

BATH AND NORTH EAST SOMERSET

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

Monday, 10th March, 2025

Present:-

Councillors: Dine Romero (Chair), Liz Hardman (Vice-Chair), Paul Crossley, David Harding, Ruth Malloy, Joanna Wright and Onkar Saini

Co-opted Members (non-voting): Chris Batten and Kevin Burnett

Cabinet Member for Children's Services: Councillor Paul May

Also in attendance: Mary Kearney-Knowles (Director of Children's Services and Education), Christopher Wilford (Director of Education & Safeguarding), Ceri Williams (Policy Development & Scrutiny Officer), Laura Ambler (Place Director for the B&NES ICB), Amy McCullough (Consultant in Public Health), Tish Bourke (BANES lead, DfE) and Giles de Rivaz (Head of Somerset Sub-region and RISE SW, DfE)

80 WELCOME AND INTRODUCTIONS

The Chair welcomed everyone to the meeting.

81 EMERGENCY EVACUATION PROCEDURE

The Chair drew attention to the emergency evacuation procedure.

82 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE AND SUBSTITUTIONS

Councillor Lesley Mansell had sent her apologies to the Panel, Councillor Robin Moss was present as her substitute for the duration of the meeting.

83 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were none.

84 TO ANNOUNCE ANY URGENT BUSINESS AGREED BY THE CHAIRMAN

The Chair informed Panel that she had been made aware that the Department for Health and Social Care has received a request from a member of the public asking the Secretary of State to use the powers under Schedule 10A of the National Health Service Act 2006 to call in BSW ICB's proposed changes to community-based care in Bath and North East Somerset, Swindon and Wiltshire, particularly the appointment of HCRG Care Group.

She explained that the three Local Authorities were being asked if they would support the call-in.

The members of the Panel gave an indication that they would support a call-in of this decision.

Laura Ambler commented that this matter had been discussed previously by the Panel and was part of a service configuration, not a change in services or transformation. She added that their priority is to ensure a safe transfer of services on 1 April 2025.

She explained that any transformation after this date would be discussed with service users.

She informed the Panel that Wiltshire Council had also considered whether to support the call-in and that they had decided not to.

The Chair addressed the Panel and said she was considering whether the number of co-optees for the Panel should be increased and was thinking of approaching Healthwatch to discuss the issue further.

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

Wendy Lucas addressed the Panel on the issue of respite care and Newton House. She stated that she was thankful for the support she had received since this matter had been first brought to the attention of the public.

She explained that should any changes in provision be required then this should be in place by September 2025 ahead of implementation in January 2026.

She informed the Panel that from the point of view of all the families who were currently in receipt of services from Newton House that it remains their preferred option to keep this facility open and providing its services.

She said that they were aware of the budget figures being discussed, but asked the Council to consider what the cost will be should this service be removed from the people currently accessing it. She added that these are real people who need support and certainty in their life.

Councillor Liz Hardman asked if any meeting had taken place with the Council since January 2025 and had any other provision been considered.

Wendy Lucas replied that one meeting had taken place between the families, Dimensions and the Council and that this had been a little difficult / feisty. She said that there remained a feeling that they were being kept in the dark.

She added that she was due to meet the Director of Adult Social Care later this morning.

She informed the Panel that no alternative provision had yet been identified and that assessments had been carried out for most of the 22 service users. She added that her child had not received an assessment since 2017.

She stated that the need for the service is likely to remain, if not grow, as the parents become older.

The Chair informed the meeting that the Panel were due to be updated further on this matter at their meeting in April.

Emily Massey, CEO of The Partnership Trust addressed the Panel on the matter of Fosse Way House. She explained that the Partnership Trust is a Multi Academy Trust of 18 schools within the primary and special sectors, predominantly based in Bath and North East Somerset.

She informed the Panel that Fosse Way School is one of their special schools located in the Radstock area of Bath and North East Somerset, and as part of the school, they currently offer an educational residential provision based on the school site; Fosse Way House.

She explained that Fosse Way House offers a 24-hour curriculum for up to 11 students aged between 11-19 years with a diagnosis of autism. Students are accommodated for 39 weeks a year (the school year) from Monday to Friday, returning home every weekend and holiday.

She said that the aim of the residential provision is to provide a 24-hour educational curriculum that enables students to develop social and communication skills within a residential environment, develop independence skills e.g. personal care, develop community links and transfer educational learning into a different environment.

She stated that the provision has been rated as Outstanding by Ofsted for the past three years, most recently in January 2025 and is one of the strongest provisions, if not the strongest provision, of its kind in the South West.

She explained that the young people that attend take part in a wide range of educational and social activities they would typically not get the opportunity to benefit from, while simultaneously being able to learn and develop independence skills through activities such as shopping, using public transport and preparing their own meals. Students are encouraged on a daily basis to make decisions, both for themselves and for the group.

She said that Fosse Way House seeks to breakdown the barriers to learning for these vulnerable young people and provides students with an environment where they are supported by a team of staff to learn fundamental independence and life skills that allows them to practice and feel safe to fail as they begin to establish these skills.

She added that Fosse Way House provides that missing link to their education in preparation for adulthood and that for the families who have young people with these needs it allows them to continue to stay together as a family, care for their other children, work within the area as well as support their child with these needs.

She informed the Panel that since 2008, 48 young people have resided at Fosse Way House, all of the students had a primary diagnosis of autism and lived in the

provision for a minimum of one year (the longest being seven years and the average likely to be 3 years).

She stated that the average cost of a 52-week residential placement with SEND can be substantial, especially when their placement at school has broken down. According to a 2023 report by the Local Government Association, the cost of such placements can range from £3,000 to £10,000 per week depending on the specific needs of the child and support required. This means that the annual cost can be between £156,000 and £520,000.

She said that based upon a model of a minimum of 5 to a maximum of 11 students, Fosse Way House costs £30,000 a year per student for some of the most vulnerable young people in Fosse Way School. She added that this is exceptionally low in comparison to other national figures and provides a 24- hour curriculum that upskills the young people to be able to generalise what is taught within the residential setting to reduce future levels of care and associated public funds in the longer term. She explained that the figure of £30,000 per student allows us to run the provision to a break-even point as this is not a profit-making provision.

She informed the Panel that the Local Authority have, for nearly 20 years, funded students to attend the provision and that funding has been allocated through their individual Education Health Care Plans or equivalent which are aligned with their needs. She added that unfortunately, notwithstanding a number of needs assessments still requiring completion, the Local Authority have reached the decision that they do not feel that there will be any young people within the authority whose needs require a placement at Fosse Way House from September 2025. We dispute this. As an education provision which is wholly funded by the LA the provision will no longer be able to function.

She stated that they would welcome anyone to come and visit and meet our wonderful staff and students and that they want to continue running the provision so they can continue to change the lives of many more students and their families.

She said that like the Local Authority, The Partnership Trust and Fosse Way School are committed to improving young people's lives and especially the most vulnerable young people and their families in our local authority.

Councillor Joanna Wright commented that there appeared to be some disparity on this matter as the Panel had heard of a backlog in respect of processing EHCPs and that they were now being told that there is no need for this provision.

Emily Massey replied that this was not an issue in terms of the backlog as all the current young people that attend Fosse Way House have an EHCP which states that they require a residential provision.

Councillor Wright asked if she believed that there would be a new cohort of young people who would need and benefit from receiving the support provided by Fosse Way House.

Emily Massey replied that she believed that there were young people who should continue to receive this provision and others that would benefit from beginning to

receive it. She added that she felt that 6 out of the current 7 attendees should continue with the provision and was aware of 4 or 5 more that could begin to attend.

Councillor Wright said that she had been informed by a parent regarding this matter and that when she approached the Cabinet Member about it was told that it was not a decision based on the budget.

Emily Massey replied that they would not be able to provide the facility without the placements being funded (£30k per student) as they have been for the previous 20 years by the Local Authority.

Councillor Liz Hardman asked if the provision was only available to students that currently attend Fosse Way School.

Emily Massey replied that this was the case currently, but it could consider allowing other students to attend following the end of their regular school day – transport provision allowing.

Councillor Hardman asked if a residential provision formed part of the EHCP for all current attendees.

Emily Massey replied that it does.

Councillor Hardman asked if there was any other provision locally that the students could attend should Fosse Way House be not able to continue.

Emily Massey replied that the students would be able to remain at Fosse Way School but only attend for regular hours of schooling.

Councillor Paul May, Cabinet Member for Children's Services thanked Emily for making her statement and said that a response to it would be given at the next meeting of the Panel.

86 MINUTES: 16TH DECEMBER 2024 & 13TH JANUARY 2025

Kevin Burnett referred to the minutes of 16th December 2024, page 6 of the agenda pack, and said that it read Standing Advisory Council on Religious Education not 'Select Advisory Council'.

He further advised, page 7 of the agenda pack, that it was the Local Authority that needs to have a new Agreed Syllabus ready to be used by schools in September 2027, not B&NES SACRE.

He referred to page 13 of the agenda pack and stated that HERS is run by the Partnership Trust and that reference to the RUH should be removed.

With these amendments in mind the Panel confirmed the minutes of the previous meetings as a true record and they were duly signed by the Chair.

87 ANNUAL EDUCATION PERFORMANCE REPORT

The Director of Education & Safeguarding introduced the report to the Panel and highlighted the following points from it.

- In the early years foundation stage (EYFS), the percentage of children reaching a good level of development increased to 72%, higher than regional and national averages.
- Key stage 2 performance has not returned to the post-pandemic levels when performance in the combined reading, writing and maths (RWM) was higher than national and regional. This year, the percentage of pupils achieving this measure rose from 58% to 60%, higher than the southwest average of 58% but lower than the national average of 61%.
- Key stage 4 attainment in grades 9 - 5 English and Maths and in Attainment 8 is once again higher than regional and national averages. This is to be commended.
- B&NES A Level results were higher in all measures than regional and national measures.
- Children with SEN support needs and those with an EHCP in KS4 have educational outcomes that are marginally higher than national. In KS2, attainment has generally been in line with or slightly above national; however, this year, it has experienced a slight dip below the national average.
- KS4 attainment in the FSM cohort remained broadly in line with national. The attainment gap in B&NES does not widen in secondary education, and their KS4 outcomes align with national for this group.
- Despite a slight improvement in EYFS and KS2 FSM outcomes, attainment within this cohort remains in the bottom quartile compared to all local authorities in England. Attainment is currently ranked 16th lowest at EYFS and 6th lowest at KS2, showing progress from previously being ranked 3rd lowest and the lowest in the country, respectively, in 2022/23. However, the disparity between our area and the national average in terms of the percentage of FSM children meeting the expected standard in KS2 RWM remains substantial, at 33% and 46%, respectively.
- B&NES, as a partner in the structures that govern a highly academised area, remains committed to playing its part in improving outcomes for our most disadvantaged group of children. We continue to fund and deliver projects in hand with the St John's Foundation and with partners, such as Black Families Education Support Group, in the early years and all schools.
- Alongside these existing commitments, the council is now looking at a wider approach to improving disadvantaged education outcomes. As previously presented to the scrutiny panel, our Public Health team are leading this work and their final report and action plan will be presented later today.

Councillor Dave Harding asked if the data could be divided into specific areas of the Council to show any elements of rural deprivation. He also asked if the data could be categorised to show the performance of those young people who are also Young Carers.

The Director of Education & Safeguarding replied that he did not have to hand the data relating to Young Carers and said that the data is not yet broken down geographically, but it was in the process of being so.

Councillor Liz Hardman referred to the under-achievement in Key Stage 2 and asked if any outcomes could be shared regarding the support provided by the St John's Foundation. She also asked what future support measures are to be put in place to support the FSM cohort.

The Early Years Adviser replied that the Language for Life project has now been rolled out to all early settings in Bath & North East Somerset, providing additional language development support to targeted children, with a focus on speech and language. She added that training for all staff on this issue really does make a difference.

The Director of Education & Safeguarding added that there were reports from the Primary Parliament and St. John's that could be shared with the Panel.

Councillor Onkar Saini asked what interventions were planned to support progress within Key Stage 2.

The Director of Education & Safeguarding replied that it was the responsibility of the Multi Academy Trusts (MATs) to attempt to improve the levels of achievement for their pupils. He added that the Local Authority is funding a number of programmes to enable the MATs to know more about what is considered to be best practice.

Kevin Burnett asked if it was felt that there was any correlation between the data for FSM pupils in EYFS and Key Stage 2.

The Director of Education & Safeguarding replied that there had to be and felt that the Language for Life programme would be of help.

Councillor Robin Moss said that he wished to recognise where improvements in results had been achieved and where these figures were seen as above regional / national average. He referred to sections 3.11 – 3.13 of the report and asked why the gap for FSM pupils remains despite the projects in place.

The Early Years Adviser replied that she had recently been analysing the data over the past 20 years and that for B&NES it was not always easy to talk about the attainment gap as the top end continues to increase. She said though that it should be noted that while the top end results increased this year by 1.5% FSM pupils increased their results by 8%. She added that the cohort size in a particular school / class was also a factor to be taken into account as it was seen that having more pupils from that cohort in a class was leading to better outcomes.

Councillor Joanna Wright commented that she would like to see further evidence of a plan being in place to improve these figures and said a process was required that would recognise the wealth disparity across the area.

The Director of Education & Safeguarding replied that a plan was being developed and that he was willing to be challenged further, but again stressed that this was not something that solely the Council could solve.

The Chair said that she would welcome an update on the plan / its timescale in some form to the May meeting of the Panel.

The Panel **RESOLVED** to;

- i) Note our pupils' overall positive education performance in B&NES early years settings and schools for the academic year 2023/24.
- ii) Note that there has been a slight improvement in education outcomes for Free School Meal (FSM)-eligible children in KS2 during the academic year 23/24, but the gap remains significant.
- iii) Be assured that Local Authority Officers continue to collaborate strategically with schools and partners and the DFE Regions Group to improve educational outcomes for all pupils in B&NES. The DFE Regions Group are in attendance today to provide an overview of their role with academies and the work they do to address academy and trust performance.
- iv) Note that the Local Authority remains committed to delivering initiatives aimed at enhancing outcomes for Free School Meal (FSM) pupils. This includes direct collaboration with schools to offer Continuing Professional Development (CPD) and training, support for early years settings, and a partnership with the St John's Foundation to provide additional assistance to schools with greater numbers of FSM pupils.
- v) Note that this year, the Local Authority has taken additional steps by conducting extensive research through our Public Health team. This research aims to examine the broader determinants of educational disadvantage in B&NES and develop an action plan for the Local Authority.

88 REGIONAL OFFICE FOR THE DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION - OVERVIEW OF ROLE WITH ACADEMY SCHOOLS

Tish Bourke (BANES lead, DfE) and Giles de Rivaz (Head of Somerset Sub-region and RISE SW, DfE) gave a presentation to the Panel, a summary of which is set out below.

The opportunity mission and Regions Group

The Opportunity Mission is focused on breaking down barriers to opportunity. We will deliver this through our four mission pillars.

- **Best start in life** - high-quality early education; early-child health; home-learning environment; family support.
- **Every child achieving and thriving** - high and rising school standards with a broad curriculum; excellent teachers; an inclusive approach to SEND; wider support and enrichment.
- **Skills for opportunity and growth** - a strong skills offer; pathways into work including youth guarantee, work experience, careers advice.
- **Family security** - removing underlying barriers to opportunity including tackling child poverty, improving housing and keeping children safe.

Roles and Responsibilities / How we Work

Schools:

- High quality trust delivery
- Addressing underperformance
- Enhancing school infrastructure and capacity
- Safeguarding in academies

Vulnerable Children: CSC and SEND:

- Intervention
- Improving performance
- Engaging with Local Authorities
- Care review implementation

BANES: Structure and performance

Structures

- BANES highly academised – 91.4 %
- 9 MATs, most with more than six schools; & 3 SATs

OFSTED performance

- Ofsted very strong with vast majority of schools with headline Ofsted judgement of Good or better, those with more recent inspections, performing well in sub-judgements.
- Trust with schools with less than Good are held to account for improvement, supported to improve

2024 Pupil outcomes

- KS2: ES RWM 60%, improving from 2023, but below NA of 61%
- KS4: Progress 8, 0.16 slight dip on 2023 but above NA of -0.03
- Disadvantaged: KS2 ES RWM 33% below NA of 46%; and KS4 progress 8 - 0.56, just above NA but still to improve

The Children's Wellbeing and Schools Bill

Keeping Families Together and Children Safe:

- Mandating local authorities to offer family group decision-making meetings
- Improving information sharing across agencies
- Strengthening the role of education in safeguarding
- Implementing multi-agency child protection teams

Driving High and Rising Standards for Every Child:

- Delivering commitments on school admissions, qualified teacher status, and the national curriculum
- Introducing new duties for schools and local authorities to co-operate on admissions and place planning; extending local authorities' powers to direct academies to admit children
- Changing the legal framework for opening new state-funded schools

Removing Barriers to Opportunity in Schools:

- Providing access to free breakfast clubs for every primary school child.
- Limiting the number of branded uniform items that schools can require

Accountability reform

- Two consultations published from Ofsted and DfE on 3rd February.
- Ofsted's consultation seeks views from parents, carers, professionals and learners on the way it carries out its inspections, and the way it reports them, with a new inspection framework and toolkits, and report cards.
- The DfE's consultation seeks views on the principles we propose should underpin an effective accountability system:
 - The approach to, and the principles of, school accountability;
 - The introduction of a new digital service – school profiles, which will be a one stop shop for parents; and
 - The approach to improvement and support, with a stronger more timely, proportionate and effective approach to intervention.

RISE (Regional Improvement for Standards and Excellence) Teams: Objectives

The goal of RISE teams will be to raise standards for all schools, as part of the government's Opportunity Mission. Through targeted intervention and a universal service, RISE teams will work to ensure that capacity and expertise from across the school system is used to deliver improvement.

- Schools facing particular challenges improve rapidly through bespoke targeted intervention for 12-24 months. Where necessary, RISE teams will

secure support high-quality organisations with a strong track record of improvement, such as an LA partnership or a MAT.

- Every school, with its Responsible Body, can navigate a path to improvement drawing on local expertise. RISE teams will make it easier for schools to do this by delivering a universal service to schools, signposting to hubs and best practice, facilitating connections between schools and trusts, and promoting peer review and networking.
- Every part of the country has a coherent set of local area priorities, working across local authorities and dioceses so that local partners work collaboratively to solve issues affecting children in their communities.

What does this mean for schools in BANES?

- Go deeper on disadvantage – South West Disadvantage Network / St John's Ten Year Foundation Fund / Big Education work
- Collaborate with each other and with the LA on SEND – It is only as a system that we will, together, solve the challenges around SEND and mainstream inclusion.
- Lead across the system – There is huge strength in schools in BANES. If you're not supporting others who need more support, why not?

Councillor Onkar Saini asked how schools would be identified for RISE interventions and how could it be ensured that the support given would be specific to that school. He also asked how they will address the challenge for maintaining standards after the intervention period has concluded.

Giles de Rivaz replied that the criteria was announced as part of the consultation that was launched on 3rd February 2025 and said that there were two categories of eligibility:

- Multiple 'Requires Improvement' judgements, with no structural change in status.
- 'Inadequate' judgement, with no structural change in status.

He added that from September 2026 if a school were to receive a judgement of 'Requires Significant Improvement' they would also be eligible to receive RISE targeted interventions.

He said that support would be tailored to the needs of each school, be collaborative and allow them to work within their current structure. He added that they would be matched with a supporting Trust / Local Authority and develop a bespoke package of measures.

He said that previously the amount of time available to provide support had been limited and that there was potential now for two years of provision which would hopefully lead to standards being maintained following the intervention.

Councillor Liz Hardman asked how the DfE Regional Office works with the Local Authority.

Tish Bourke replied that they are active in visits to local schools throughout the year and formally meet every term with the B&NES Director of Education & Safeguarding.

She explained that they have a standing agenda item for when the School Standards Board meets and also hold meetings with the Cabinet Member for Children's Services, local Diocese representatives and other partners.

Kevin Burnett commented that he felt that the current system was fragmented, and that responsibility should be given back to the Local Authority. He asked in what ways do they work with colleagues in terms of Health & Social Care and providing Support Services to schools.

Giles de Rivaz replied that the team's focus was on schools, but that there was a Vulnerable Children's Unit that has been established within the Regions Group. He explained that providing services to school was not part of their role / function, their role is to hold schools to account.

He added that it was hoped that the measures of providing school based nurseries and breakfast clubs would help local families. The free breakfast clubs will help ensure pupils start every day ready to learn, and in turn will improve behaviour, attendance and attainment.

He explained that within the work of RISE they will bring partners together and said that improving the outcomes for disadvantaged young people was a key issue to tackle.

Tish Bourke said that the Vulnerable Children's Unit was also working with the Integrated Care Board (ICB). She added that improving the outcomes for all children was important and that they will continue to work with the Trusts / Schools to seek these improvements.

Kevin Burnett stated that through government cuts and austerity measures services to schools have dissipated. He said that they need on the ground support to help our children as much as possible.

Councillor Joanna Wright said that she felt that more support was needed in schools and that support to young people in community spaces was lacking. She asked that they ensure that their priorities are coherent.

Giles de Rivaz replied that they were trying to bring cohesion to a fragmented system and bring schools back into the heart of their community. He said that the SEND system and school attendance were priorities for the team.

Councillor Paul May, Cabinet Member for Children's Services said that he welcomed the regular attendance of Tish at the School Standards Board and the work they are doing on SEND priorities. He added that they were working to reduce SEND costs by 2030.

He said that they had also inputted into some joint strategies with the ICB.

Councillor Ruth Malloy referred to the disadvantaged gap and asked if there was a South West Task Group.

Giles de Rivaz replied that there was not a single easy answer and that areas such as Devon & Cornwall will have different issues to tackle within their localities. He added that the Social Mobility Commission has also raised some factors to be considered.

The Chair thanked Giles and Tish for their attendance and proposed that they return to the Panel in around 12 months to update them on their work.

89 WIDER DETERMINANTS OF EDUCATIONAL DISADVANTAGE

The Consultant in Public Health introduced the report and highlighted the following areas.

The Challenge

Addressing inequality - At key stage 2: Disadvantaged pupils doing less well in B&NES than nationally e.g. 30% reaching expected standard at KS2 compared to 44% nationally. The gap between disadvantaged and non-disadvantaged pupils is large, with an attainment gap of 36% compared to 23% nationally.

At key stage 4: In 2022/23 in B&NES the attainment gap at KS4 had relatively narrowed and was more in line with the national attainment gap, though still wider. The gap between disadvantaged and non-disadvantaged pupils remains large.

Ambition - Reduce the attainment gaps by improving the performance of disadvantaged pupils across B&NES.

Whole system approach to reducing the attainment gap

In an average year, children spend around 20-24% of their waking hours in school and so around 76-80% of their waking hours outside of school. Socio-economic factors and the physical environment account for 30-55% of our health outcomes – the same factors also play a crucial role in education attainment.

The wider environment in which children and young people grow up in therefore has a huge role to play. As B&NES Council and system partners are in a position to influence some of these wider or core determinants, a whole systems approach to addressing the attainment gap helpful.

Project aim and methodology

Aim: Investigate the potential causes of the educational attainment gap in B&NES, with a focus on the core determinants of health outside of school settings, and make recommendations as to how a whole systems approach could help address the gap.

Research / potential solutions

What does the data tell us? What does the published and grey literature tell us? / What do professionals and young people tell us? / 60 + interviews and focus groups.

Multi partner task and finish group (Met 4 times – the final one as a workshop).

Triangulated findings inform Action Plan.

What the data tells us...

In primary schools in B&NES, the number of FSM pupils has almost doubled from 1,238 in 2015/16 to 2,407 in 2022/23 in B&NES (an increase from 9% to 18%). Poor attainment in the disadvantaged cohort is not restricted to a few schools in B&NES, but is more widespread, and across rural and urban areas.

There is a very weak association between the size of the disadvantaged cohort and attainment in the disadvantaged cohort in schools in B&NES. Schools in B&NES with 40% or more disadvantaged pupils have the lowest attainment for both disadvantaged and non-disadvantaged pupils (does not indicate causality).

Interviewees / Focus group participants

Education settings: The Hut / First Steps Twerton / St Martins Garden Primary / East Harptree and Ubley Primary / Oldfield School / Bath College / Director of Secondary, Lighthouse Partnership Trust.

B&NES Council: Head of Virtual School / Head of SEND / Education Inclusion Officer / Educational Psychologist / Welfare support.

Young people: Via Off the Record (care experienced young people) and Youth Connect.

Voluntary, Community and Social Enterprise: Brighter Futures / Nurture outreach service / Youth Connect South West / Mentoring Plus / Bath Area Play Project / Bath Mind.

Health and Care Services: School Nurses (multiple) / Family Nurse Partnership (multiple) Health Visitors (multiple) / Speech and Language Therapist / Early Years Community Practitioners (multiple).

Drivers of the education attainment gap

Many different factors and core factors are contributing to the education attainment gap - no one silver bullet. Can address by removing barriers and building protective factors - Poverty an over-arching factor.

Core Factors:

- Barriers to social mobility
- Barriers to community cohesion, inclusion and equity
- Inequitable social and cultural capital
- Under-resourced home learning environment
- More complex home social environment

- Reduced family and education setting relationship
- Health and wellbeing needs
- Reduced early intervention
- Limited engagement with services/settings

Specific challenges for B&NES:

- The visible gap between wealth and deprivation and its impact social mobility
- Difference in social, sporting and cultural opportunities that CYP access
- Focus on academia in schools and the impact of this on employment options and social mobility
- How different areas look (different investment in different areas) and the impact this has
- A lack of diversity and the impact this has on minority groups
- Large rural communities and challenges with public transport impacting access to education settings, public services and youth clubs

Action Plan

Approximately 65 actions / 5 priorities.

Takes an “equity-based approach” to reducing the attainment gap by suggesting that there should be a greater focus on removing the barriers to educational attainment to support those at greatest risk

Whole system approach

The following priority/outcome will be embedded in B&NES new Culture Plan: Help to address the educational attainment gap by increasing social capital, aspiration and social mobility in children and young people from disadvantaged families; for example, by supporting skills and knowledge development, enhancing identity and belonging, and reducing barriers to participating in the cultural and heritage offer.

This will also translate into practice... for example by being embedded in culture projects such as the new fashion museum; a national lottery bid for funding includes a CYP outreach post that (if the bid is successful) will proactively build relationships with communities, families and settings to support meeting this outcome.

Governance

Aligns well with the Be Well approach...

Take collective action on the social, economic, environmental and commercial factors that drive our behaviours, as well as supporting individuals and communities to make positive choices.

Work at different levels of the system to change not only the actions we take, but the structures that support them and the health beliefs that the system holds.

Exploit the value of working together on the building blocks of health (in this context the building blocks of educational attainment).

Both Be Well B&NES and the HWB have broad membership that aligns with the core determinants.

Update to and feedback from:

- School Standards Board
- School Heads Forum
- CDAS
- CYPs Sub-Group (reports to HWB)

Councillor Liz Hardman welcomed the report and said that she agreed with the recommendations. She asked what measures were likely to be put in place as part of the drafting of the action plan.

The Consultant in Public Health replied that a draft action plan was nearly complete and would look at expanding the culture and heritage offers to young people. She added that they would be working with schools to gather evidence with regard to funding as a larger cohort would equate to additional funding.

She said that they also planned to engage with private schools and external leisure providers.

Councillor Joanna Wright commented that she would like to see the report be given more of a profile, due to its importance, and suggested a press release be arranged in due course. She said that she was aware of the disparity across the area and that through her work on the Alice Park Trust that funding is not readily available.

She proposed a practical solution – all children / young people to be issued with a Discovery Card. She added that the Panel should seek an update on this work every six months.

The Consultant in Public Health replied that from a community element it was very important that there was wider awareness of the report. She said that she would take the suggestion regarding the Discovery Card away for further discussion with colleagues.

Kevin Burnett asked if they had considered involving Parish Councils in their plans at all.

The Consultant in Public Health replied that they had not and welcomed the suggestion. She added that they would also like discuss how the use of Section 106 funding through planning might be used for youth clubs or other elements of infrastructure.

Councillor Ruth Malloy said that she agreed with the suggestion of issuing a Discovery Card to all children and young people and also posed whether a Library Card should be considered as well. She said that young people also need supportive parents and carers so that they feel involved and encourage lifelong learning.

She referred to page 83 of the agenda re: Attainment by Ethnicity and said that they needed to be cautious with results as there are low numbers from the Black and Other ethnic groups in this cohort.

She said that support in languages should be promoted, especially for those young people that English is not their first language.

The Consultant in Public Health replied that as part of their work they intend to go out into the communities and discuss these issues across a range of generations. She said that opportunities relating to lifelong learning will be in the action plan.

She added that the relationship between parents, carers and schools will also be looked at. She said that an EIA would be required for when analysis of the ethnicity attainment is carried out.

Councillor Robin Moss said that he welcomed the report and agreed that for the KS2 figures there was no magic bullet. He stated though that the attainment gap has been there for quite a while and questioned why this remained an issue for B&NES.

The Consultant in Public Health replied that there were a number of Core Factors, in particular Poverty that remain factors within B&NES alongside the barriers associated with Social Mobility and geographical constraints.

The Chair commented that the Panel should be updated on the progress of this work in six months time.

The Panel **RESOLVED** to:

- i) Note the work underway on a whole systems approach to reducing the educational attainment gap.
- ii) Review the draft report and provide feedback.
- iii) Support the ambitions of the work by considering opportunities to champion the work underway.

90 CABINET MEMBER UPDATE

Councillor Paul May, Cabinet Member for Children's Services addressed the Panel and highlighted the following points to them.

HCRG

We are aware of an incident affecting the provider HCRG Care Group. We are working with them and others to fully understand the scale of the incident and any potential impact on health data. Patients should continue to access NHS care in the normal way. While investigations are ongoing and can take time, patients do not need to take any action or contact your care provider. Any individuals who are impacted will be contacted and advised in line with Information Commissioners Office (ICO) guidance.

Families First Partnership Programme

The Families First Partnership Programme (FFP) is a new national programme set up in the Department for Education, backed by over half a billion pounds of investment (£523.5m). The programme will work in partnership with local areas (local authorities, police, health, education and other relevant agencies) to improve their local services and systems that help and protect children and families.

Bath and North East Somerset have an engagement meeting regarding “readiness” with the Department of Education (DFE) on March 10th 2025. We will provide a regular update on implementation plans.

Councillor May announced that this would be the final Panel meeting for the Director of Children's Services & Education, Mary Kearney-Knowles as she was retiring. He thanked her for all the work she had done for the Local Authority.

The Chair, on behalf of the Panel, gave their thanks as well.

Kevin Burnett asked if any of the Families First work could dovetail with the work outlined regarding attainment.

The Director of Children's Services & Education replied that engagement sessions were planned to take place over the coming weeks and that transformation was planned to take place across 2025/26.

Councillor Liz Hardman asked if any further update could be provided regarding the Safety Valve programme.

Councillor May replied that he could not really add anything further to his written update and had asked the Director for Education & Safeguarding to provide an update to Cabinet as soon as any new information was available.

Councillor Joanna Wright asked if he was aware that the phonenumber for Bath Mind was due to close down on 31st March.

Councillor May replied that he believed that this was a contract issue for the ICB.

Councillor Wright said that she had been contacted by a resident who has been unable to make any contact with HCRG.

Councillor May asked if she would pass those details on so that the matter could be looked into further.

Councillor Robin Moss asked if any comment could be given regarding the number of local organisations, including Off The Record and Voices, who are set to receive less or no funding in the coming year.

Councillor May replied that he shared these concerns regarding funding, was not aware of the reductions for Off The Record and was due to meet with representatives from Voices later in the week.

The Chair thanked him for his update on behalf of the Panel.

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

Laura Ambler, Director of Place for Bath and North East Somerset, BSW ICB addressed the Panel and highlighted the following areas from within the update.

Engagement with local patients and community groups for NHS Ten-Year Plan

Community and patient groups in Bath and North East Somerset have taken part in a number of engagement sessions organised by the ICB throughout January and February.

The sessions have taken place as part of a national exercise to collect thoughts and opinions that will be used to develop the new NHS Ten-Year Health Plan. The plan will set out steps to create a health service that is designed to meet the changing needs of the country's population.

Panel members who wish to submit their own views for the plan can still do so via an online survey at www.change.nhs.uk . The NHS Ten-Year Health Plan is expected to be published in May.

Kevin Burnett asked if any feedback had been received from schools regarding the Big Brush Club initiative.

Laura Ambler replied that no formal feedback had been received yet, but said that all parties were aware of the programme and they expected a high take up of the initiative.

Kevin Burnett asked if any additional information could be provided on a number of previously raised matters, namely Pharmacies Review update, Alice Park Youth Festival and ICB budget deficit.

Laura Ambler replied that the Pharmacies Review was undertaken annually alongside colleagues from Public Health and that the outcome of that was not due yet. She reminded the Panel that the ICB's ability to be involved in direct provision was limited.

She said that they had received some initial headline feedback from the Alice Park Youth Festival, but was not aware of the need to provide any further information. She added that the event had been seen as a successful one and could liaise further with Councillor Wright if required.

On the matter of the budget she explained that the ICB were working on their annual submission alongside the Local Authorities. She said that all ICBs remain financially challenged.

Councillor Ruth Malloy asked if any comment could be provided on whether some local branches of Jhoots Pharmacies have had to close down recently and asked

what mechanisms are in place if a chain starts to have such difficulties and what advice can be given to residents.

Laura Ambler replied that she would take this matter away and ask for a response.

In response to an earlier point relating to Bath Mind she said that they were looking to recommission Breathing Space and that this was part of a current live procurement process. She added that they were aware of the issue relating to the phonenumber and were in the process of addressing that.

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

92 KNIFE CRIME PREVENTION TASK GROUP - FINAL REPORT

The Chair introduced the report to the Panel. She explained that part of the role of the Task Group had been to review current approaches to the prevention of knife crime across Bath and North East Somerset, to review knife crime prevention national best practice examples and to consider opportunities for improving prevention of knife crime across Bath and North East Somerset.

Councillor Eleanor Jackson addressed the Panel and explained that she had been a member of the Task Group. She said that incidents that have occurred in the local community have had a huge impact on residents.

She said that she felt that social media influence, the pandemic and exclusions from school were factors to be taken into account into the incidents that took place.

She raised three points for the Panel to be aware of:

- i) Deaths - The victims in a number of the incidents could be classed as innocent parties with no previous connection to their assailants or involvement in crime.
- ii) Mental Health support - need to take into account properly what is required to support young people with mental health needs.
- iii) Bullying – should more of a link have been made to this as a contributing factor.

She concluded by suggesting whether a module on Knife Crime should be included in the syllabus for schools to be able to raise awareness of the issue.

The Chair thanked Councillor Jackson for those comments and for her contributions to the work of the Task Group.

Councillor Joanna Wright asked why it was young males that were the main perpetrators of such crimes.

The Chair agreed that gender definitely was a factor and that girls seemed to be much less involved in incidents of this nature. She said the Task Group had looked at the factors such as peer pressure and the glamorisation of knife crime as part of their work.

She added that it was hoped that the steps being taken by the Council and its partners on Early Help would lead to the creation of better outcomes for our local children and young people.

The Chair commented that the ongoing work of the Violence Reduction Partnership would address these issues.

Councillor Paul Crossley asked if data was available on the types of knives used in these incidents.

The Chair replied that the data was not broken down to that level for the work of the Task Group.

The Panel **RESOLVED** to;

- i) Endorse the Task Group's findings and recommendations, and;
- ii) Agree for the recommendations to be forwarded to the Cabinet/Cabinet Member for response.

93 TARGETED EARLY HELP / PREVENTION SERVICES - ESTABLISHMENT OF A NEW TASK GROUP

The Chair introduced the report to the Panel. She explained that during the recent Task Group review looking at knife crime prevention, members recognised the importance and value of investment in early years and preventative services.

She said that the Group would be asked to learn about the work taking place around targeted early help and prevention for children and young people across the Children's Services department and to consider opportunities based on the evidence for the Council to improve its future provision.

The Panel **RESOLVED** to;

- i) Agree to establish a Task Group to consider targeted early help and prevention for children and young people;
- ii) Endorse the provisional terms of reference, as detailed in para 3.8;
- iii) Delegate authority to the Panel Chair and Vice Chair to finalise the Task Group membership;
- iv) Request that the Task Group's findings and recommendations are reported back to the Panel for endorsement within six months of its first meeting.

94 PANEL WORKPLAN

The Chair introduced the item to the Panel and asked for suggestions for future reports to the Panel.

Councillor Hardman suggested that they receive an update from the Violence Reduction Partnership.

Kevin Burnett reiterated that the Panel should be updated on the work of the Wider Determinates of Educational Disadvantage project.

The Panel **RESOLVED** to note their current workplan and these proposals for future reports.

The meeting ended at 1.15 pm

Chair(person)

Date Confirmed and Signed

Prepared by Democratic Services