Care Team</p>	<p>I'm not sure if this is the best place to write to about this as it's where I'd normally log a complaint but I wanted to share a really positive experience I've had with the LA today and hopefully it will get to the right person.</p> <p>An unexpected issue was raised around lunch time today that could have impacted my face to face contact with one of my children next week. I was unable to reach my sw or her manager but managed to speak with the Team Manager.</p> <p>J helped me to get the issue sorted and even went out of her way to bring me lateral flow tests to ensure my parents and I each had enough to take one each day before the visit as requested by the placement</p> <p>I feel that this was above and beyond what would be expected and am extremely thankful that J took the time to do this.</p> <p>I am thankful that I can head into Christmas without the worry that I may not be able to see my daughter.</p>

## 8. Complaint handling and monitoring

### Response to Stage 1 complaints

- 8.1 Compliance with timescales is carefully monitored in recognition of the need to deal with complaints as swiftly as possible.
- 8.2 **Statutory complaints** – the timescale for a response is 10 working days. This can be extended to 20 working days when an advocate is needed, or the complaint is complex. Due to the increased complexity of many complaints and the difficulty managers have in addressing the issues satisfactorily in 10 working days, the timescale is now extended to 20 working days from the outset for many complaints.



- 8.3 34 complaint responses were issued during the year:
- Within 10 working days: 5 complaints (100% within agreed timescale)
  - Within 20 working days: 14 complaints (100% within agreed timescale)
  - In excess of 20 working days: 15 complaints (not within agreed timescale)

8.4 The Complaints and Data Protection Team work closely with managers to avoid unnecessary delay and keeps the complainant informed of timescales. Three complaints responses which fell outside the timescale were delayed while the manager arranged to meet with the complainant.

8.5 **Corporate Complaints** - a response should be provided in 15 working days.

42 responses were issued during the year

Within 15 working days: 22 complaints (52% of responses)

In excess of 15 working days: 20 complaints (48% of responses)

### **Response to Stage 2 complaints**

8.6 **Statutory complaints** - The response to a Stage 2 complaint should be provided within 25 working days from the date the complaint is agreed with the complainant. This timescale is very challenging as the complaints are complex and the time needed for file reading and interviewing staff is considerable. The timescale can be extended up to a maximum of 65 working days with the agreement of the complainant and this is required with most investigations.

8.7 Of the 9 investigations completed, two investigations met the 65 working day timescale. It took an average of 89 working days to complete all the investigations. The Complaints Manager continues to work with the Investigating Officer and Independent Person to manage their time effectively during the investigation but there are many factors which contribute to the delays which are outside the control of the Investigating Team. Complainants are also returning to ask to meet in person rather than online which is a more efficient use of time.

8.8 Corporate Complaints – the Stage 2 process is managed by the Corporate Complaints Team and is reported on separately.

### **Response to Stage 3 complaints**

8.9 **Statutory Complaints only** - A Stage 3 Review Panel should be held within 30 working days of the request being received. Two Panels were held within this timescale. The third Panel was arranged to accommodate the complainant's commitments.

## **9. An overview of the work of the Complaints and Data Protection Team**

- 9.1 **The Complaints and Data Protection Team Manager** manages the complaints and data protection service for Children’s Services, Adult Social Care and Public Health and has two Information Governance Officers in the Team. One supporting the Data Protection service and the other the Complaints Service.
- 9.2 **The data protection service** includes processing Subject Access Requests under the Data Protection Act 2018, responding to requests from the police under a joint information sharing protocol and requests from other local authorities and agencies for disclosure of records. The Team also works Data Protection Team on information security issues (data breaches).
- 9.3 **Membership of external groups:** The Complaints and Data Protection Team Manager is the Vice Chair of the South West Region Complaints Managers Group. She is also currently co-managing the Register of Independent Investigators and Stage 3 Panel Members (South West) with South Gloucestershire Council. This Register was set up to ensure that the Council has access to appropriately appointed and trained independent investigators and Stage 3 Panel Members. The Group holds annual Network Meetings to support the development of Register Members in the independent roles.
- 9.4 **Development of the Service; the objectives for the coming year**

- **Continue to work with managers to improve the response times for complaints at Stage 1 whilst maintaining the quality of the response.**

*A delayed or poorly written response will increase the possibility of escalation to Stage 2.*

*Emphasis is now placed on the manager speaking with the complainant as soon as they receive the complaint to ensure they understand the complaint and the outcomes being sought. Writing directly to the complainant without a speaking to them first is discouraged particularly if the complainant is a young person.*

- **Continue to support managers with the handling of complaints through individual support sessions and attendance at meetings to share good practice and provide feedback.**

*Delivering training sessions to managers and staff is currently being explored. This could be face to face or through an e-learning package.*

- Continue to develop the mechanism for capturing and disseminating the learning from complaints through the use of action plans.

*This work is support by the Service Improvement Board and will continue through the year. The intention is to routinely share the action plan and outcomes with the complainant following a Stage 2 investigation or Stage 3 Review Panel.*

- Review the collection of equalities monitoring data.

*This work will continue during 2023 – 24.*

- Continue to develop the work started recently to offer a Complaint Investigation Service for Schools and Multi-Academy Trusts. This work is being done in collaboration with One West Professional Services.

*The work is in its infancy but offers a professional complaint investigation service using members of the South West Register of Independent People.*

- Participate in the introduction of the Joint Complaint Handling Code which has been issued by the Local Government and Social Care Ombudsman and the Housing Services Ombudsman.

*The new Code is due to be implemented in April 2024 and will require changes to the procedure for handling Corporate Complaints. It will not effect the statutory complaints procedure.*

Sarah Watts  
Complaints and Data Protection Team Manager  
November 2023

## **Appendix 1 - Summary of the statutory Complaints Procedure**

The statutory complaints procedure is aimed primarily at providing a child or young person who is looked after, a care leaver or a child in need the opportunity to make a complaint to Children's Social Care. In addition, a parent with parental responsibility, a foster carer, a special guardian and prospective adopters can use the procedure.

An adult can make a complaint on behalf of, or in relation to, a child or young person but the local authority must be satisfied they are suitable to act on behalf of the child or young person and have sufficient interest in the child's welfare.

### **Stage One – Local Resolution**

Stage 1 complaints are investigated and responded to by the manager of the team complained about. The manager responding to the complaint is encouraged to speak with the complainant to hear their concerns first hand and identify ways of resolving the complaint as swiftly as possible.

This is followed by a written response from the manager within 10 working days. The timescale can be extended to 20 working days where the complaint is complex, or input is needed from an advocate or other agency.

If the complainant is not satisfied with the response, they have 20 working days in which to request a Stage 2 investigation.

There are a small number of complaints where the informal approach at Stage 1 is not appropriate, for example, where a young person makes a detailed complaint about their care experience. In these circumstances the complaint is escalated straight to Stage 2.

### **Stage Two – Independent Investigation**

The Complaints Manager will arrange a full investigation of the complaint. The investigator will be independent of the service and the person complained about.

The investigation is overseen by an Independent Person, and they will be involved in all aspects of the investigation to ensure it is fair, thorough and transparent and the child or young person is the focus of the investigation.

The complainant should receive a response to their complaint in the form of a report from the investigating officer and a report from the independent person and adjudication letter from a senior manager within 25 days of making the complaint. This can be extended up to a maximum of 65 working days where the complaint is particularly complex or a key witness is unavailable for part of the time.

The Adjudicating Officer should ensure that recommendations contained in the response are implemented. This is monitored by the Complaints Manager.

### **Stage Three - Review Panel**

At the end of the Stage 2 process if the complainant remains dissatisfied, they can request a Review Panel meeting. They have 20 working days to make the request and the Panel must be held within 30 working days of the request. The Panel is made up of three people who are independent of the local authority.

The complainant has an opportunity to present their case to the Panel and the Panel will then consider whether the complaint has been adequately dealt with at Stage 2.

The Panel should focus on achieving resolution for the complainant and making recommendations to provide practical remedies and solutions.

The Stage 3 Review Panel is the final stage of the local authority procedure. If the complainant remains dissatisfied, s/he will be advised how to refer their complaint to the Local Government and Social Care Ombudsman.

## **Appendix 2 – Abbreviations used for Children’s Service Teams**

**A&T** – Schools Admissions and Transport

**A&W** - Attendance and Welfare Support Service

**ACE** – Adolescent and Child Exploitation Team

**Children’s Centres** – Bright Start Children Centre Services

**CIC** – Child in Care Team

**Commissioning** – Complex and Targeted Support

**CF** - Connecting Families

**DCT** – Disabled Children’s Team

**Early Years Funding** - EYF

**FPT** – Family Placement Team

**FST** – Family Support Teams (1, 2 & 3)

**IRO** – Independent Reviewing Officer

**LADO** – Local Authority Designated Officer (Managing Allegations)

**SSEN** - Statutory Special Educational Needs Team

**S&QA** – Safeguarding and Quality Assurance (including CP Chairs, LADO and IRO)

**Triage**

<b>Bath &amp; North East Somerset Council</b>		
<b>MEETING/ DECISION MAKER:</b>	<b>Children, Adults, Health &amp; Wellbeing Policy Development &amp; Scrutiny Panel</b>	
<b>MEETING/ DECISION DATE:</b>	<b>13th November 2023</b>	
<b>TITLE:</b>	<b>Free School Meals</b>	
<b>WARD:</b>	All	
<b>AN OPEN PUBLIC ITEM</b>		
<b>List of attachments to this report:</b> <b>Advertising materials for FSM</b> <b>Holiday Activities Fund Brochure</b>		

## **1 THE ISSUE**

- 1.1 This report highlights the current provision in Bath and North East Somerset with regard the numbers of pupils who are in receipt of Free School Meals and the provision they can expect to receive, and also explains the statutory requirements of schools food standards that apply to meals provided in schools.

## **2 RECOMMENDATION**

**The Panel is asked to;**

- 2.1 Note the information in the report**

## **3 THE REPORT**

### **3.1 Eligibility for Free School Meals.**

- (1) School meals are free for all state school pupils in Reception, Year 1 and Year 2 of primary school. These are known as 'universal infant free school meals'.

(2) However, if a family is living on a low income and claiming certain benefits, a child may be able to get a free lunch until at least 2025 (known as 'benefit-related free school meals').

(3) The benefits that provide support are:-

- Universal Credit (if your annual net earned income is £7,400 or less, as assessed by earnings from up to three of your most recent assessment periods)
- Income Support
- Income Based Jobseeker's Allowance
- Income Related Employment and Support Allowance
- Child Tax Credit, **without any Working Tax Credit**, and an annual household income of £16,190 or less (as assessed by HMRC - Her Majesty's Revenue and Customs)
- **Four-week run-on** Working Tax Credit (paid for four weeks after you **STOP** qualifying for Working Tax Credit)
- Guaranteed Element of State Pension Credit
- Support under part VI of the Immigration and Asylum Act 1999

These rules and regulations are provided by the DFE as statutory guidance.

### 3.2 Numbers of FSM in B&NES Schools

The Number of FSM pupils by Sector in B&NES

SECTOR	PUPIL NO.S May 23	FSM MAY 2020	FSM MAY 2023	Inc./ Dec.	% CHANGE	FSM OCT 2023	Inc./ Dec.	% Change
<b>PRIMARY</b>	13,726	2,077	2,475	398	19%	2,277	-198	-8%
<b>SECONDARY</b>	13,350	1,453	1,974	521	36%	2,114	140	7%
<b>SPECIAL</b>	548	194	266	72	37%	280	14	5%
<b>TOTAL</b>	27,624	3,724	4,715	991	27%	4,671	-44	-1%

3.3 The table above shows the number of FSM eligible pupils from May 2020 (just after the first lockdown of the pandemic) and the equivalent date in 2023. This shows the significant increase in eligibility over the 3 years.

3.4 Also shown is the October 23 data (most up to date) which shows a fall in primary aged children being eligible. On further analysis this trend occurs each year (except 2020) with drop in the primary eligible pupil numbers in the autumn term.



- 3.5 The fall in eligibility is due to the new intake of parents who have not made an application for Free School Meals at the beginning of term.
- 3.6 It is noted there are many reasons for this lack of application, but it is likely that a large impact is due to the Universal Infant Free School Meals (UIFSM) where all key stage 1 pupils are provided with a free meal whether they are eligible by benefit or not.
- 3.7 To overcome this dip in applications we actively promote the entitlements and the added benefits that could occur for the schools' other budgets to parents. We do this in the following places, B&NES Livewell Facebook page, the main B&NES Facebook page, B&NES Community Well Being Hub, and the B&NES Libraries digital screens. The Libraries also create a window display for us around BRFSM and healthy eating as well as placing A4 posters and leaflets around the buildings.
- 3.8 Schools are also sent letters for parents emphasising the additional benefits the school could receive if a parent was eligible for FSM due to the benefits they receive.
- 3.9 Copies of some of our promotional information is shown in the appendix
- 3.10 We run a promotion with the above 3 times a year in the lead up to the Benefit Related Free School Meal Census dates (the census leads to the schools additional pupil premium funding) the census dates are in October, January and May.

I have added a link below to our B&NES BRFSM web page which gives you more information and various links

<https://beta.bathnes.gov.uk/apply-free-school-meals>

We have always understood the importance to approve as many children as possible for a benefit related free school meal both from the children/parent/guardian side as well as the schools. Because of this we think it is important to have various avenues to apply for a BRFSM. We have the following routes to apply:

- Paper Form which can be downloaded, completed and sent to us direct or via the school or handed in to B&NES one stop shops.
- Online form – this is our most popular way to apply. It is also the quickest and we have designed this form to cover all the information we need and also have a notes/comments section if the applicant wants to add some extra details.
- Telephone application – we always receive positive comments via this avenue as the public are so pleased (and surprised) to be able to speak to a human.

- 3.11 As well as the above, if a school finds it difficult to get someone to apply for BRFSM but they think they may qualify, then the school can obtain the relevant details along with permission to use parent/guardian's data (re GDPR) to check their eligibility. Sometimes depending on what a parent/guardian tells us in an email we also use that email as an application.

### **3.12 Free School Meals – Holiday Periods**

3.13 During holiday periods the Free School Meals Voucher scheme, provides funding for parents entitled to benefit related free school meals to obtain a voucher that can be used at supermarkets.

3.14 The funding is part of the Housing Support Fund

3.15 The total funding allocated in 2023-24 is estimated at £800k

3.16 This means we can issue approximately 4,100 FSMV's for each school holiday in 2023 up to and including Easter 2024.

3.17 During the summer 2023 school holidays we issued 4,130 vouchers to 2,593 families in the B&NES area. This is up from 2,433 families in May, a 6.5% increase. We have found demand is increasing year on year from when this was first started during Christmas 2020.

3.18 The fund is guaranteed until Easter holidays 2024 but will need further grant funding for it to continue.

### **3.19 Holiday Activities Funding (HAF Programme)**

3.20 The HAF programme provides additional opportunities for pupils entitled to FSM to take part in holiday activities. The events also ensure the children are provided with meals throughout the activity.

3.21 The brochure of the summer activities and information about the programme is shown in the appendix to this report.

### **3.22 Responsibility for Free School Meals**

3.23 It is the statutory responsibility of the governing body and trustees to ensure the School Food Standards are being met. The governing board are responsible for the provision of school food and play a crucial role in creating and embedding a great school food culture. Guidance has been produced by the DfE: The role of Governing bodies in relation to school food .

3.24 In recent years Ofsted have put a greater focus on how schools are creating a culture and ethos of healthy eating

### **3.25 School Food Standards**

3.26 The most recent School Food Standards were launched in 2015, replacing previous nutritional standards whereby menus were required to be nutritionally analysed through software. This prohibited in-house catering services who did not have access to such software to check if menus were compliant against the standards.

3.27 The new standards are designed to help children develop healthy eating habits and ensure that they have the energy and nutrition they need to get the most from their whole school day. As a general principle, the standards consider the provision of food provided across the school's week.

3.28 There are two sets of standards one being Standards for School lunches and Standards for School Food other than Lunch. The second set of standards includes food and drink provision served at breakfast club, mid-morning break, lunchtime and during after school clubs.

3.29 The food-based standards specify which types of food should be served at school and how often. They allow catering managers to quickly identify if menus are compliant against each food group. To be compliant against the standards, it is essential that food and drink provision served across the day is considered as some food items are restricted in this way.

### **3.30 Increasing the take up of school meals:**

3.31 Increasing the take up of school meals requires a cultural change and commitment within schools. Key aspects include:

- (1) senior leadership commitment
- (2) providing tasty food that looks good and is nutritious
- (3) creating a positive dining experience
- (4) considering the marketing and pricing of school meals
- (5) instilling a love of cooking and growing across the school

3.32 The School Food Plan was published by the Department for Education in 2013 and set out 17 actions to transform what children eat in schools and how they learn about food.

3.33 The checklist for Headteachers and the checklist for Governors provide guidance around creating change in schools and implementing the 17 actions.

### **3.34 Previous work funded through Public Health Grant:**

#### **Food in Schools Officer post**

3.35 The Food in Schools Officer post had dedicated time to provide leadership around the School Food Plan in B&NES, supporting schools in working towards the 17 actions.

3.36 In 2015, when the new School Food Standards were published the post delivered training and worked with catering teams to ensure menus were compliant. The role also promoted the Food for Life Partnership and delivered training to Governing Bodies informing them of their responsibility for School Food.

### **3.37 Current work funded through the Public Health Grant:**

3.38 Following the disbanding of the Director of Public Health Award Public Health, the Public Health in Schools Programme was launched and enables schools to complete self-assessment audits including a Healthy Weight Audit which focuses on food alongside physical activity elements. The audit

encompasses the following areas: National and local guidance, sources of support for children and young people, teaching and learning resources, working with parent and carers, continuing professional development

3.39 The audits are self-assessments which enable school leaders to benchmark themselves against best practice in each area and create an action plan where required. The programme uses The Hub as a platform to host each area of the programme and its accompanying resources. The Public Health team ensure the programme is promoted among schools and professionals working alongside schools and that resources and audits are based on evidence and best practice.

3.40 The programme is voluntary for schools to take part in and the Public Health Team do not verify completed self-assessments.

#### **4 STATUTORY CONSIDERATIONS**

4.1 Not applicable.

#### **5 RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS (FINANCE, PROPERTY, PEOPLE)**

5.1 The resources for some of these activities related to Free School Meals pupils rely on government grants and decisions on what the future programme may look like will need assurance from government about the continuation of these grants.

#### **6 RISK MANAGEMENT**

6.1 A risk assessment related to the issue and recommendations has been undertaken, in compliance with the Council's decision making risk management guidance.

#### **7 EQUALITIES**

7.1 No Equalities Impact Assessment has been completed in relation to completing this report as the report only sets out the current position in relation to FSM provision and does not suggest any changes.

#### **8 CLIMATE CHANGE**

8.1 No climate change assessment has been made as no changes to current provision are suggested

#### **9 OTHER OPTIONS CONSIDERED**

9.1 Not applicable

#### **10 CONSULTATION**

10.1

<b>Contact person</b>	<i>Richard Morgan 07368456392</i>
<b>Background papers</b>	
<b>Please contact the report author if you need to access this report in an alternative format</b>	

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## Universal Infant Free School Meals

**Is your child receiving Free School Meals because they are in Reception, Year 1 or Year 2?**

**If you are receiving any of the benefits listed below you can also register for a benefit related free school meal.**

**Your registration could attract Pupil Premium for your school of £1,455**

Please contact the team at: [freeschoolmeals@bathnes.gov.uk](mailto:freeschoolmeals@bathnes.gov.uk)

Apply online at <https://beta.bathnes.gov.uk/apply-free-school-meals>

Or call 01225 394317 (if you leave a message, we will return your call).

- Universal Credit (provided you have an annual net earned income of no more than £7,400, as assessed by earnings from up to three of your most recent assessment periods)
- Income Support
- Income-Based Jobseekers Allowance
- Income Related Employment Support Allowance
- Child Tax Credit (WITHOUT Working Tax Credit) and have an annual household income (as assessed by HMRC) below £16,190
- Working Tax Credit **Run-on** which is **only paid for 4 weeks** after you STOP qualifying for Working Tax Credit
- The Guaranteed Element of State Pension Credit
- Support under Part V1 of the Immigration and Asylum Act 1999



## Benefit Related Free School Meals All School Years

If you receive any of the benefits listed below, and your child attends a Bath and North East Somerset academy or maintained school, please register for benefit related free school meals.

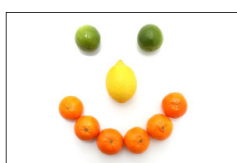
Registration could attract Pupil Premium funding for your child's school, £1455 per Primary pupil and £1035 per Secondary pupil.

- Universal Credit (provided you have an annual net earned income of no more than £7,400, as assessed by earnings from up to three of your most recent assessment periods)
- Income Support
- Income-Based Jobseekers Allowance
- Income Related Employment Support Allowance
- Child Tax Credit (WITHOUT Working Tax Credit) and have an annual household income (as assessed by HMRC) below £16,190
- Working Tax Credit **Run-on** which is **only paid for 4 weeks** after you STOP qualifying for Working Tax Credit
- The Guaranteed Element of State Pension Credit
- Support under PartV1 of the Immigration and Asylum Act 1999

Apply online at <https://beta.bathnes.gov.uk/apply-free-school-meals>

Email the team at [freeschoolmeals@bathnes.gov.uk](mailto:freeschoolmeals@bathnes.gov.uk)

Or call 01225 394317 – please leave a message if you reach our answerphone and we will return your call.





## Holiday Activity and Food programmes in Bath and North East Somerset



Summer 2023



## Holiday Activity and Food programmes

in Bath and North East Somerset

Summer 2023

### What is it?

The HAF programme in Bath and North East Somerset provides funded holiday activities for all children and young people aged 5-16 years old (reception to year 11), who receive benefits related free school meals (FSM). We have a wide selection of childcare, sports, outdoor education and activity programmes on offer across Bath and North East Somerset this Summer 2023.

### Who is it for?

All HAF camps and programmes are FREE of charge and include a FREE meal for any child or young person in receipt of benefit related free school meals (FSM). We have primary aged, secondary aged, mixed and SEND specialist provision across the region, **please only book a place if you know your child can definitely attend.**

### How do I book?

- All eligible children and young people will receive their unique HAF pass through the Vouchers and Holiday Activities platform.
- These will be sent directly to the contact associated with the child or young person.
- You can then view and book the activities on offer from this direct link
- All children and young people have been allocated 12 credits, which can be used to book 12 different activities across the Summer

**- Please only book a place if your child is definitely attending.**

This brochure contains information about what is on offer across the region, where, when, for what age groups, and who to contact directly for more information or to help with booking.

[haf@we-activate.co.uk](mailto:haf@we-activate.co.uk) 0121 227 4385



The camp is open to children aged 5 to 14 years old. Our Multi Activity Camps offer a fun holiday childcare solution.

Activate

[www.we-activate.co.uk](http://www.we-activate.co.uk)

[haf@we-activate.co.uk](mailto:haf@we-activate.co.uk)

0121 227 4385

[ActivateCamps](#)

5 - 14 Years

**Castle Primary School** Newlands Rd, Keynsham, Bristol BS31 2TS

24-28 July, 31 July-4 August, 14-18 & 21-25 August

**St Marys CofE Primary School** Old Rd, Writhlington, Radstock BA3 3NG

24-28 July, 31 July-4 Aug & 7-11 Aug

**St Michael's Junior School** Newton Rd, Bath BA2 1RW

21-25 August

**The Hive** Bath Rd, Peasedown St John, Bath BA2 8DH

31 July-4 August & 14-18 August

**Aspire Academy** Frome Road, Bath and North East Somerset, BA2 5RF

24-28 July & 31 July - 4 August

**Combe Down Rugby Club** Bramble Way, North Rd, Bath BA2 5DE

7-10 & 21-24 August

**Chew Valley Rugby Club** Chew Ln, Chew Stoke, Bristol BS40 8UE

26 July, 9 & 23 August

All camps 10am - 2pm

Our Multi Activity Camps offer a fun holiday childcare solution. Every camp is packed full of a combination of sports, activity, arts and crafts, games, nutrition education and challenges. Our curriculum covers sports, wide games and parents will be invited to join in at specific times!

Activate are delivering action packed trips for all secondary aged children this summer!

## Activate Teenage Trips

[www.we-activate.co.uk](http://www.we-activate.co.uk)

[haf@we-activate.co.uk](mailto:haf@we-activate.co.uk)

0121 227 4385

[ActivateCamps](#)

12-16 years

Transport is provided for these trips and will include pick up points in Paulton, Odd Down and Keynsham.

**Cotswolds Aqua Park** Cotswold Country Park and Beach, Spratsgate lane, Cirencester, GL76DF

27 July 11.30pm - 1.30pm

**Porthcawl Surf School** Watersport Centre Rest Bay CF36 3UP

3 August 11am - 2.15pm

**Little Kitchen** Little Kitchen Cookery School, 32 Oxford St, Totterdown, Bristol BS3 4RJ

10 August 11.30am - 2.30pm

**Hollywood Bowling Longwell Green** Longwell Green, Aspects Leisure Park 2, Longwell Green, Bristol BS15 9LA

17 August 11.30am - 1.30pm

**Bristol Golf Centre** Common Mead Ln, Hambrook, Winterbourne, Bristol BS16 1QQ

22 August 11am - 2pm

**Adventure Bristol** Blackhorse Hill, Wild Place Project, Bristol BS10 7TP

24 August 11.30am - 4pm

**Thorpe Park** Thorpe Park Resort, Staines Road, Chertsey

31 August 10.30am - 2.30pm

Local sport and activity specific camps for secondary aged children this summer!

## Activate Secondary Specific Camps

[www.we-activate.co.uk](http://www.we-activate.co.uk)

[haf@we-activate.co.uk](mailto:haf@we-activate.co.uk)

0121 227 4385

[ActivateCamps](#)

12-16 years

**Girls Netball @Hayesfield Girls School** Upper Oldfield Park, Ba BA2 3LA

11am - 3pm 28 July

**Football @Wellsway School** Keynsham, Bristol BS31 1HH

11am - 3pm 01 August

**Football @Writhlington Leisure Centre** Knobsbury Ln, Radstock BA3 3NQ

11am - 3pm 08 August

**Rollerskating @Ba Pavillion** N Parade Rd, Bathwick, Ba BA2 4EU

4.30pm - 6.30pm 26 July, 2 & 9 August

**Young Leaders Qualification @IKB School** 68 Ba Rd, Keynsham, Bristol BS31 1SP

10am - 2pm 14-18 August

**Football @Midsomer Norton Leisure Centre** Gullock Tynning, Midsomer Norton, Radstock BA3 2SY

11am - 3pm 15 August

**Girls Football @Hayesfield Girls School** Upper Oldfield Park, Ba BA2 3LA

11am - 3pm 18 August

**Indoor Inflatables @Keynsham Leisure Centre Temple St, Keynsham, Bristol BS31 1HE**

11am - 1pm 16, 23 & 30 August

**Junior Gym Session @Keynsham Leisure Centre** Temple St, Keynsham, Bristol BS31 1HE

11am - 1pm 25 July, 8, 22 & 29 August

In this training, cyclists will learn Bikeability Level 1 skills on a cycle circuit, a traffic-free environment. The second day, they will progress onto local low traffic roads, where each instructor will work with up to 4 trainees.

Bath & North East  
Somerset Council

Improving People's Lives

## Bikeability

➤ <https://beta.bathnes.gov.uk/bikeability-cycle-training>

✉ [bikeability@banes.gov.uk](mailto:bikeability@banes.gov.uk)

☎ 01225 396043

📍 **Odd Down Sports Ground Cycle Track**  
Odd Down Playing Fields, Chelwood Dr, Bath BA2 2PR

📅 1-2, 8-9, 15-16 & 22-23 August

🕒 9.30am - 3pm

👤 9 - 13 Years

Bikeability is a wheely great option for growing your child's life skills and confidence with cycle activity, learning, and time outdoors. After a Level 1 course taking place in a traffic-free environment, our expert instructors will lead children onto local quiet roads, to experience real cycling with Level 2 course. This is a certified course and children must attend every day to complete it.



Progressive Sports offers children the opportunity to try out a variety of different activities and games in a safe, friendly and engaging environment.



## Progressive Sports

➤ <https://progressive-sports.co.uk/bath-north-somerset>

✉ [j.mctiernan@progressive-sports.co.uk](mailto:j.mctiernan@progressive-sports.co.uk)

☎ 07789 997375

📘 [progressivesportsbath](https://www.facebook.com/progressivesportsbath)

📍 **Wellsway Sports Centre**  
Keynsham, Bristol BS31 1HH

📅 24-28 July, 31 July-4 August, 7-11, 14-18 & 21-25 August

📍 **Farmborough Primary School**  
The St, Farmborough, Bath BA2 0FY

📅 24-28 July, 31 July-4 August, 7-11, 14-18 & 21-25 August

📍 **Batheaston Primary School**  
School Ln, Northend, Batheaston, Bath BA1 7EP

📅 1-3, 8-10, 15-17 & 22-24 August

🕒 9am - 3.30pm

👤 4 - 13 Years

Our Multi Sports Active Camps are provided in a safe, engaging and friendly environment. Children will have access to a variety of sports and games across an indoor and outdoor setting, delivered by our team of qualified sports coaches and instructors. Our Camps are also a great opportunity for children to socialise, develop relationships and make new friends. We get very busy so please book early!

Mini Mojos multi-activity holiday club is an inclusive, safe space for all children to flourish, develop, experience and be challenged at their own pace and in their own way, whilst having the most amount of fun!



## Happy Mojos

📍 [www.happymojo.co.uk](http://www.happymojo.co.uk)

✉ [hello@happymojo.co.uk](mailto:hello@happymojo.co.uk)

☎ 07809 110832

🌐 [happymojo.co.uk](http://happymojo.co.uk)

📷 [happymojo](https://www.instagram.com/happymojo)

🐦 [happymojoHQ](https://twitter.com/happymojoHQ)

🌐 [happymojo](https://www.linkedin.com/company/happymojo)

📍 **St John's Primary School** Redfield Rd, Midsomer Norton, Radstock BA3 2JN

📅 24-27 July, 31 July - 3 August & 14 - 17 August

🕒 9am - 1pm

👤 5 - 11 Years

A totally unique holiday club that nurtures all who join us! Children will be immersed into a complete sensory experience. Starting our day with 'Stretch & Shine' before enjoying the freedom to choose from any of our exciting zones including "Let's nourish, move, create, discover and learn!" We provide a healthy hot lunch and snacks too! We have limited availability for children with SEND; please connect with us to discuss.



Our Holiday Clubs provide an inspiring and rich environment where children can play, explore and learn new skills, work with natural materials and explore the magic of natural world.

## Creative Roots Outdoor Learning

📍 [www.creative-roots.org](http://www.creative-roots.org)

✉ [info@creative-roots.org](mailto:info@creative-roots.org)

☎ 07505 353167

📷 [creative\\_roots\\_outdoor](https://www.instagram.com/creative_roots_outdoor)

📘 [CreativeRootsUK](https://www.facebook.com/CreativeRootsUK)

📍 **Mike's Meadow** 30-16 Northend, Batheaston, Bath BA1 7EN

📅 24-26 July, 10-11 & 17-18 August

👤 4 - 11 Years

🕒 9.30am - 1.30pm

Our Holiday Clubs provide an inspiring and rich environment where children can play, explore and learn new skills, work with natural materials and explore the magic of natural world. Some of the forest school activities will include den building, singing, bushcraft, cooking and storytelling around the campfire as well as whittling, woodwork, clay, weaving, felting and spinning with wool. Along with group and mindfulness games plus lots more. Mike's Meadow provides the children with extra activities where they can also learn to identify and forage edible plants, play in the orchard among fruit trees or explore the straw bale classroom. The children have a range of activities to choose from and time for free play in an exciting, open-ended environment with a mud kitchen, water-play sandpit, playhouse and shelter.

# Explore, play, create & relax with us

103 Childcare



We offer outdoor and indoor activities, cooking, crafts, football, den making, arts, team games, construction etc

## 103 Childcare

☎ 07902 099777

✉ [mrsemilywhite@yahoo.co.uk](mailto:mrsemilywhite@yahoo.co.uk)

📍 **103 Childcare** Weston Hub, Penn Hill Road, Bath BA1 4EH

📅 8-10, 21-24 & 29-31 August

🕒 9.30am - 2.30pm

👤 5 - 11 Years

Amazing outdoor play space, den building, sports, climbing, mud kitchens, potion making, sand/water play, arts and crafts, movies, cooking and baking and heaps more!

Family Playdays are a great way to have fun as a family!



## Bath Area Play Project

🌐 [www.bapp.org.uk](http://www.bapp.org.uk)

✉ [enquiries@bathareaplayproject.co.uk](mailto:enquiries@bathareaplayproject.co.uk)

☎ 01225 832479

📘 [BathPlayProject](https://www.facebook.com/BathPlayProject)

📍 **Three Ways School** 180 Frome Rd, Bath BA2 5RF

👤 12-16 years & 5-11 years

🕒 9am - 2.30pm

📅 24-28 July & 31 July - 4 August

📍 **The Hut Holiday Playscheme** Claverton Down, Bath BA2 7AY

👤 5-11 years

🕒 9am - 2.30pm

📅 8-11 & 14-18 August

📍 **SOFA Secondary, Playscheme @Odd Down Community Centre** Odins Rd, Odd Down, Bath BA2 2TL

👤 12-16 years

🕒 10am - 4pm

📅 8-11 & 14-18 August

📍 **Family Days**

Beacon Field, Peasedown St John | Roundhill, Mount Road, Southdown | Westfield, Norton Hill Recreation Ground | Broadmoor Lane, Bath | Paulton Memorial Park | Odd Down Cycle Circuit | Pennyquick Park, Twerton | Abbots Wood, Keynsham | Sandpits Park, Monksdale Road Bath | Kelston Road Park, Keynsham | Alice Park, Gloucester Road, Bath | Entry Hill, Bath | Town Park, Midsomer Norton | Weston Recreation Ground, Bath | Southfields, Radstock & Woodland or Boat Day trip

👤 5-11 years

🕒 1pm - 3pm

📅 24-27 July, 31 July - 3 August, 7-10 & 14-17 August





Kids always have an amazing time at our multi-sport holiday camps whether they're super sporty or just love to have fun and make friends.

## Premier Education

📍 [www.premier-education.com](http://www.premier-education.com)

✉ [mbrewer@premier-education.com](mailto:mbrewer@premier-education.com)

📍 [PremEdBristol](#)

☎ 01935 277800

📍 **Abbot Alphege Academy**  
Beckford Dr, Bath BA1, UK

📅 31 July - 3 August & 7-10 August

📍 **Two Rivers CofE Primary School**  
Fairfield Wy, Keynsham,  
Bristol BS31 1GD

📅 14-17 & 21-24 August

🕒 9am - 3pm

👤 5 - 12 Years

Premier Education is the UK's No.1 provider of sport and physical activity to primary schools. Kids always have an amazing time at our multi-sport holiday camps whether they're super sporty or just love to have fun and make friends. These jam-packed holiday activity camps combine various sports for a week of non-stop fun. Our Activity Professionals deliver a range of games so attendees can enjoy exciting activities during half term. From everyday sports like football and hockey, to fencing and archery,



Bath Rugby Foundation will be offering a wide range of sporting and dance activities for children to enjoy, as well as food nutrition sessions, crafts and a cooked meal each day.



## Bath Rugby Foundation

📍 [www.bathrugbyfoundation.com](http://www.bathrugbyfoundation.com)

✉ [contact@bathrugbyfoundation.com](mailto:contact@bathrugbyfoundation.com)

☎ 07443 767555

📘 [BathRugbyFoundation](#)

📍 **Twerton Village Hall**  
Landseer Rd, Twerton, Bath BA2 1DX

📅 25-28 July & 1-4 August

📍 **St Michael's Junior School**  
Newton Rd, Bath BA2 1RW

📅 7-10 & 14-17 August

📍 **Hampset Cricket Club**  
Bloomfield Rise Bath, BA2 2BL

📅 24-27 July, 31 July - 3 August,  
14-17 & 21-24 August

📍 **Welton Rovers FC**  
West Clewes, Radstock, BA3 2QD

📅 24-27 July, 31 July - 3 August,  
14-17 & 21-24 August

🕒 9am - 1pm

👤 5 - 11 Years

Summer Break Out returns and Bath Rugby Foundation will be offering all children the chance to take part in multiple sports (e.g., football, tag-rugby, dodgeball), creative arts and crafts and themed team building games.



At Next Thing Education Camps, we offer a range of unique technology activities to support the development of children's teamwork, resilience and wider educational attainment.



## Next Thing Education Camps

📍 [www.nextthing.education/summer-camps/](http://www.nextthing.education/summer-camps/)

📧 [haf23@nextthing.education](mailto:haf23@nextthing.education)

☎ 01442 873150

📷 [nextthing.education](https://www.instagram.com/nextthing.education)

📍 **Prior Park College**  
Ralph Allen Dr, Bath BA2 5AH

📅 24-27 July, 31 July - 3 Aug  
& 7-11 August

📍 **Batheaston Primary School**  
School Ln, Northend, Batheaston,  
Bath BA1 7EP

📅 14-18 & 21-25 August

🕒 9am - 4pm

👤 5 - 11 Years

Our Holiday Camps are the perfect place for children to have fun, get creative and absorb our knowledge of all things coding! We are a group of professional creators, inventors and tech-enthusiasts who love sharing our skills with young inventors. No stress, we bring the cutting-edge technology and children learn the creative, technical and logical skills they need for the future.



Our multi-activity, sports, art, food and enrichment camps for both boys and girls offers the opportunity to enjoy and develop skills in a wide range of activities.



## Procoaching

📍 [www.pro-coaching.co.uk](http://www.pro-coaching.co.uk)

📧 [info@pro-coaching.co.uk](mailto:info@pro-coaching.co.uk)

☎ 07361 513889

📘 [sportscourses4kids](https://www.facebook.com/sportscourses4kids)

🐦 [procoachingweb](https://www.twitter.com/procoachingweb)

📍 **Roundhill Primary School**  
Roundhill Primary School, Mount Rd,  
Southdown, Bath BA2 1LG

📅 7-11 August

📍 **Culverhay Leisure Centre**  
Rush Hill, Bath BA2 2QL

📅 14-18 August

🕒 9am - 1pm

👤 4 - 14 Years

Our Multi-Sports Courses offers the opportunity to enjoy and develop skills in all of the sports that we cover over the holidays plus much much more!!!. Operating on a rotation basis always finishing with competitions. The course will be led by our specialist coaches and is suitable for all abilities.





Nature exploring, adventure, exercise, new experiences, enjoyable days in the outdoors... lots of eating, playing, crafts and cooking.

## Swainswick Explorers

📍 [https://swainswickexplorers.co.uk/holiday\\_events](https://swainswickexplorers.co.uk/holiday_events)

📧 [info@swainswickexplorers.co.uk](mailto:info@swainswickexplorers.co.uk)

☎ 07758 515092

📷 [swainswickstyle](#)

📘 [swainswickexplorers](#)

🕒 10am - 4pm

👤 5 - 14 Years

📍 **Explorer Days @Swainswick House**  
Upper Swainswick Bath, BA1 8BU

📅 31 July, 1, 3, 8 & 11 August

Fun, fresh air and friendships! On an 'Explorer Day' we journey through the countryside, exploring a series of wild places along the way. We tend to walk a couple of miles but settle down to make a camp for crafts, play and cooking on the campfire.

📍 **Art & Forest School Days @Radstock**  
Church Street Car Park, Church Street, BA3 3PR

📅 15 August

Swainswick Explorers in collaboration with Little Lost Robot Crew in Radstock. Come and join our Art and Woodland Play day. We will be making bug, beetle and butterfly sculptures out of willow and recycled materials in the Little Lost Robot Crews' art space. Inspired by British wildlife and your imagination you will design and make a range of beautiful bugs to take home and keep. After the workshop we will go to a nearby woodland to set up rope swings, hang out in hammocks and cook something delicious over a campfire. Time to play? - There is a playground nearby!

Youth Connect South West are delivering various activities and camps for secondary aged children this summer.



## Youth Connect South West

📍 [youthconnectsouthwest.org.uk](http://youthconnectsouthwest.org.uk)

✉ [contact@ycsw.org.uk](mailto:contact@ycsw.org.uk)

📘 [YouthConnectSouthWest](#)

🕒 11am - 3pm

👤 12 - 16 Years

📍 **Multi-Sport Activity Sessions @ Southside Youth Hub** Kelston View, Bath BA2 1NR

📅 7-8 August

📍 **Making Music Videos @Southside Youth Hub** Kelston View, Bath BA2 1NR

📅 9-10 August

📍 **Puppetry, VR and Robots @Radstock Youth Hub** Radstock BA3 3QG

📅 10 August

📍 **Carving @Radstock Youth Hub**  
Radstock BA3 3QG

📅 11 August

📍 **Cartooning Workshop @Southside Youth Hub** Kelston View, Bath BA2 1NR

📅 14-15 August

📍 **Dungeons and Dragons @Radstock Youth Hub** Radstock BA3 3QG

📅 17 August

📍 **Magic The Gathering @Radstock Youth Hub** Radstock BA3 3QG

📅 18 August

📍 **Graffiti Workshop @Radstock Youth Hub** Radstock BA3 3QG

📅 23 August



Lots of football & fungames so attendees can enjoy exciting activities during half term.

## Bath City Foundation

✉ [info@bathcityfoundation.org](mailto:info@bathcityfoundation.org)

☎ 07931 913445

🌐 [www.bathcityfoundation.org](http://www.bathcityfoundation.org)

🌐 [BCFCFoundation](http://BCFCFoundation)

📷 [BCFCFoundation](https://www.instagram.com/BCFCFoundation)

🐦 [BCFCFoundation](https://twitter.com/BCFCFoundation)

📍 **St Martins Garden Primary School**  
Lympsham Grn, Bath BA2 2UN

📅 24-27 July, 7-10 & 21-24 August

📍 **The Rhymes Pavilion** Coalpit Rd,  
Batheaston, Bath BA1 7NW

📅 1-3 & 15-17 August

🕒 10am - 2pm

👤 5 - 12 Years

Football holiday courses. Warm up activities, skills challenges, mini matches and games. Lots of football & fungames so attendees can enjoy exciting activities during half term. From everyday sports like football and hockey, to fencing and archery, there's something for everyone to enjoy.



Our Multi-Sports Holiday club will offer your children the opportunity to get involved in a vast range of sports and activities



## Sporting Sensations

✉ [sportingsensationsuk@gmail.com](mailto:sportingsensationsuk@gmail.com)

☎ 07810 543078

🌐 <https://bookwhen.com/sportingsensations>

📘 [SportingSensations](https://www.facebook.com/SportingSensations)

📷 [sportingsenations](https://www.instagram.com/sportingsenations)

📍 **Roundhill Primary School** Mount Rd,  
Southdown, Bath BA2 1LG

📅 1-3, 15-17 & 22-24 August

📍 **Weston All Saints Academy**  
Broadmoor Ln, Bath BA1 4JR

📅 25-27 July & 8-10 August

🕒 9am - 4pm

👤 5 - 11 Years

Our Multi-Sports Holiday club will offer your children the opportunity to get involved in a vast range of sports and activities such as football, dodgeball, archery, golf and many more. Through these different sporting activities we aim to create a fun, nurturing environment where children can grow their confidence physically, socially and emotionally aiding their development in all aspects of life.



# Frequently Asked Questions

## Who is eligible for a free place on the holiday activity and food programme?

This holiday provision is for school aged children from reception to year 11 (inclusive) who receive benefits-related free school meals. Benefits-related free school meals (FSM) are available to pupils if their parents are in receipt of one of the qualifying benefits, and have a claim verified by their school or local authority.

Local authorities have discretion to use up to 15% of their funding to provide free or subsidised holiday club places for children who are not in receipt of benefits-related free school meals but who the local authority believe could benefit from HAF provision.

This may include, for example:

- children assessed by the local authority as being in need, at risk or vulnerable
- young carers
- looked-after children or previously looked after children
- children with an EHC (education, health and care) plan
- children who have low attendance rates at school or who are at risk of exclusion
- children living in areas of high deprivation or from low-income households who are not in receipt of free school meals

- children in transition phases between nursery and primary school or primary and secondary school
- This list is not exhaustive, and it is open to the local authority to decide which children should benefit from the 15% flexible funding element of their HAF funding.

## My child is on Universal infant free school meals are they eligible?

All children in reception, year 1 and year 2 in England's state-funded schools receive a free meal under the Department for Education (DfE) universal infant free school meal (UIFSM) policy. Infant pupils who receive a free meal under UIFSM must also be eligible for benefits-related FSM to be able to access a place on the HAF programme.

## Can I pay for my child to attend if they are not in receipt of FSM?

Yes, many of the camps in the area are open for paid places. You will need to contact the holiday camp provider and follow their booking requirements to book and pay for the place.

## How many days can my child attend?

All eligible children and young people will have 12 credits for Summer 2023 and 12-16 year olds attending our teenage trips will only be able to book 3 off site trips. Each credit allows for one session per child/young person. This is to allow access to HAF for as many families as possible, however this will be regularly reviewed and increased if funding and provision allow.

## How do I book?

Evouchers/Holiday Activities App is the booking platform that is being used in Bath and North East Somerset. All eligible families will be contacted directly by the Holiday Activities APP or by your child's school. The information will be emailed direct to eligible families based on the contact information used for free school meal data. Families can then access a link in the email or text which will take them to the Bath and North East Somerset HAF site, from there they can search by provider or postcode to find the provision they require. Bookings are made directly through this link which contains each child or young person's unique code. Anyone who is not eligible to receive the HAF pass can contact their chosen provider and book/pay directly with them if possible.

## Does it matter if I book and then don't use the place?

Yes, yes it does! The government have funded each place, so whilst they are free to those eligible, each booked but not attended place can cost up to £50 per person. Therefore, please only book the provision you require and please notify the provider directly if you no longer require the place.

## My child has special educational needs or a disability, can they still attend?

We have some SEND specialist providers who work with those children and young people who may require more support. Many activities and camps are inclusive, however please do contact your chosen provider directly if you feel your child or young person needs more support to find out if the activities are suitable or not.

## What food is provided?

There will be a lunch provided at each session that comes at no extra cost. Our aim is to offer a hot meal wherever possible but in some instances there will be packed lunches on offer. We aim to use local food providers where possible and to reduce food wastage we would be grateful if you could contact your camp provider if you no longer require the meal or are cancelling your booking. We understand some children may not want the food offered and it is possible for them to bring a packed lunch, however we do encourage all children to try the food on offer where possible.

## Is a HAF Pass the same as a FSM holiday voucher?

No, your Holiday Activity and Food (HAF) Pass is separate from any voucher you may or may not receive from the LA to spend in your chosen supermarket. The LA FSM holiday vouchers will be distributed separately from the HAF passes and at a later date. HAF passes have 'Activate your Holiday' branding and allow you to book your child onto HAF activities - they have no direct monetary value. It is hoped that both the HAF provision and the FSM Holiday Vouchers will help eligible parent/carers feed and entertain their children over the summer holidays.

## Can you support us in getting our children or young person to an activity?

We have a small limited budget for transport costs. If you feel you are unable to access your nearest provision without additional support please speak to the provider who can then put a claim in for additional funding to help cover transport costs.



# Holiday Activity and Food programmes in Bath and North East Somerset



## Summer 2023



Visit [we-activate.co.uk/bnes](https://we-activate.co.uk/bnes)

or call **0121 227 4385**

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For offers and promotions follow us @ActivateCamps

## CHILDREN, ADULTS, HEALTH AND WELLBEING POLICY DEVELOPMENT AND SCRUTINY PANEL

This Forward Plan lists all the items coming to the Panel over the next few months.

Inevitably, some of the published information may change; Government guidance recognises that the plan is a best assessment, at the time of publication, of anticipated decision making. The online Forward Plan is updated regularly and can be seen on the Council's website at:

<http://democracy.bathnes.gov.uk/mgPlansHome.aspx?bcr=1>

The Forward Plan demonstrates the Council's commitment to openness and participation in decision making. It assists the Panel in planning their input to policy formulation and development, and in reviewing the work of the Cabinet.

*Should you wish to make representations, please contact the report author or, Democratic Services (). A formal agenda will be issued 5 clear working days before the meeting.*

*Agenda papers can be inspected on the Council's website.*

Ref Date	Decision Maker/s	Title	Report Author Contact	Director Lead
<b>13TH NOVEMBER 2023</b>				
13 Nov 2023	<b>Children, Adults, Health and Wellbeing Policy Development and Scrutiny Panel</b>	<b>Independent Reviewing Officer (IRO) Annual Report</b>	Christopher Wilford Tel: 01225 477109	Director of Children and Education
13 Nov 2023 Page 142	<b>Children, Adults, Health and Wellbeing Policy Development and Scrutiny Panel</b>	<b>Bath &amp; North East Somerset Community Safety &amp; Safeguarding Partnership (BCSSP) Annual Report</b>	Kirstie Webb Tel: 01225 396350	Director of Children and Education
13 Nov 2023	<b>Children, Adults, Health and Wellbeing Policy Development and Scrutiny Panel</b>	<b>Children's Services Annual Complaints Report</b>	Sarah Watts Tel: 01225 477931	Director of Children and Education
13 Nov 2023	<b>Children, Adults, Health and Wellbeing Policy Development and Scrutiny Panel</b>	<b>School Meals</b>	Christopher Wilford Tel: 01225 477109	Director of Children and Education

Ref Date	Decision Maker/s	Title	Report Author Contact	Director Lead
<b>11TH DECEMBER 2023</b>				
11 Dec 2023	<b>Children, Adults, Health and Wellbeing Policy Development and Scrutiny Panel</b>	<b>Food Poverty - Public Health Report (TBC)</b>	Cathy McMahon Tel: 01225 394064	Director of Public Health and Prevention
11 Dec 2023	<b>Children, Adults, Health and Wellbeing Policy Development and Scrutiny Panel</b>	<b>Homeless Health</b>	Rebecca Reynolds Tel: 01225 394074	Director of Public Health and Prevention
11 Dec 2023	<b>Children, Adults, Health and Wellbeing Policy Development and Scrutiny Panel</b>	<b>Community Based Care - Future Commissioning of Adults and Children Health Contract from 2025</b>	Laura Ambler, Natalia Lachkou	Director of Adult Social Care
<b>FORTHCOMING ITEMS</b>				
	<b>Children, Adults, Health and Wellbeing Policy Development and Scrutiny Panel</b>	<b>Community Resource Centres - Consultation</b>		Director of Adult Social Care

Ref Date	Decision Maker/s	Title	Report Author Contact	Director Lead
	Children, Adults, Health and Wellbeing Policy Development and Scrutiny Panel	Homelessness Health		Director of Public Health and Prevention
Page 144	Children, Adults, Health and Wellbeing Policy Development and Scrutiny Panel	Child Sexual Exploitation		Director of Children and Education
Page 144	Children, Adults, Health and Wellbeing Policy Development and Scrutiny Panel	Covid - Care Homes Study		Director of Public Health and Prevention
	Children, Adults, Health and Wellbeing Policy Development and Scrutiny Panel	Covid 19 - Impact of Long Covid across our communities		Director of Adult Social Care, Director of Children and Education, Director of Public Health and Prevention



Ref Date	Decision Maker/s	Title	Report Author Contact	Director Lead
	<p><b>Children, Adults, Health and Wellbeing Policy Development and Scrutiny Panel</b></p>	<p><b>Budget 2024-25 discussion</b></p>		<p>Director of Adult Social Care, Director of Children and Education</p>
	<p><b>Children, Adults, Health and Wellbeing Policy Development and Scrutiny Panel</b></p>	<p><b>Education Performance Update</b></p>		<p>Education and Safeguarding Director</p>
<p>The Forward Plan is administered by <b>DEMOCRATIC SERVICES:</b> <a href="mailto:Democratic_Services@bathnes.gov.uk">Democratic_Services@bathnes.gov.uk</a></p>				

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