

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

Date: Monday, 10th June, 2024

Time: 9.30am

Venue: Council Chamber - Guildhall, Bath

Councillors: Dine Romero, Liz Hardman, Paul Crossley, Dave Harding,
Ruth Malloy, Lesley Mansell, Joanna Wright, Vacancy and Vacancy

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:-**

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Further details of the scheme can be found at:

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**Children, Adults, Health and Wellbeing Policy Development and Scrutiny Panel - Monday,
10th June, 2024**

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: 13TH MAY 2024 (Pages 7 - 22)

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. ADULT SOCIAL CARE TRANSFER - EVALUATION REPORT (Pages 23 - 34)

The safe transfer of Adult Social Care Services took place on 1st April 2024 for Adult Social Work (including Direct Payments team) and Adults with Learning Disabilities and their Families Day Services (including Shared Lives, Employment Inclusion and Supported Living) from HCRG Care Group to B&NES Council.

10. PANEL WORKPLAN (Pages 35 - 38)

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 01225 394458.

BATH AND NORTH EAST SOMERSET

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

Monday, 13th May, 2024

Present:- Councillors Dine Romero (Chair), Liz Hardman (Vice-Chair), Alex Beaumont, Dave Harding, Ruth Malloy, Joanna Wright, Andy Wait (in place of Paul Crossley) and Robin Moss (in place of Lesley Mansell)

Co-opted Member (non-voting): Kevin Burnett

Also in attendance: Mary Kearney-Knowles (Director of Children and Education), Christopher Wilford (Director of Education & Safeguarding), Ceri Williams (Policy Development & Scrutiny Officer), Laura Ambler (Place Director, BSW Integrated Care Board), Laura Donnelly (Head of SEND) and Olwyn Donnelly (Head of Education Commissioning)

Cabinet Member for Children's Services: Councillor Paul May

119 WELCOME AND INTRODUCTIONS

The Chair welcomed everyone to the meeting and those present introduced themselves.

120 EMERGENCY EVACUATION PROCEDURE

The Chair drew attention to the emergency evacuation procedure.

121 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE AND SUBSTITUTIONS

Councillors Lesley Mansell and Paul Crossley had sent their apologies to the Panel. Councillors Robin Moss and Andy Wait were present as their respective substitutes for the duration of the meeting.

Chris Batten, Co-opted Member had also sent his apologies to the Panel.

122 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were none.

123 TO ANNOUNCE ANY URGENT BUSINESS AGREED BY THE CHAIRMAN

There was none.

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

Councillor Eleanor Jackson had registered to make a statement to the Panel regarding the SACRE Annual Report (Agenda Item 12).

125 MINUTES: 15TH APRIL 2024

Kevin Burnett made the following observations on the minutes.

- The Panel are still waiting to receive a Community Summit summary from the Education team. The Director of Education & Safeguarding replied that he did not attend the summit, but would ask an officer who did to provide some feedback.
- The Panel had asked how many schools involved in the Supervised Toothbrush Scheme were also receiving support from the St. John's Foundation.
- Lucy Baker, BSW ICB had said she would provide a response to the Panel regarding overall GP capacity concerning student numbers. Laura Ambler, BSW ICB said that she would follow that up on behalf of the Panel.

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

126 CABINET MEMBER UPDATE

Councillor Paul May, Cabinet Member for Children's Services addressed the Panel and highlighted the points below from his update report. A copy of the report will be attached as an online appendix to these minutes.

School Streets

Councillor May informed the Panel that he had met and discussed this matter with Councillor Wright and Councillor Heijltjes and that potentially such a scheme could be an advantage to some schools.

He explained that the Climate Emergency and Sustainability Panel have responsibility for this work area and that the CAHW Panel would be updated as progress is made.

Skills

Councillor May said that he had met with the new acting Principal of Bath College to stress how important it is for them to maintain the support they have in place for SEND pupils.

He added that discussions had also started with the College around the Somer Valley Enterprise Zone (SVEZ) scheme to see if training, apprenticeships and work experience opportunities can be provided during and after the construction phase of the Zone.

SACRE Annual Report

Councillor May said that he felt that there was a slightly inconsistent approach to the teaching of Religious Education across the B&NES schools and added that it is important that multi faith teachings help children to understand each other from an early age as possible.

Care experienced protected status

Councillor May informed the Panel that the Council are talking to Bath University about a memorandum of understanding which may include one or two scholarships, adopting the principle for all students, developing a mentoring scheme, possible accommodation support and apprenticeship schemes.

He added that they have also been discussing the possibility of moving people from Band B to Band A on the housing waiting list for care experienced young people.

Councillor Andy Wait asked how a school would be identified as wanting to take part in the School Streets scheme.

Councillor May replied that there was currently enough budget for one school to be initially considered to take part in the scheme and that practically the number of available schools was limited. He stated that the process, in the main, must be driven by the school and that the Council would discuss options with those that volunteer to take part.

The Chair asked if the schools should consult with their local Ward Councillors.

Councillor May replied that they should and added that he has asked for an item to be placed on the next School's Standard Board agenda for when they are next due to meet on 16th July 2024.

Councillor Andy Wait reiterated that the process must be led by the school and that steps should be taken to identify those that are interested in taking part.

Councillor May stated that there was a budget in place and an officer available for a scheme to progress. He said that feedback on the scheme would be provided to both this Panel and the Climate Emergency Panel.

Councillor Joanna Wright stated that the Green Party has twice had a budget amendment declined on this subject area and said that she challenged whose role it actually is to progress this, given the extreme pressure that most schools find themselves under. She added that she was aware of a number of parents with pupils at St Stephen's School were trying to introduce something similar on a weekly basis.

Councillor May commented that this was not a simple process and that there likely to be knock on implications of putting a scheme in place. He added that he has discussed this issue with the Executive Directors within the Council.

The Chair stated that overall the matter should remain within the remit of the Climate Emergency Panel and that should a working group be proposed then members of the CAHW Panel should be invited to take part.

Councillor Dave Harding asked what the key features were for establishing a School Street.

Councillor May replied that a school and its surrounding streets need to be identified and then at some stage in the process a Traffic Regulation Order would be put in place to stop vehicles entering those streets near the school at particular times of the day.

Kevin Burnett stated that he did not feel that it should be the responsibility of the schools to initiate this process and that there should be an overall Council plan for these schemes.

Councillor Harding asked how many pupils had taken part in years 1 & 2 of the Language for Life project provided by the St John's Foundation.

The Director of Education & Safeguarding replied that he did not have that information to hand, but could supply it to the Panel in due course.

Councillor Harding asked if any of the pupils identified in either the red or amber groups of the project were moved on sooner to receive speech and language therapy and whether any pupils had also gone onto receive any other downstream services.

The Director of Education & Safeguarding replied that he would make an enquiry on behalf of the Panel and issue an answer to them.

Councillor Wait asked if any further information could be given on a new private children's home that was due to open in Keynsham and could accommodate a maximum of 4 children.

The Director of Children's Services & Education replied that any provider that moves into the local area must notify the Council of their intentions and ensure that they are Ofsted compliant.

Councillor May commented that children's homes run by the Local Authority had ceased, resulting in young people having to be sent out of area. He added that a feasibility study was due to take place over the summer as to whether Charlton House can become a residential special school and that this might also involve a number of other sites with differing structures in place.

Councillor Liz Hardman said that she was pleased to see the progress that was being achieved through the work of the St John's Foundation. She asked which schools had been involved in the initial programme.

The Director of Education & Safeguarding replied that schools within Twerton & Whiteway took part in the initial programme.

Councillor Hardman commented that she was looking forward to the forthcoming double roll-out across Radstock, Midsomer Norton & Paulton and asked what the criteria for selection was.

The Director of Education & Safeguarding replied that for the first programme the criteria was connected to pupils in receipt of Free School Meals / Pupil Premium and that this time all Nurseries and Primary Schools would be approached to take part.

Councillor May informed the Panel that St. John's had attended a recent meeting of the Health & Wellbeing Board and said that the minutes of that meeting should be circulated to the Panel.

The Chair said that she was likely to raise the issue of Culverhay under the Safety Valve report, later in the agenda.

Councillor May replied that Bath College had decided not explore a future use of Culverhay as that would involve adding a new build facility to the site. He added that this was why there were looking at options for the SVEZ as a solution for our young people needs to be found.

He informed the Panel that a decision relating to the redeployment of Culverhay for educational uses, supporting our most vulnerable children by providing SEND and Alternative Provision needs in B&NES through the redevelopment of the former Bath Academy school site was due to be taken by Cabinet on 6th June.

The Chair asked if this would include a decision relating to the on-site swimming pool as this was also an important local facility.

Councillor May replied that this was not for discussion with this Panel, but said that he had met with the Ward Members and would report back when a decision was made.

Councillor Robin Moss said that he found the prospect of using the SVEZ as part of a skills learning site an interesting one, given that a Development Order was in place following a recent round of decisions.

Councillor May replied that he understood the local sensitivities regarding the site and had discussed the matter with Councillor Paul Roper, Cabinet Member for Economic and Cultural Sustainable Development. He added that the needs of local young people should at least be discussed.

The Chair, on behalf of the Panel, thanked Councillor May for his update.

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

Laura Ambler, BSW ICB addressed the Panel and highlighted the following sections from the update report that had been provided. A copy of the report will be attached as an online appendix to these minutes.

Health Inequalities funding update

BSW Integrated Care Board is working to tackle health inequalities across B&NES, Swindon in Wiltshire. In B&NES, a health inequalities core network team was established in May 2023.

The team works closely with partners in a number of areas including overseeing a cross-partnership B&NES Health Inequalities Network, awareness raising, supporting health inequalities work at the RUH and in primary care, holding outreach events and coordinating and allocating health inequality-related funding streams and leading applications for any further grants relating to health inequalities.

Grants have been awarded to 12 projects in B&NES for 2024/25 including inclusive afterschool clubs for children with SEND, perinatal mental health support, targeted family support for vulnerable families in Twerton and developing a new service for people experiencing homelessness to access palliative and end of life care.

Royal United Hospitals awarded £21.6m grant for energy efficiency projects

A £21.6million decarbonisation grant will bring the Royal United Hospitals Bath NHS Foundation Trust one step closer to achieving its net zero goals.

The grant has been awarded by the Department for Energy Security and Net Zero as part of the Salix Public Sector Decarbonisation Scheme and will fund improvements including more environmentally friendly lighting, insulation, and heating and cooling controls.

When the proposed improvements are completed, by 2026, they will result in an estimated 24 per cent annual reduction in carbon emissions over which the RUH has direct control.

Dental Van update

On 7th February, the Department of Health and Social Care published its Dental Recovery Plan with the ambition to make dental services faster, simpler, and fairer for our population. One priority is to bring dental care directly to under-served, more isolated communities via the deployment of mobile dental vans. On the same day as the dental recovery plan was published, the Secretary of State named the 12 ICBs where dental access remains most challenging, which included BSW ICB.

Options are now being appraised for the acquisition of vehicles, and a national market engagement exercise as part of a procurement exercise has taken place. We are still waiting for the service specification. We are keen in BSW to ensure these plans support and supplement the ongoing local work with the Public Health teams to support access and our focus on inequalities and oral health plans.

We are working across the South West and as an ICB we are scoping the unmet need and vulnerable populations and key demographic areas for a targeted approach, including specific areas for the van to deliver services with a view the service will commence September / October 2024.

Councillor Joanna Wright asked how our local areas will become included in the visits of the Dental Van.

Laura Ambler replied that they are currently mapping where the local vulnerable communities and populations are and then assessing where they will be the most receptive. She added that, without promising, it was understood that B&NES has particular pockets of deprivation that would benefit from this work.

Councillor Wright asked if there would be enough dentists and dental staff available for the service to progress.

Laura Ambler replied that they are looking at the models of staffing that can be introduced alongside the levels of treatment that can be offered as part of the project.

Councillor Wright asked if the ICB were able to feedback in anyway to Government the issues relating to NHS dentists not being paid enough.

Laura Ambler replied that she was aware that this was being addressed at a national level, but was not able to supply any direct information at this time and offered to bring further information to the Panel through their future update reports.

Kevin Burnett said that he welcomed the Health Inequalities funding and asked if any of it could be assigned to proactive projects.

Laura Ambler replied that they are attempting to do that more in this second round of funding and that Mental Health was identified as a key focus on this occasion.

Kevin Burnett asked how much influence the ICB will have on the decisions relating to the Dental Vans.

Laura Ambler replied that there will be a national policy directive, to which a regional plan will be formed and that we will need to respond to.

Councillor Dave Harding said that he was sure that Councillors within the rural areas of B&NES would help in providing further data if needed.

Laura Ambler thanked him for that offer.

Councillor Ruth Malloy commented that it was interesting to hear about the new service for people experiencing homelessness to access palliative and end of life care and would appreciate further information on that in future reports when appropriate.

She also asked if further information could be given to the Panel on the proposal for pop-up Dental Services.

Laura Ambler replied that they could seek to bring further information on these matters in their future update reports.

Kevin Burnett raised the following subject areas and asked if any additional information could be given to the Panel on them.

- BSW ICB SEND representative
- Partnerships for Inclusion of Neurodiversity in Schools (PINS)
- Pharmacy capacity levels
- Police – Attending incidents with Mental Health
- RUH Services
- Birth Trauma

Laura Ambler said that written updates could be provided on most of these matters and gave the following initial response.

BSW ICB SEND representative - Gill May is the Chief Nurse for BSW ICB and its SEND representative. Amongst other work she sits on the Local Area Inclusion Board. They would like to discuss further with Kevin what level of information he is seeking.

Partnerships for Inclusion of Neurodiversity in Schools (PINS) – An excellent project and one that they can provide further information to the Panel.

Police – Attending incidents with Mental Health – Very constructive work has been undertaken with the Police on their approach to attending incidents that involve people suffering from Mental Health issues.

The Chair, on behalf of the Panel, thanked Laura Ambler for her update.

128 SEND HOME TO SCHOOL TRAVEL POLICY REVIEW

Councillor Paul May introduced the report to the Panel and sought to compliment the Head of SEND for the work that has taken place regarding the review of the policy. He stated that the policy was currently in a consultation phase and that they would welcome any comments from the Panel.

He added that they have met with the local Parent & Carers Forum who have been complimentary on the work of the review.

The Head of SEND addressed the Panel and explained that the current SEND Home to School Travel Policy had not been updated for several years and since then a number of DfE guidance updates have been issued, causing the current policy to become out of date.

She stated that the SEND Home to School Travel Policy has been reviewed and rewritten in line with new Department for Education guidance and has also been updated to clarify the eligibility criteria and to outline all travel support options for SEND children and young people more clearly.

She informed the Panel that the consultation process has been followed robustly, including writing to 477 parent/carers, contacting 69 schools, transport providers, B&NES parent carer forum and consulting our B&NES colleagues.

She said that feedback was given online, via the telephone and at 6 in person events. She said that through the consultation process some concerns had been raised regarding whether any changes would make it more difficult for young people to attend their current schools and said that this was not the case and that as part of the Annual Review process they discuss travel options with families and would continue to do so.

She added that some families have also raised the issue of whether they could change schools once the proposed new facilities are in place as they might be closer to their home.

Councillor Robin Moss thanked the officer for a comprehensive report, but said that he felt that the issue was bigger than just this review. He added that the policy was likely to have financial consequences on a budget that is already overspent and that any changes need to be fully understood as to how they will affect our young people and their families.

He stated the need to make the most of the money that is being spent.

Councillor May replied that the changes are driven by the conditions that have been set down by the Government and that the procurement of the associated transport services is a separate matter. He added that this review was about establishing whether this policy is correct and fair for our young people and their families.

The Head of SEND added that there is an option for families to have an individual budget to claim fuel expenses so that their young person can be driven to school by somebody that they know.

Councillor Liz Hardman said that she considered there to be three significant changes to the current policy.

1. A child / young person would attend their nearest appropriate school if it is able to accommodate their needs.
2. The policy has become much clearer for parents, carers and those officers who work within the process.
3. Car Seats – need to be provided by the families for those children / young people who need them.

She said that she also recognised the need to address the overspend within this work area at some point.

The Head of SEND replied that 11 specific points in the guidance need to be included in the policy and that previously there was only 4 that had been in place. She added that this was mainly references to other pieces of legislation.

She added that the guidance concerning the distance between the nearest school and the nearest appropriate school was not that specific previously.

She informed the Panel that the matter of available car seats was not concerning for a large number of local children or young people, but it was the case that some Taxis do not always have one available for a journey.

Kevin Burnett asked when the policy would be implemented.

The Head of SEND replied that a Single Member Decision confirming the policy was due to be taken on 10th June and then steps would be taken to implement this for new applications. She added that at each EHCP Annual Review the issue of travel to school would be discussed and stressed that there are no plans to move children from their current schools.

She added that as previously mentioned some families have enquired about attending the proposed new schools when they are ready to open as they could be significantly closer to home than the school currently being attended by their child / young person.

Kevin Burnett queried why, on page 36 of the agenda, there was reference to a key milestone as being the end of Year 3.

The Head of SEND thanked him for this observation and said that it should be the end of Year 2.

Kevin Burnett asked what the key costs were affecting SEND travel to school.

The Head of SEND replied that she felt that this was a question that the B&NES Transport Team should respond to.

The Director of Education & Safeguarding commented that significant consultation has been undertaken with connected parents and carers and that the new policy was bringing clarity rather than changes.

He acknowledged that separate discussions need to be had regarding the overall budget and stated that one of the biggest drivers to consider was being able to have enough operators in place.

Councillor May said that young people across all areas of the Council will have different needs and that our Transport Team are looking at ways to take this matter forward. He said that first and foremost a policy needs to be in place.

Councillor Dave Harding asked how many young people will no longer be able to receive transport to school.

The Head of SEND replied that transport to school would not be taken away from any child or young person with SEND. She added that the eligibility hasn't changed, but the type of transport may differ in the future.

Councillor Joanna Wright asked whether the issue of the Climate Emergency had been addressed as part of this review and if the use of electric vehicles or cargo bikes should be promoted.

The Head of SEND replied that this was an interesting point and that some families might be willing to look at these options.

Councillor Wright asked if School Streets had any part in this process to be able to deliver healthy routes to school.

The Head of SEND replied that she did not think that it would as it is a specialist provision that is put in place and that it would normally take the child or young person directly into the grounds of the school.

The Director of Education & Safeguarding commented that travel training, to enable a young person to travel to school or college independently, would be offered when deemed appropriate.

Councillor May informed the Panel that he had a meeting scheduled with the Commissioning team and would raise with them the issue of electric vehicles.

Kevin Burnett noted that within the report around a third of the 32 respondents were not satisfied with their Home to School transport provision and asked if their concerns had been addressed as part the review.

The Head of SEND replied that many parents prefer their child to travel in a taxi with a guide and that this was not the best use of Council budgets. She added that from speaking with the Parent & Carer Forum there are some frustrations when the service is late when a vehicle is having to make multiple pick-ups.

Kevin Burnett asked how it is checked that parents select the nearest appropriate school and was that done in conjunction with the Transport team.

The Head of SEND replied that applications for these children & young people are not part of the normal school admissions process when they have an EHCP in place and that they are discussed as part of their Annual Review process.

Kevin Burnett referred to HERS (Hospital Education Reintegration Service) travel and how changes to this structure had affected how some young people are able to access this service. He asked if any comment could be given on whether the resources allocated to the service were being used as expected.

The Director of Education & Safeguarding replied that they would have to make enquiries on this point and form a response for the Panel.

Kevin Burnett asked if this policy solely related to SEND pupils and was there a separate travel policy for non-SEND pupils.

The Head of SEND replied that yes there was a separate travel policy for non-SEND pupils, without an EHCP, for when they live over three miles away from their school.

Councillor Ruth Malloy asked if the independent travel training could take place prior to Year 10 if deemed appropriate for the child or young person.

The Head of SEND replied that all three of the Special Schools within B&NES offer this service and it was considered that a definite date needed to be put in place for when this issue will at least be first discussed. She added that the schools make the judgement for when it is most appropriate to begin these discussions.

The Chair on behalf of the Panel thanked all parties that had taken part in the review and the consultation process.

129 SAFETY VALVE UPDATE

Councillor Paul May introduced this item to the Panel and began by apologising that they were unable to provide a full report at this stage. He said that this was a complicated area of work and was a major issue for the Council to get correct.

The Director of Education & Safeguarding added that the Council has until May 24th to submit updated plans to the Department for Education (DfE), working closely with three DfE-appointed Safety Valve advisers.

He informed the Panel that an independent review of the finances and plans involved has been carried out and that they are working on refinements within their existing plan.

He said that Safety Valve is an opportunity for rapid service improvement to be achieved in the following areas.

- Early Help
- SEND Support
- Free School / AP School capital investments
- 7 new Resource Bases
- Bolster SEND Team Leadership

He stated that all draft plans have been shared with the local Parent & Carer forums.

Kevin Burnett said that it should be acknowledged the excellent work the officers within the Council do for their pupils with SEND. He said he was concerned though as to whether this work will put them under undue pressure / scrutiny from the DfE in terms of cost cutting from what they would like to see versus what B&NES needs.

He asked if assurances could be given with regard to being able to stick to their plan, once it has been submitted, and not to have to dilute on the request of the DfE. He added that it was acknowledged that all of these issues, especially the new schools would take time.

The Director of Education & Safeguarding thanked hm for his comments and replied that there were no plans to reduce the amount of funding through our EHCPs and that the plans contain the right level of service investment. He added that he was very comfortable that the plans will not be detrimental to the Council.

Councillor Robin Moss commented that the Council is in the position it is in because the current Government has been removing funds from Councils for many years. He stated that he was concerned that services would be continued to be cut in order to fund the National Insurance tax cut plans due for September.

He asked how confident was the Cabinet Member for Children's Services that these plans will come to fruition, especially for those schools that will be expecting to receive certain services.

Councillor May replied that if plans within Safety Valve should fail it will leave a lot of Local Authorities in trouble and stated the Government needs to provide these services to our schools and our young people. He added that the officers involved have worked tirelessly in a professional way to have these plans in place. He stated that Early Help provision must remain in place and that they would endeavour to submit a full report to the Panel on this issue in due course.

Councillor Liz Hardman asked why the Council has failed to meet its original targets that were submitted to the DfE and how confident are we that by submitting this revised plan that the payments from the DfE will be reactivated, and what will happen if the plan is not achievable.

The Director of Education & Safeguarding replied that in terms of the initial plan negotiations they probably did not allow themselves enough time to achieve their proposals. He added that if the finances are not received it will be an issue, but that officers will do all they can to achieve the set targets.

He said that the deficit does not sit on the Council's budget line currently and therefore this is an unknown factor at this stage.

Kevin Burnett commented that the current situation has been determined by the years of austerity and cuts that have been made to school's services and SEND provision and asked what will happen if schools do not have provision in place for pupils who have an EHCP.

The Director of Education & Safeguarding replied that the academisation process within B&NES was quite rapid and that school services then became the responsibility of those academies and there remains a degree of inconsistency about services that are provided by them. He added that the Council could become proactive in this area if national policy was to be updated.

Councillor May stated that this was major issue and the decisions taken will affect the whole Council.

The Panel **RESOLVED** to approve the following recommendations.

- i) The Panel was briefed on the progress to date on the direction of our safety valve work.
- ii) The Panel was assured that the Local Authority and its partners are working to deliver a programme of work that improves services, delivers more school places for children with SEND and reduces financial pressures.

- iii) In consultation with parents/carers, and stakeholders we have renamed our programme the SEND Collaboration for BaNES, as this reflects the overarching aims of the work.
- iv) Note that the financial issues facing the Council are a national issue affecting all Local Authorities. The council's position is that SEND remains an area of Education policy in urgent need of reform, and that the current system is dramatically underfunded.

130 SACRE ANNUAL REPORT

Councillor Eleanor Jackson addressed the Panel. A copy of her statement will be attached as an online appendix to these minutes whilst a summary is set out below.

We flatter ourselves in this country about the degree of 'tolerance' towards and between the main faith communities and individual 'people of faith' but I think this is meaningless if it is based on ignorance and lack of understanding. Conversely, the Hebrew Scriptures Book of Psalms explain more about the Israeli attack on Gaza than any BBC news guru. Religious faith itself is meaningless if it is kept as a private hobby and does not address real life problems.

So where does this leave SACRE? We should thank the officer and the RE advisor for producing the Report, but it should be appreciated that more than any other council work I can think of, it is volunteers at the heart of it. We owe a special debt to Jane O'Hara, the chair, from the Bath Inter-Faith Group.

The SACRE report is not about 'naming and shaming', though we know from the recent OFSTED Report that about a third of schools in England do not observe their legal obligations. Rather, it is to identify and commend good practice, and to encourage schools with resources and advice, as well as training, for example on the Holocaust.

It is still my ambition to produce material on 'black religious experience' and utilise Fairfield House appropriately. SACRE is about opening children's eyes to a new world where they can develop their spirituality and ethics and co-operate in society, whether they believe or not.

Councillor May said that he would like to encourage all young people to have an understanding of the many religions and beliefs that are present in society today.

Councillor Liz Hardman asked if the increased budget of £15,000, agreed last year, was now the baseline figure that would be carried forward.

The Head of Education Commissioning replied that it was her understanding that this figure was now the baseline budget.

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

131 PANEL WORKPLAN

The Chair introduced the workplan to the Panel and the following subjects were noted as potential future items of discussion.

- Suicide Prevention
- Safety Valve Update
- Budget Update – 3rd Sector providers
- GP Services – Access / Waiting times / Closures (ICB Update)
- Dental Services / Provision (ICB Update)

The Panel **RESOLVED** to note their current workplan alongside these proposals for future work areas.

The meeting ended at 12.29 pm

Chair(person)

Date Confirmed and Signed

Prepared by Democratic Services

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Bath & North East Somerset Council		
MEETING/ DECISION MAKER:	Children’s and Adults Health and Wellbeing Policy Development Scrutiny Panel	
MEETING/ DECISION DATE:	10th June 2024	EXECUTIVE FORWARD PLAN REFERENCE:
TITLE:	Adult Social Care Transfer Evaluation Report	
WARD:	All	
AN OPEN PUBLIC ITEM		
List of attachments to this report:		
Appendix 1: ASC Transfer Evaluation - Strengths and Areas of Improvement		

1 THE ISSUE

- 1.1 Bath and North-East Somerset Council (B&NES) and what is now the Bath and North East Somerset, Swindon & Wiltshire Integrated Care Board (ICB) made a decision not to extend the Integrated Community Services contract with HCRG Care Group for the three-year extension term in May 2022 (Non-extension Decision Ref: E3362). This contractual arrangement expired with HCRG Care Group on 31st March 2024.
- 1.2 Following the non-extension decision, the council completed a detailed options appraisal, and the decision was taken to transfer Adult Social Care (ASC) to B&NES Council (Decision Reference E3393 November 2022). The safe transfer of Adult Social Care Services took place on 1st April 2024 for Adult Social Work (including Direct Payments team) and Adults with Learning Disabilities and their Families Day Services (including Shared Lives, Employment Inclusion and Supported Living) from HCRG Care Group to B&NES Council.
- 1.3 The transfer of ASC services saw a compliment of 237 staff from HCRG Care Group transfer to B&NES. The Adult Social Care Directorate now represents 19.5% of the council’s total workforce.

1.4 This report evaluates the key aspects of the transfer of Adult Social Care services back to the council as of 1st April 2024 and provides an overview of the initial evaluation of the effectiveness of the transfer alongside lessons learnt. Appendix 1 details the strengths and areas of improvement identified resulting from the initial evaluation of the ASC transfer project 7 weeks post transfer date of 1st April 2024.

2 RECOMMENDATION

The Panel is asked to;

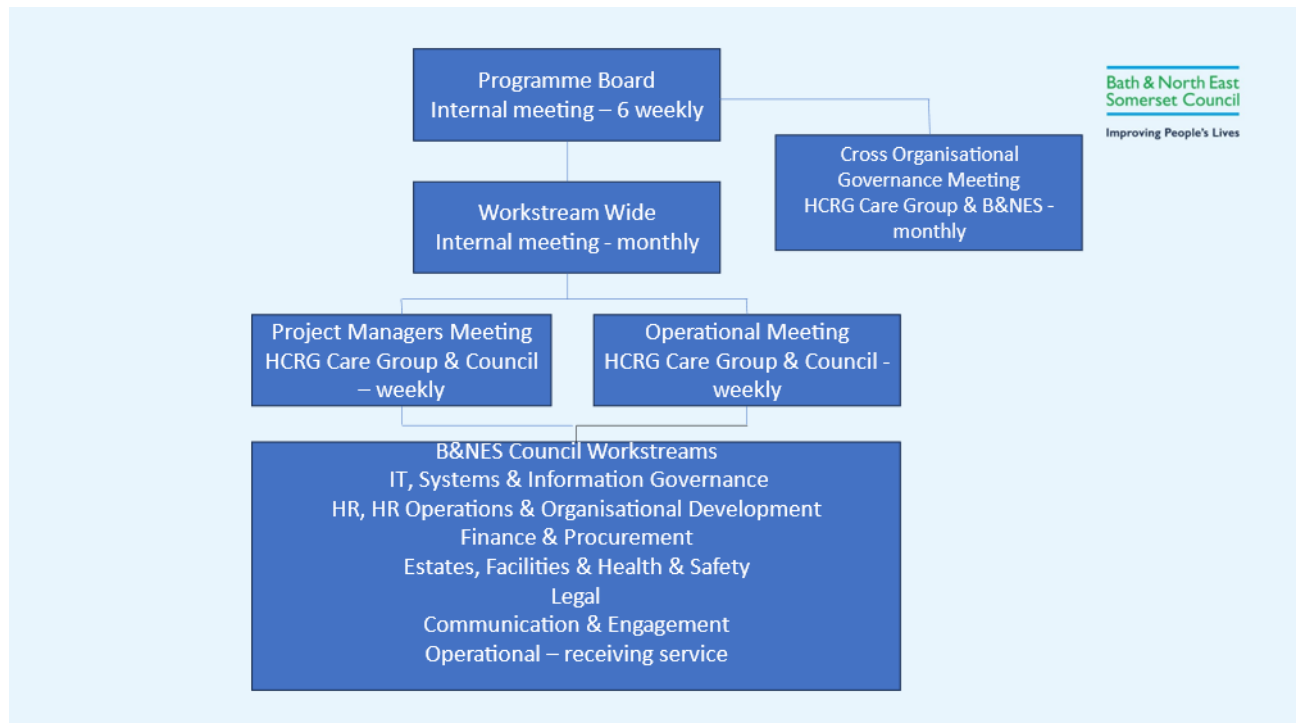
2.1 Note the evaluation of the Adult Social Care transfer of services to B&NES Council on 1st April 2024 and lessons learnt.

2.2 Feedback to officers any areas of consideration and learning for future transfer projects.

3 THE REPORT

3.1 From the outset of the ASC transfer project, the commitment to ensuring a safe transfer of services with minimal disruption to service users was paramount and underpinned decision making. This has been achieved through robust project management and complimented by strong partnership and collaborative working between B&NES and HCRG Care Group.

3.2 ASC Transfer Programme Governance Structure and Assurance Reporting



3.2.1 A robust project governance framework was implemented to manage the ASC transfer of services with a dedicated Programme Board, which met every six weeks and was chaired by the Director of Adult Social Services (DASS). Over the duration of the transfer project there have been regular progress assurance reports to Cabinet, Scrutiny Panel, Corporate Management Team, Senior Leadership Team as well as monthly briefings with the Lead Member.

3.3 Project Workstreams

3.3.1 Positioned below the Programme Board were a number of workstream groups that met monthly to mobilise the transfer of services, these were dedicated meetings for each corporate service supporting the safe transfer of services. The monthly workstream wide meeting was created to increase representatives' understanding of the complex interdependences across all workstreams, map key milestones and record workstream risks. Output and updates from these multiple workstream groups on were presented at the Programme Board.

3.3.2 Weekly operational meetings were held with the Assistant Director Operations, this supported agile decision making to manage and mitigate any operational risks identified over the course of the project period. This approach has been instrumental to ensuring a safe transfer of services on 1st April 2024 with limited disruption to the transferring workforce and service users. The Assistant Director Strategy, Transformation and Governance was instrumental in the design of the programme and oversaw the governance and implementation of the safe transfer.

3.4 Collaboration with HCRG Care Group

3.4.1 ASC have over the last 4 years undertaken 2 other transfer projects from HCRG Care Group (Safeguarding Team and Community Resource Centres & Extra Care). The learning from these projects was considered in the scoping phase of the ASC transfer project and established a strong foundation long before mobilisation started.

3.4.2 Due to the size and complexity of the programme for B&NES, the same project manager who had led the two previous transfer projects was specifically deployed to lead the project management. This built confidence early in the project for both B&NES and HCRG Care Group. The Assistant Director Strategy, Transformation and Governance provided strategic leadership over the project transfer, as part of the wider Community Services Transformation programme. This collaborative approach has delivered a safe and well managed transfer with minimal disruption to service users and the transferring workforce.

3.4.3 Through the project transfer there were joint meetings between B&NES and HCRG Care Group project managers to channel and manage the vast and critical exchange of information between organisations. Meetings held with HCRG Care Group Operations Senior Manger enabled transferring services to be represented and ensured that the council obtained first hand operational information to facilitate a safe transfer.

3.4.4 The cross-organisational meeting which was attended by the ASC Leadership Team and senior management team from HCRG Care Group was used as a joint escalation platform to mitigate and address any emerging issues for each organisation. The proactive approach adopted by B&NES and HCRG Care Group ensured a jointly owned and collaborative approach to the effective management of the transfer for both organisations.

3.5 Audit – Level 4 Substantial Assurance

3.5.1 An audit of the Adult Social Care Transfer - Governance and Programme Management was undertaken as part of the 2023/24 annual audit plan. The outcome of the audit was Level 4 Substantial Assurance (October 2023).

3.5.2 The key findings and conclusion of the audit report stated ‘that the overall governance and programme management arrangements in place for ASC transfer are robust and comprehensive. The programme is supported with key evidential documentation and records which are of a high standard, well organised and presented. The auditor was able to fully trace and track key projects tasks/ decisions, progress and the current risks. The project team have committed to project management excellence by reflecting on past experiences and identifying areas for improvement’.

3.6 Service Users

3.6.1 As of 2nd April 2024 (1st April was a bank holiday) service delivery has been maintained and business as usual activity has continued to ensure all service users continue to receive the support and care expected. Since transfer, we have not experienced an increase in complaints and there have been no examples of service users or individuals not being able to access adult social care.

3.6.2 Prior to transfer, service users who were in receipt of an active service received a letter from HCRG Care Group, with input from B&NES, to advise about the change in provider as of 1st April 2024. The key message was to reassure service users that staff working in the services would also transfer and therefore individuals would continue to see the same people and receive the same level of care and support with no change to service delivery.

3.7 Staff Engagement

3.7.1 Throughout the duration of the project, regular briefing sessions were held with the transferring staff. These were mainly face-to-face and provided a platform for HCRG Care Group staff to raise questions, receive project updates and follow presentations from B&NES on specific areas of interest requested by the transferring staff. Topics covered included pensions, terms & conditions, IT, training and development as well as health safety and wellbeing. These sessions created an opportunity for ‘getting to know each other’ as well as being able to effectively plan the welcome and induction of the transferring workforce to the council. These engagement events were jointly planned and hosted between HCRG Care Group and the council; the sessions were well attended and all questions raised in the sessions were followed up with written responses in a timely manner.

3.2.7 Trade Union representatives were involved in a designated briefing session at an early stage in the transfer and attended a series of meetings with managers from HCRG Care Group and the B&NES transfer project team in the months leading up to transfer. These meetings provided key information and resolved queries as they arose.

3.8 Induction

3.8.1 Initial feedback received from transferred staff is that they felt welcomed and well supported in the first weeks since transfer. Highlights noted have been the execution of the IT equipment rollout, quality of the equipment and onsite support during the initial two weeks. The creation of the buddy system for managers and the daily operational huddle meetings have also been noted as positive in resolving early operational issues. The induction and training programme developed for the transferring staff has been well received and the next steps will be to formally gather further feedback from staff about their experience of the transfer as well as working with the organisational development colleagues to evaluate the training uptake. Both evaluations will be undertaken in the coming months and will be formally reported to the ASC Transfer Assurance Programme Board.

3.8.2 The council leaders were delighted to welcome the Adult Social Care teams to the council. Will Godfrey, Suzanne Westhead and Cllr Alison Born the Lead Member Adult Services have visited the newly transferred teams. This has been well received by staff groups who valued the early opportunity to engage directly with senior leaders and the Lead Member to showcase the services, highlight opportunities and reinforce the bringing together of ASC services at B&NES.

3.8.3 The Assistant Director Operations has commenced meeting with transferred teams to proactively ascertain their views on current service delivery and better understand what is working well and what needs to be improved to continue to best meet the needs of service users. So far, four teams have engaged in this process and a common theme in the feedback from staff is the need to review the experience for B&NES residents from first contact with ASC through to receiving commissioned services from Adult Social Care. The feedback gathered from the staff teams will be used to inform future proposals on the new target operating model for Adult Social Care to deliver the right outcomes for B&NES service users.

4 STATUTORY CONSIDERATIONS

4.1 The Health and Care Act 2022 gave Care Quality Commission (CQC) new powers to assess how local authorities meet their duties under Part 1 of the Care Act 2014. CQC inspection will assess the performance of Local Authorities to assure CQC and the Department of Health and Social Care about the quality of care in the area and consider any improvements that are required.

4.2 B&NES received notification of CQC inspection on 15th April and the first stage of the process was completed by the deadline of 3rd May. The first stage was an information return to CQC which covers 38 different information topics (approx. 180 items of evidence) including a Self Assessment report. The second stage of the inspection will be a site visit, ASC is awaiting a date from CQC. The regulator has advised they will give 6-8 weeks notification of the date before they will undertake the site visit.

5 RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS (FINANCE, PROPERTY, PEOPLE)

5.1 The total projected cost of ASC mobilisation to 31st March 2025 is £2.28m, which is £1.165m less than original commitment against the adult social care

reserve, giving a higher balance for funding service pressures and investment into social care improvement.

Spend	2022/23	2023/24	2024/25	Total
Revenue	£324, 932	£1,014,886	£597,173	£1,936,992
Capital	£0	£343,000	£0	£343,000
Total Project Spend	£324, 932	£1,357,886	£597,173	£2,279,992
Cumulative Spend	£324, 932	£1,682,818	£2,279,992	

5.2 The table below outlines the resource commitment across the council as part of the safe transfer of staff from HCRG Care Group.

5.2.1 Table One: IT Resources

Resource	Volume
IT & Equipment	Laptop Handover 141 Mobile Telephone Handover 182 Delivery of the following work from home equipment: 45 Monitors, 53 Mice/Keyboard & 42 Laptop Risers Created 235 network accounts
Payroll run	Payroll run for 232 (not including 3 multiple employees, 1 maternity & 1 sabbatical) Staff payroll totalling: Gross £452631.67 and Net £361314.74

5.2.3 Table Two: Staff Induction Training (completion figures at end of April 2024, the next monitoring of induction training completion rate will take place at the end of May)

Course	Format	Number Completed
Cyber Security	eLearning	85
GDPR	eLearning	51
Health, Safety and Wellbeing	eLearning	83
Corporate Induction	Instructor Led	68
Customer Complaints for staff	Instructor Led	49
* Customer Complaints for Managers	Instructor Led	5
Learning Zone Overview	Instructor Led	64
Clear Review	Instructor Led	59
Basic First Aid	Instructor Led	25
Infection Control	Instructor Led	18
Booking Spaces, Rooms and associated technology	Instructor Led	36

*This is based on the group of 15 managers only

5.3 Continuation of Programme One Board (ASC Transfer Assurance) for 6 months post transfer to maintain oversight and assurance of transferred services. This meeting will continue to be chaired by the Director of Adult Social Services with representation from the Assistant Director Operations, Assistant Director Strategy, Transformation and Governance, transfer project team as well as corporate services colleagues from Business Change Hub, HR and finance.

5.4 A Business Transfer Agreement (BTA) was drawn up between both parties. This legal document was enacted so each party was clear on organisational liabilities and risks prior and post transfer. The BTA is also a record of all transferring assets, both physical and non-physical, with details of processes and responsibilities for each element.

5.5 From a pay perspective the April pay run went smoothly. B&NES HR colleagues diligently worked through some data queries relating to the TUPE data received early March 2024 (28 days prior to transfer) in the post transfer pay run period. This ensured that all 237 transferees were paid on time and accurately in accordance with the formal data we had been given from HCRG Care Group. The relevant HR teams continue to review and respond to specific queries around individual pay and terms and conditions which we continue to work with HCRG Care Group to resolve. We have completed the review of the information that has been sent informing us of each individual's pay and terms and conditions, and there is a route for people to query or challenge where they disagree with the terms and conditions applied.

6 RISK MANAGEMENT

6.1 The suite of project documentation contained an agile project risk register with an associated mitigation strategy and a risk owner responsible for managing and escalating if required. The register was monitored and reviewed regularly at Programme Board and was reviewed by the Lead Member, reported to the Corporate Risk Group and Corporate Management Team. Each workstream had its own risk management framework which fed into the overarching project risk register and this was reported at the Programme Board for oversight and monitoring.

6.2 As part of the continued oversight and assurance, post transfer the ASC Transfer risk register has been updated to reflect risks post 1st April 2024 and will be maintained for a minimum of 6 months. This has also included an update to the ASC Risk Register and Corporate Risk Register in relation to the transfer.

7 EQUALITIES

7.1 The Equality Impact Assessment is included in Community Services Transformation Programme – Preferred delivery options for 2024/25 and 2025/26 Decision Reference E3489. No specific EIA issues have been raised because of the impact assessment carried out for the proposed transfer of services from HCRG Care Group to B&NES due to the service delivery model not changing at the point of transfer and no change to the service offered to B&NES residents.

8 CLIMATE CHANGE

- 8.1 No negative impacts are expected to result from the transfer of ASC services back to B&NES Council on climate change. The continued service delivery arrangements are comparable to the previous service provision for Adult Social Care services delivered by HCRG Care Group.

9 OTHER OPTIONS CONSIDERED

- 9.1 A full options appraisal was undertaken prior to the decision taken in November 2022 to transfer ASC services back to the council from HCRG Care Group. This is detailed in Decision Reference E3393.

10 CONSULTATION

- 10.1 There has been extensive collaborative consultation between the council and HCRG Care Group throughout the delivery of the ASC transfer.
- 10.2 The council has proactively engaged, informed and consulted with council Trade Union representatives on a monthly basis from November 2022 up until the point of transfer and additional funding for Trade Union facilities time was built into the mobilisation costings to support the transfer programme.
- 10.3 Following a council enquiry requesting the detail of the HCRG Care Group employee representatives, in accordance with TUPE Regulation 13 and 14, HCRG Care Group made arrangements to elect employee representatives and reached agreement for council Trade Union representatives to attend the joint formal consultation meeting as part of the November 2023 staff briefing session.
- 10.4 The ASC Senior Leadership Team alongside HR colleagues will continue to engage with Trade Unions through the monthly Corporate Trade Union meeting to resolve any issues for staff in relation to the transfer and TUPE in line with council policy and procedure.

Contact person	Suzanne Westhead, Director Adult Social Services
Background papers	Decision to transfer Adult Social Care (ASC) to B&NES Council (Decision Reference E3393) and Community Services Transformation Programme – Preferred delivery options for 2024/25 and 2025/26 (Decision Reference E3489)
Please contact the report author if you need to access this report in an alternative format	

Appendix 1

ASC Transfer Evaluation – Strengths and Areas of Improvement

May 2024

Strengths identified as part of the ASC Transfer Evaluation

Robust project management framework with key documentation in place strengthened by strong leadership and decision-making – Level 4 Substantial Assurance audit outcome.

Project documentation included the creation of a lessons log, which was used in workstream meetings to record early learning as it emerged. This helped to mitigate or escalate issues rapidly and it turn limited service disruption.

Workstreams well resourced and engaged. Effective project planning and mobilisation across all workstreams with full engagement from corporate colleagues.

Good post transfer planning, for example, in-person IT support across all base locations, rapidly resolving IT issues and well executed welcome and induction & training plan for transferring staff (including buddies) with engagement from Chief Executive and Director Adult Social Services.

Dedicated project management resource from both organisations which supported timely flow and management of information requests and agile decision making.

Scheduled staff briefing sessions were a positive way to respond to direct questions, plan how best to welcome colleagues to the council and start to build new working relationships that were different to the existing contractual relationship.

Weekly input from operational leads from both organisations to support a safe transfer with no disruption to service users, this supported understanding of services and decision-making.

Monthly update to the Lead Member to give assurance and oversight on key milestones of the project. High level of oversight and scrutiny of the transfer through frequent assurance progress reports to SLT, CMT, Cabinet and Scrutiny Panel.

Robust governance arrangements in place early on with clear terms of reference and escalation routes which ensured assured progress reporting.

Monthly engagement sessions with Trade Unions providing assurance and progress updates on the project with specific focus on 237 transferring workforce.

Areas of improvement identified as part of the ASC Transfer Evaluation

Receipt of key project critical information only one month prior to transfer date impacted on the ability to allocate effective resource to resolve issues in preparation for day one (2nd April 2024). Internal resources therefore were redirected to support critical activity, which impacted on the ability to effectively support wider project requirements.

TUPE information was not received by B&NES until the statutory 28 days prior to the transfer date, a significant amount of work was compressed into a small window prior to transfer date of 1st April 2024. This impacted on the sign off of the Business Transfer Agreement.

Missed opportunity by not having direct operational discussions with service managers during the final month of transfer. This approach may have been more effective in problem-solving and clarifying key information that directly impacted on service delivery.

Dedicated internal support to manage all key information requirements for developing the Business Transfer Agreement. Although the work on the BTA commenced in Autumn 2023 much of the information requirement was compressed to 2 months before transfer.

More diligence on initial costs presented by corporate support services on identification of required projected mobilisation costs and ongoing business as usual support costs post transfer.

B&NES corporate teams having direct access to HCRG Care Group national corporate team for IT/Systems, Finance and HR to ensure swift exchange of key data and information to resolve queries resulting in less post transfer resolution requirements and less burden for project managers to resolve technical issues.

Subject Matter Expert (SME) meetings involving both organisations should have been scheduled across key workstreams earlier in the project. This would have reduced reliance on the project team to respond to technical questions where SME meetings would have been more efficient and saved valuable project resources.

Lessons Learnt - the lessons log will continue to be updated for 3 months post transfer to allow all transfer activity to be captured. This will include feedback from the wider project group and from transferred staff. Findings will be compiled as a written report to be presented to the ASC Transfer Assurance meeting and shared with the Business Change Hub for wider organisational learning.

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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
10TH JUNE 2024				
6 Jun 2024 10 Jun 2024 E3540	Cabinet Children, Adults, Health and Wellbeing Policy Development and Scrutiny Panel	Adult Social Care Transfer - Evaluation Report	Claire Thorogood Ann Smith Tel: 01225 477272 Tel: 01225 396212	Director of Adult Social Care
15TH JULY 2024				
9TH SEPTEMBER 2024				
Page 34 9 Sep 2024	Children, Adults, Health and Wellbeing Policy Development and Scrutiny Panel	3SG - Service Delivery Update	Suzanne Westhead	Director of Adult Social Care
FORTHCOMING ITEMS				
	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 Public Health and Prevention, Director of Children & Young People

Ref Date	Decision Maker/s	Title	Report Author Contact	Director Lead
	Children, Adults, Health and Wellbeing Policy Development and Scrutiny Panel	Community Services Transformation - Community Health Services offer from April 2025	Laura Ambler, Natalia Lachkou	Director of Adult Social Care
Page 35	Children, Adults, Health and Wellbeing Policy Development and Scrutiny Panel	Child Sexual Exploitation / Modern Slavery	Mary Kearney-Knowles Tel: 01225 394412	Director of Children and Education
	Children, Adults, Health and Wellbeing Policy Development and Scrutiny Panel	Attainment Gap Project Update - St John's Foundation	Christopher Wilford Tel: 01225 477109	Director of Education

The Forward Plan is administered by **DEMOCRATIC SERVICES:** Democratic_Services@bathnes.gov.uk

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