

**Royal Borough of Kingston upon Thames
Safety Valve Agreement**

Quarter Four 2021/22 Summary Update Report

Date Submitted	11th March 2022
Data Date	28th February 2022
Signed off by S151 Officer	Sarah Ireland
Signed off by Director of Children's Services	Ian Dodds
Background documents	Safety Valve Agreement SEND Futures Plan

Kingston continues to make consistent progress on the SEND Futures Plan including the conditions associated with the Safety Valve Agreement. The risk register (Appendix D) has been refreshed and now includes a section on risks that span all of the workstreams and additional risks that have been identified in the last quarter. There have also been some changes to the level of risk and further mitigating actions added and there are more details within the summary report below. The total number of education, health and care plans (EHCPs) is slightly in excess of the number that was forecast in the Safety Valve Agreement (SVA), at the point of the January census. Schools also continue to report an increase in level and complexity of need that will need to be closely monitored moving forward. The number of specialist places within the borough is another critical factor and although there has been good progress on the new ASC Special Free School it is still a concern that opening in September 2023 is a very tight deadline. The opening of this school is critical alongside the expansion of other specialist places to ensure that we can effectively meet the needs of children and young people in Kingston. It is also important to note alongside the increase in need that there is significant price inflation for placements across SEND education settings regionally, particularly in post-16 provision and also in out of borough placements, partly due to the lack of specialist places. Despite the increased risk, a good level of confidence remains that the majority of the terms and conditions for 2021/22 will be met and that this work will support the achievement of conditions associated with future years.

Progress and challenges with the SEND Futures Plan were presented and discussed at Schools Forum in both January and the papers published on the [Schools Forum meeting agenda](#) on the Council's website.

The SEND Partnership Board paper provides a detailed update on the five SEND Futures Plan workstreams including progress made, emerging issues and upcoming priorities. The most recent update on progress is attached as appendix C to this report. A summary update on each of the safety valve conditions is included in the table below with further detail on each area in the appendix.

There is a good level of assurance given for all but five areas of the Safety Valve agreement. Since last quarter we have changed the level of assurance on four conditions. There are now four conditions that have a low level of assurance as we do not believe the target will be reached in these areas at the end of Q4, these are conditions 3.3, 3.4, 3.5 and 3.7. There is further information on the reduction of assurance levels in the report below. There continues to be monitoring activity across all conditions and we are confident that progress is being made to ensure that we are continuing to meet the conditions within the agreement.

Agreement Condition	Assurance Level			
Condition 2: Maximum Forecast DSG Deficit Profile at year end £28.6m	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4
	Good	Good	Good	Good

Progress update:

There is a good level of assurance that this target will be met as evidenced within January's [Schools Forum reports](#) and appendices A and B.

The current projected deficit on the DSG Fund before Safety Valve funding is £28.2m compared to the max threshold set of £28.6m. The continuation of our multi-agency work will be essential to ensure that demand is controlled whilst the local area continues to meet the needs of children and young people within the borough. Demand management is a critical part of ensuring that the DSG fund is in a more sustainable position, alongside the cost of placements. The work is documented in the SEND Partnership Board update (Appendix C) and further work is summarised in 3.1 and 3.3 below.

The key indicators to note are:

KPI	SVA Target	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4
Max cumulative deficit before safety valve funding	£28,607,000	£27,886,000	£28,260,000	£28,363,000	£28,192,000
Estimated Max number of EHCPs @ Jan census	1,537	1,550	1,537	1533	1546 (Jan actual)
Increase in EHCPs at Jan 22 census (projected)	+101	+121	+101	+97	+110 (Jan actual)
Increase in EHCPs @ 28th February 2022		1,447 (+18)	1,470 (+23)	1536 (+66)	1560 (+24)

Condition 3.1: Improve support available in schools to manage demand more effectively and reduce escalation of need.	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4
	Good	Good	Good	Good

Recent impact and progress - Early Years onwards

- i. The Inclusion Charter resource continues to be developing well. The Inclusion Charter itself is complete, alongside the school audit, systemic and operational guides. The next steps of implementing this resource is to promote the work that has been completed to professional partners.
- ii. Transition framework has been finalised and is due to be circulated to primary and secondary schools in March; this has been produced in collaboration with school partners, AfC colleagues and other key partners. A number of resources have been developed including a Google form, checklist, timeline and FAQs which will improve the transitions process at both primary to secondary school and secondary to post-16.
- iii. Work continues around the consistency of the Local Offer in terms of Quality First Teaching.
- iv. SENDCo Bitesize training is in progress; workshops for secondary schools commenced in January. The training is covering topics such as the SEND Code of Practice, Person Centred annual reviews and the process of applying for an EHC Needs Assessment

v. The schools' quality assurance team are now undertaking quality assurance work of EHC Plans. This is developing an understanding of what quality of assessments/ annual reviews is required to make Plans person centred and strengths focussed.

vi. As a result of multi-agency participation work in the Council for Disabled Children's Holistic Outcomes session, bespoke workshop sessions have been introduced on Multi Agency Development of Holistic Outcomes. The initial session was delivered in December with participants attending from across the system, further sessions have been scheduled.

Recent impact and progress - First 1,001 Days and Early Help

vii. The Partnership audit of the impact of Resilience Networks on families has been completed and findings shared with relevant stakeholders, report is to be produced.

viii. Interactive Video Guidance is now available to families of children of any age (previously only those under 1 year old) and open to social care to help support and guide them.

ix. The Children's Centre Partnership held a review of the previous strategy and work carried out to support the new strategy in 2022.

x. Funding secured for Reducing Parental Conflict, via the Department for Work and Pensions which is led by Learning and Development and supported by the Parenting Coordinator. Family Coaches have been identified that will deliver the programme.

xi. Funding secured from Violence Reduction Unit that will be used for a parenting program where parents are harmed by their children, titled 'Who's in Charge?'

Condition 3.2: Expand specialist provision to avoid placements in more expensive Non Maintained Special Schools and independent special schools.	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4
	Good	Good	Good	Good

Progress Update

i. Work is on-going with the Department for Education and Ambitious About Autism to open the new special free school, at the Moor Lane site. It is anticipated that the ESFA will submit the planning application in March, with a view of a decision being taken at the Council's Planning Committee in May. A September 2023 opening therefore remains achievable, but is very tight.

ii. Phase 2 of the Malden Oaks post-16 SRP is on schedule for opening in September 2022 and will enable an expansion from 16 to 24 places.

iii. Further opportunities to expand local specialist places are actively being pursued.

£329,000 in cost mitigations have been secured to date compared to the £191,000 target. More places have been created than anticipated when the Safety Valve Agreement was set. The cost of alternative placements in independent or special schools has also increased which increases the cost mitigation per place but has impacted in achievement of savings elsewhere in the plan.

Condition 3.3: Manage demand for Education Health and Care Plans (EHCP) by scrutinising provision at each annual review and continuing to work with consultants Mastodon C to forecast and manage EHCP growth during 2021-22.	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4
	Good	Good	Good	Low

Progress Update:

The total number of EHC plans stands at 1560 at the end of February, representing a 6.4% increase over the past

twelve months. We have changed the level of assurance for this condition to red as the number of EHC Plans at the January census slightly exceeded the projection within the Safety Valve Agreement and the target at 1558 for the end of March has also been exceeded. There continues to be an increased level and complexity of need that is being reported in borough, and also regionally and nationally, and demand management needs to be closely monitored moving forward whilst continuing to ensure that we are meeting our statutory duties.

The Education, Health and Care Needs Assessment panel, which began in September, has continued and provides a multi agency forum to moderate decision making and is ensuring robustness around decision making.

The EHC Needs Assessments multi-agency review group is developing a targeted approach to the increase in EHC Needs Assessment requests in collaboration with the School Improvement Partners and other SEND Leaders and an action plan is being developed. In conjunction with this a cross borough peer working group, including school leaders, is being established consisting of strong inclusive leaders to support schools that have been identified. Other support will be available to schools depending on their identified areas of development. The purpose of this targeted approach with schools is to improve inclusive practice and to support and meet the needs of children in mainstream schools that have SEND. This is part of our demand management approach and once schools have been identified their support will commence in the Summer term.

Bimonthly multi agency quality assurance of Education, Health and Care plans continues to happen. There has been continued improvement of quality, the amount of plans that have been assessed to be good or better has increased every quarter, particularly around specification and quantification of provision.

Annual reviews remain a key priority with AfC and key partners, there has been collaborative working to make improvements to the review process and also provide continued and on-going multi-agency training to all partners. The improvements we have made to the annual review process have had an impact on the cessation of plans where we have exceeded the target of ceasing plans as stated below, (this is still being reconciled with SEN2 data).

The table below shows a cumulative total through each quarter.

KPI	SVA Target	Q1 (May)	Q2 (Aug)	Q3 (Nov)	Q4 (Feb)
Issued plans	172	24	52	101	182
Ceased plans	72	-7	-22	-35	-84

Condition 3.4: Improve efficiency of commissioning services to drive down cost.	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4
	Medium	Medium	Medium	Low

Progress Update:

A new Associate Director for Business Development and Strategic Commissioning starts in March 2022 and their post will focus on strategic commissioning across AfC including SEND. Their main focus will include improving commissioning practice and process and maximising capacity and expertise within the team. They will be working with the Head of Strategic Commissioning who has been in post since December. The recruitment process for the permanent roles within the SEND Placement Commissioning team has been completed, the new structure includes 1 x SEND Commissioning Manager and 1 x SEND Commissioning Operations Manager and 1 x SEND Placement Co-ordinator. This new structure will allow for a more structured and strategic approach to SEND Placement Commissioning and with the introduction of the new post there will be more capacity in the team to work with providers to improve quality of SEND Placements and minimise costs. The new structure will commence in April and the SEND Placement Co-ordinator will be in post in May.

The Senior SEND Placement Commissioner is working to continue to improve the quality and value for money of SEND placements and good progress is being made against their objectives. Negotiations are on-going with education providers who have been prioritised with regards to value for money and quality of their placements. At present there is a focus on high cost individual placements and where there is a large number of placements in one setting. Meetings are scheduled throughout the rest of the academic year, with independent special schools and colleges being the main priority, to ensure that quality is being maximised and value for money is being achieved. The post pandemic placement market is exceedingly complex. There are difficulties in negotiating price on current placements and the ongoing fee increase requests that exceed normal levels of inflation. These increases continue to present budgetary pressures.

A system is also being trialled for the SEND team to directly refer individual young people to commissioners when in-year fees appear too high, the young person has not attended the placement or the placement has not been able to provide full range of delivery within EHCP. This level of individual pupil work is starting to result in cost reductions.

There has been a reduction in cost in Further Education (FE) colleges on a per pupil, per placement basis compared to last year. 66% of FE colleges have committed not to pass on inflationary increases for the 22/23 academic year, 33% of FE colleges have confirmed that they will be applying for price increases, the impact of this is to be further analysed following the 31st March 2022, which is the phase transfer deadline.

We have received 18 fee increase notifications from national providers where we currently place young people for the next academic/financial year. This already has a projected impact on current places to Kingston of +£120K. One of our local colleges that provides education for 43 Kingston children and young people is proposing a 7% uplift, the impact of this will not be known until June when all placements are finalised. Given we are in phase deadlines, this increase in fees is likely to have a greater impact than currently stated.

£250k in savings/ cost mitigations have been achieved in the financial year compared to the savings/ cost mitigation target of £351k for the full year. The savings have been achieved based on independent negotiating and targeted work with providers and access to the SLCP for inflationary negotiations. The average cost of independent placements has increased from the estimate of £33,313 to £34,779 for pre 16 placements and from the estimate of £34,051 to £38,812 for post 16 placements. Although significant progress has been made in this area further work is required to support longer term sustainability.

A low level of assurance has been given as it is likely that the full target will not be achieved and due to complexity of the post pandemic market, difficulties in negotiating current price placements and the ongoing fee increase requests that exceed normal levels of inflation.

Condition 3.5: Increase contributions from health and social care.	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4
	Medium	Medium	Medium	Low

Progress Update:

The current actual increase is £227,000 and represents the funding agreements confirmed and made to date. The projected contributions are estimated to be £300,000 however this is dependent on the funding split that is agreed at the Joint Agency Panel for the remainder of the year. The remaining £73k is the anticipated figure for EHCPs that will be agreed before the end of the financial year. There is an anticipated shortfall compared to the target of £299,000.

The increase across the year is partly the result of a clearer framework and more proactive agreements about which partner should be picking up which costs as well as because of increasing numbers of children requiring EHC Plans as well as alignment with the needs of the cohort. The actual changes agreed to date are summarised in the table below:

Partner	Actual Increase in contribution relative to 2020/21 Q1	Actual Increase in contribution relative to 2020/21 Q2	Actual Increase in contribution relative to 2020/21 Q3	Actual Increase in contribution relative to 2020/21 Q4
Children's social care	-£111k	-£31k	+79k	+79k
Adult social care	-£75k	-£1k	-3k	-3k
Children's health	-£43k	-£11k	-31k	-30k
Adults health	+£69k	+£75k	+181k	+181k
Total	-£160k	+£32k	+£226k	+227k

A low level of assurance has been given to this area as the savings target for this financial year will not be achieved. There is on-going work to improve joint funding panels, especially at 16 to 25 years so that all partners meet their statutory duties. There continues to be uncertainty and inability to forward plan due to funding arrangements not being transparent between partners.

Condition 3.6: Commission a Local Government Association (LGA) peer review and implement any recommendations arising from it which drive sustainability in their high needs system.	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4
	Good	Good	Good	Good

Progress Update:

The Schools Forum High Needs Sub Group held its second meeting in January and productive discussions were held on the spend on the High Needs Block and also regarding the proposed implementation of the new banding system; this meeting was valuable and will help shape the future of the spend in the High Needs Block. Other topics that were covered in this meeting were SEND placements, phase transition, Targeted High Needs funding and supporting inclusion in schools across the borough.

The Parent Carer Engagement Officer has been developing closer working relationships with families across the borough and has been attending local events to raise the profile of their role and ensuring parents and carers are aware of the newly created post. This is helping to ensure that parents and carers of children and young people with SEND are involved in the SEND Futures Plan.

The Parent Carer Engagement Officer is leading on the implementation of the Coram SEND Parent Champions scheme and is acting as the Parent Champions Coordinator. Parent Champions are parent volunteers who use their time to talk to other parents about childcare and other local services available to families. Parent Champions for SEND focus on what specialist support is available locally and nationally, understand the barriers families often face in accessing services, and are able to offer practical solutions. Nationwide planning meetings have been attended and this information will be shared at a local level to ensure that the implementation of the scheme can be as effective as possible.

Condition 3.7: Reforming of the authority's post-16 offer, including but not limited to development of new provision.	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4
	Good	Medium	Medium	Low

Progress Update:

This condition is being progressed as part of Workstream 3 'Local Provision'. The update on the post-16 provision is in Condition 3.3 and the capital condition.

The average cost of post 16 placements has actually increased this year and we have not achieved most of the £120,000 target. Average costs have increased across the majority placement types and particularly in independent specialist placements as shown on the dashboard in appendix A. The table below shows the difference between Q4 cost of placements in various settings vs the target in the SVA. The reasons for the increase are driven by inflation and increased energy costs, ceasing of lower cost placements and increased level and complexity of need. The average cost of placement at a post-16 setting has increased by 3.7%. Whilst the team are continuing to work hard to minimise costs the level of inflation is presenting significant pressures on the continued rise in the cost of placements.

Placement Setting	SVA Target	Q4 Cost	Difference
>16 - Average cost of all settings	£11,877	£13,690	+£1,813
Independent School >16	£34,051	£38,812	+£4,761
Independent Special School >16	£29,202	£37,247	+£8,045
In borough Special Schools >16	£24,949	£28,786	+£3,837

Training has been offered to services to improve understanding and knowledge of transitions and our responsibilities. Training with The National Development Team for Inclusion/ DfE was held with career leads, school professionals, the Local Authority and CCG, and there was good engagement from schools. The session enabled all partners to rethink the approach that is currently taken with regards to outcomes and how to improve them for children and young people. The team will be reviewing what further action can be taken to mitigate future costs for this growing older cohort and will also be assessing the longer term impact of Covid 19 on more affordable placement options e.g. apprenticeships.

Project work has begun with the National Development Team for Inclusion around preparation for adulthood with a focus on careers guidance and development of holistic outcomes. This work will embed pathways into post 16 for learners with SEND. Further support has also been secured to develop a post 16 transitions framework mapping out key roles and responsibilities for all partners

SENDCo training sessions have been held to improve understanding and knowledge of transitions and responsibilities of preparing CYP for adulthood at the earliest opportunity.

The Next Steps programme is now delivered as an integral part of EHC Plan annual reviews in Year 9 and 11 and offered as a one-to-one interview to EHC plan and SEN support learners in Year 10. The Next Steps programme is an integral part of the transitions pathway. The Next Steps programme for academic year 2021/22 has commenced with advisors currently prioritising year 11 reviews to discuss post 16 pathway plans and phase transfer.

Condition 3.8: Contribute to the reduction of the cumulative deficit via alternative council funding sources in each financial year covered by this agreement.	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4
	Good	Good	Good	Good

Progress Update:

An additional £201,000 was received as a block transfer for the Early Intervention Outreach offer and this is in addition to the £462,000 in block transfers agreed as part of DSG budget setting process.

The general fund contribution totalling £1,200,000 was also agreed this year and has been built into budget projections next year.

The Schools Forum met in January following an autumn consultation to consider the prioritisation of education funding for the 2022/23 budget and this now has been agreed and block transfers are confirmed. £644k of block

transfers have been agreed. £300k from the Schools Block; £195k from the Central School Services Block and £148k from the Early Years Block.

Capital: Progress on capital investment and associated local infrastructure growth	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4
	Good	Medium	Medium	Medium

Good progress continues to be made towards establishing a new post-16 SEND centre in the borough which would provide, on one campus, a second site for the sixth forms of the three Orchard Hill special schools (Bedelsford, Dysart and St Philip's) plus the re-location of Orchard Hill College's local centre, currently based in New Malden. This would provide up to 80 new post- and pre-16 places in the borough. The granting of £3.6m to support this project, plus a substantial portion of the borough's HNC allocation, will make this deliverable, subject to formal Council sign-off and the securing of a suitable site. LocatEd have identified a potential site and work is ongoing to see if the challenges regarding change of planning use and the cost of the annual rent can be overcome.

The ESFA's progress towards delivering the special free school, to be run by Ambitious about Autism, in Chessington, was delayed by having to re-tender for a new contractor, which has put the proposed opening date of September 2023 at risk of not being achievable. However, they expect to submit the planning application in March with a view to a decision being taken at the Council's Planning Committee in May. If that timetable can be achieved, then a September 2023 opening ought to be achievable.

The SEND Futures Plan update report identifies a number of emerging risks. Risks are monitored by the Director of Children's Services and his team and where needed associated mitigating actions are identified and implemented. Appendix D provides the SEND Futures Plan risk register for information. None of the risks are likely to compromise progress on the SEND Futures Plan in the short term. It is important that the following risks continue to be carefully monitored, noting also that the risk register contains an increase in the number of risks considered to be moderate or high compared to last quarter:

- The lack of available specialist places within the borough is resulting in higher cost out of borough placements being selected as appropriate provision for children and young people. The lack of specialist places in surrounding boroughs is also increasing the price of placements and therefore increasing overall spend. Joint working with the DfE and new providers for capital schemes for specialist places will make a significant difference in this area.
- Inability to recruit professionals into certain roles across the service. Specific examples of this in certain services are: Educational Psychologists, Clinical Psychologists, Occupational Therapists, Physiotherapists, Speech & Language Therapists and SEND Case Workers. There is a risk that shortage of staff will cause a struggle to deliver statutory duties in a timely manner and insufficient capacity, skill and expertise within the service to drive up the quality of work and maximise the benefits. This will impact the progress of the SEND Futures Plan as there may be insufficient capacity or skill in certain areas to drive the agenda forward.
- The continuation of significant increases in need, complexity of need and the number of requests for EHC needs assessments with a view to receiving a EHC plan from schools and parents. Workstream 4 and 5 action plans will cover all the key actions that need to be taken to ensure that we are closely monitoring the level of needs and issuance of EHC Plans.
- The uncertainty of the impact of implementation of the Integrated Care System (ICS) on the SEND system. There is uncertainty around the potential impact of the implementation on the health provision with SEND services and what this means for children and young people. There may be an impact on delivery and health provision in the borough moving forward.

Regarding requests for additional support from the DfE to help Kingston meet its objectives:

- There has been progress this quarter on the opening date being September 2023 for the new local special free school for autism at Moor Lane however as mentioned this is a very tight deadline. Anything that could be done to help speed this process would be appreciated, as delays will have a negative financial impact.
- A number of local academy special schools have approached AfC asking for increases to their funding due to rising operational costs. The DfE benchmarking shows that the level of funding provided is reasonable relative to other similar schools. It would be helpful if the DfE could support these schools to find solutions given they are academies.
- Uncertainty exists about the future operation of the South London SEN Commissioning Partnership. The DfE's views / support in considering Pan London and / or regional South East England commissioning partnerships would be welcome at a time when a regional shortage of specialist places is driving significant price inflation and creating probably the biggest threat to meeting the terms of the SVA
- We continue to hear of cases where health professionals have discussed EHC needs assessments / plans and / or particular school placements with families in a way that is not always in line with the statutory process / SEND Code of Practice. We would ask that the DfE works with NHS England colleagues to ensure such conversations are conducted in line with formal processes so as to make the experience of families as joined up and understandable as possible.

Summary of appendices

Appendix A - Demand and Financial Management Dataset

Appendix B - SEND Futures Plan Budget Monitoring

Appendix C - SEND Futures Workstream Update

Appendix D - Risk Register

Key contact

Ian Dodds

Director of Children's Services

Royal Borough of Kingston upon Thames &

London Borough of Richmond upon Thames

Telephone: 020 8891 7551

E-mail: ian.dodds@achievingforchildren.org.uk

KINGSTON DEMAND AND FINANCE DASHBOARD

Appendix A

Ref	Key Performance Indicator	Baseline 31st March 2021	Target 21/22	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	RAG	Comment	Target Derivation	KPI Category
1	Actual EHCPs	1429	1558	1447	1470	1512	1560	R	actual @ Feb	Pro rata	Demand Management
2	% increase in EHCPs	6.72%	6.42%	1.26%	2.87%	5.81%	9.17%	A		Pro rata	Demand Management
3	Net EHCPs @ Jan Projected	1436	1537	1550	1537	1533	1550	R	Actual @ Jan census	Annual - In Plan	Demand Management
4	% increase	9.29%	7.00%	7.94%	7.03%	6.75%	7.94%	A		Annual - In Plan	Demand Management
5	New EHCPs	27	172	24	52	101	182	A	actual @ Feb	Annual - In Plan	Demand Management
6	Ceased EHCPs	-41	-72	-7	-22	-35	-84	G	actual @ Feb	Annual - In Plan	Demand Management
6a	Movers	n/a	n/a	1	12	13	33	G	actual @ Feb	Annual	Demand Management
7	% of EHCP per head of population	2.20%	2.20%	2.25%	2.73%	2.80%	2.89%	A	updated population estimates used in Q3	Annual	Demand management
8	% of pupils with SEN Support	9.40%	9.40%	9.40%	9.90%	9.90%	9.90%	G	updated population estimates used in Q3	Annual	Demand management
9	HNB Surplus / Deficit	£6,564,065	£5,432,000	£5,120,000	£5,704,626	£5,847,751	£5,822,317	R	Reduction in budget for export adjustment has impacted in year position. Spend also being driven by challenging average cost of placements.	Annual - In Plan	Financial Control
10	HNB Spend	£30,270,400	£31,791,000	£31,680,146	£32,057,326	£32,200,451	£32,175,017	A	£201K increase is matched by an additional schools block transfer agreed for additional Education Outreach Services.	Annual - In Plan	Financial Control
11	HNB Spend - direct (includes recoupment and future demand)	£28,793,720	£29,912,412	£29,813,462	£30,230,169	£30,336,298	£30,373,832	A		Annual	Financial Control
12	HNB Spend - central	£1,476,680	£1,878,588	£1,866,684	£1,827,157	£1,864,153	£1,801,185	G		Annual	Financial Control
13	In Year DSG Surplus/Deficit	£5,149,967	£3,482,000	£3,485,000	£3,859,000	£3,962,000	£3,791,000	A		Annual - In Plan	Financial Control
14	Cumulative DSG Surplus/Deficit - before safety valve funding	£24,401,000	£28,607,000	£27,886,000	£28,260,000	£28,363,000	£28,192,000	G		Annual - In Plan	Financial Control
15	Cumulative DSG Surplus/Deficit - after safety valve funding	£12,401,000	£11,607,000	£10,886,000	£11,260,000	£11,363,000	£11,192,000	G		Annual	Financial Control
16	Funding gap as % of HNB allocation	-30.09%	-22.76%	-22.33%	-24.79%	-25.34%	-25.24%	R	Impacted by high average costs and drop in grant funding relative to budget	Annual	Financial Control
17	Early Years outturn	-£871,000	-£750,000	-£436,000	-£436,000	-£470,000	-£361,000	A		Annual - In Plan	Financial Control
18	HNB DSG allocation	£23,268,514	£25,897,000	£25,896,881	£25,689,881	£25,689,881	£25,689,881	R	Reduction due to import/export adjustment	Annual - In Plan	Financial Control
19	Block transfers	£437,800	£462,000	£662,800	£662,800	£662,800	£662,800	G		Annual - In Plan	Financial Control
20	General Fund	£0	£1,200,000	£1,200,000	£1,200,000	£1,200,000	£1,200,000	G		Annual - In Plan	Financial Control
21	Savings / mitigation < 16 HNB only	n/a	£666,000	£309,967	£424,388	£604,372	£604,372	A		Annual - In Plan	Financial Control
22	Savings / mitigation > 16 HNB only	n/a	£595,000	£217,459	£309,851	£301,049	£301,049	R		Annual - In Plan	Financial Control
23	Average cost - all HNB 2 - 18	789	841	838	848	852	851	A		Annual	Value for Money
24	Savings / mitigation - HNB only	n/a	£1,261,000	£527,426	£734,239	£905,421	£905,421	A		Annual - In Plan	Value for Money
25	Average placement cost < 16s	£18,778	£16,483	£16,797	£16,928	£16,342	£16,104	G		Annual	Value for Money
26	Average placement cost > 16s	£13,206	£11,877	£11,778	£13,226	£13,638	£13,690	R		Annual	Value for Money
27	Average cost of an independent < 16	£38,140	£33,313	£33,657	£30,443	£34,208	£34,779	R		Annual	Value for Money
28	Average cost of maintained / academy special school - in borough	£29,683	£28,650	£28,547	£29,324	£29,008	£27,322	G		Annual	Value for Money
29	Average cost of maintained / academy special school - out borough	£30,204	£27,473	£29,189	£30,665	£30,035	£30,059	R	Mix of inflation and increased complexity of needs	Annual	Value for Money
30	Average cost of an independent > 16	£32,658	£34,051	£33,837	£35,024	£37,096	£38,812	R	A number of lower cost placements have ceased. The number of placements has overall remained the same between Q3 and Q4 (both 43).	Annual	Value for Money
31	Average cost of FE colleges > 16	£2,495	£2,711	£2,691	£3,466	£2,806	£2,282	G		Annual	Value for Money
32	Average cost of ISP > 16	£39,088	£29,202	£29,172	£34,266	£36,916	£37,247	R		Annual	Value for Money
33	Average cost of in borough special school > 16	£30,606	£24,949	£24,766	£25,272	£27,567	£28,786	R		Annual	Value for Money
34	Average placement cost - alternative provision	£17,695	£17,171	£16,768	£16,768	£16,768	£16,508	G		Annual	Value for Money
35	Savings / mitigation - alternative provision	£133,000	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0	G		Annual	Value for Money
36	Annual Review Savings / mitigation all age	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a			Annual	Value for Money
37	Average cost of an Education, Health and Care Plan (EHCP)	£21,183	£20,684	£20,009	£20,388	£20,376	£20,102	G		Annual - In Plan	Value for Money
38	% of spend in: the independent, non-maintained special school and independent college sector	28.45%	26.60%	26.37%	27.81%	28.02%	28.58%	A		Annual	Value for Money

KINGSTON FINANCIAL MODEL MONITORING

KINGSTON FINANCIAL MODEL MONITORING					
		2021/22			
KINGSTON FINANCIAL MODEL	Financial Model	Actual Q4	Variance	RAG	
	£m	£m	£m		
HNB allocation	25.897	25.690	-0.207	A	
Budget additions (transfers)	0.462	0.663	0.201	G	
Total budget	26.359	26.353	-0.006	G	
HNB expenditure before savings	33.052	33.080	0.028	G	
Increased places in Specialist Resource Provisions (SRP)	-0.071	-0.138	-0.067	G	
Review of SRP vacant place funding	-0.073	-0.033	0.040	G	
Increased special school places	-0.047	-0.159	-0.112	G	
Development of post 16 offer	-0.120	-0.026	0.094	R	
Improved commissioning practice including annual reviews	-0.351	-0.250	0.101	R	
Contributions from other partners (health & social care)	-0.599	-0.300	0.299	R	
HNB expenditure after savings	31.791	32.175	0.384	G	
Net HNB deficit	5.432	5.822	0.390	A	
Variance in other DSG blocks	-0.750	-0.831	-0.081	A	
General Fund Contribution	-1.200	-1.200	0.000	G	
Net DSG Deficit (incl GF contrn)	3.482	3.791	0.309	A	
Net DSG deficit - cumulative before safety valve	28.607	28.192	-0.415	G	
Net DSG deficit - cumulative after max safety valve	11.607	11.192	-0.415	G	

SEND Futures Plan Update

1. Introduction

- a. Under the terms of Kingston's "[Safety Valve](#)" Agreement, the Council is required to report on performance against conditions in the agreement on a quarterly basis. In December [the Council reported to the Department for Education \(DfE\)](#) in relation to the Q3 payment with the report stating that "There is a good level of confidence that the terms and conditions for 2021/22 will be fully met and that this work will support the achievement of conditions associated with future years". The DfE has confirmed that the next quarterly payment will be made. The Council will report to the DfE again in March for the final quarter of this financial year. We expect to meet with the DfE to discuss progress in more detail in February or March.
- b. The total number of education, health and care plans (EHCs) is slightly in excess of the number that was forecast in the Safety Valve Agreement. It is also important to note that there is significant price inflation for placements across SEND education settings, particularly in Post-16. The placement price increase alongside the significant increase in need presents budgetary pressures with regards to the Safety Valve funding agreement which needs to be closely monitored.
- c. On 24 December 2021, NHS England and NHS Improvement released its [operational planning guidance for 2022/23](#), including its nine priorities for the service. One of the most significant points to note is the delayed implementation of integrated care systems (ICS) from 1 April 2022 to 1 July 2022, due to parliamentary timings. In line with contingency planning, this requires straightforward changes to clinical commissioning group regulations that will enable ICS leaders to continue their development work during this transition. Current statutory arrangements will remain in place until July, with the first quarter of 2022/23 serving as a continued preparatory period.
- d. On-going work with the implementation of recommendations arising from the LGA Peer Review of SEND Provision continues. An example is a Parent Carer Engagement Officer started in post in December; they will be responsible for developing closer working relationships with families that will ensure that parents and carers of children and young people with SEND are fully involved in the SEND Futures Plan.
- e. The Ofsted / CQC revisit following the original Local Area SEND Inspection of September 2018 has not yet materialised, and is expected sometime in this academic year.

2. Workstream 1: Co-production, engagement and participation

a. Children and Young People (CYP)

Impact and progress

- i. Children and young people with SEND have continued to share their views and influence planning and decision-making through a range of projects.
- ii. 7 members of the Recruits Crews have been involved in staffing appointments to Short Breaks, Emotional Health Service (including Schools Teams), Disabled Children's Family Support Service and Physiotherapy.
- iii. 1 young person joined peers from the Children in Care Council, Kingston & Richmond Youth Council and Windsor & Maidenhead Youth Voice to meet the new Non-Executive Director of AfC Board to discuss Young People's engagement with the Board.

- iv. Young people have been involved in delivering participation training to staff which has been positively received and is raising awareness across the service.
- v. The Young People's Health Group discussed KPIs and outcome measures with the Designated Clinical Officer.
- vi. 4 new young people referred to the Recruits Crew and they have been contacted with the aim of joining the team shortly.
- vii. A huge thank you to all the children and young people who have been participating and giving feedback to shape future services, their time and effort is appreciated.

Strategic work

- i. Participation leads meetings have been held with Integrated Service for Children with Disabilities, Special Educational Needs team & Hounslow and Richmond Community Healthcare (HRCH) with the aim of promoting participation across multiple services.
- ii. Advisory/development meetings have been held with the Virtual School, Designated Social Care Officer, Dysart School, RBK Adult Engagement, Children Looked After (CLA) Nursing Team, Your Healthcare and Inclusion Development Officers to promote collaborative working and ensure that participation is embedded across the services.
- iii. 'Have My Say' app development has begun with 'This is Focus' and Education, Social Care & Health representatives selected to help drive the development forward.
- iv. Development work has been undertaken with regards to health and hospital profiles.
- v. A system has been implemented for health teams to present children and young people's feedback to Senior Health Care Managers, this feedback will be discussed in meetings for consideration and/or action.

Areas of concern

- i. There is currently restricted access to Boardmaker symbol software and work is ongoing to widen access and deliver training. This software is required to improve the accessibility of information provided by professionals and to support production of Easy Read materials.
- ii. The capacity within the Participation team to deliver on the "Have My Say" app project.
- iii. The impact of general recruitment challenges across the service on Recruits Crew.

Priorities and milestones for coming months

- i. The procurement and distribution of Boardmaker symbol software and ensuring the staff that need it have access to the software.
- ii. Development of Emotional Health Service Recruits Crew role to support organisation, facilitation & recruitment of young people.
- iii. 'Have My Say' app development work.

- iv. Recruitment of new members to the Recruits Crew to ensure that the quality of participation work remains high and that as many children and young people as possible have the opportunity to share their view to influence service development.

b. Parents and Carers

- i. Further information on the Parent Carer Engagement Officer mentioned in the introduction, who started their role in December is available here: [SEND Parent and Carer Engagement Team](#).
- ii. Initial meetings have been held with regards to the launch and delivery of the Coram SEND Parent Champions scheme and the Parent Carer Engagement Officer will be leading on the implementation of the scheme and acting as the Parent Champions Coordinator. Nationwide planning meetings have been attended and this information will be shared at a local level to ensure that the implementation of the scheme can be as effective as possible.
- iii. The Parent Carer Engagement Officer will be attending local events throughout the upcoming months and will be raising the profile of their role and ensuring that parents and carers are aware of the newly created post.
- iv. [Notes and actions of recent Parent and Carer consortium meetings](#). Parent Consortium meetings continue to be held monthly, there have been updates provided to the PCF, and feedback received, on the following items: the annual review process, direct payments, short breaks recommissioning and the SENDIASS contract.
- v. Development of the Local Offer website is on-going; meetings between the Parent Carer Engagement Officer and AfC Local Offer Website Manager are scheduled to ensure that the PCF are included in the developments moving forward. The SENDCO zone is due to go live early in 2022 to enable easier access to resources for school practitioners.

3. Workstream 2: Joint Commissioning

Impact and Progress over past 3 months

- i. AfC's Head of Strategic Commissioning started in early December and a new Associate Director for Business Development and Strategic Commissioning will also be starting in March 2022. The purpose of these roles includes to lead improvements in SEND and social care procurement and commissioning practice. There will also be a review of the current team structure to ensure that we can maximise capacity, skills and expertise.
- ii. Improved joint working continues to improve the timeliness of decisions on joint funded placements via the SEND panel and Joint Agency Panel.

SEND Placement Commissioning

- i. SEND Placement Commissioners are working to continue to improve the quality and value for money of SEND placements and good progress is being made against their objectives. Negotiations are on-going with education providers who have been prioritised with regards to value for money and quality of their placements. At present there is a focus on high cost individual placements and where there is a large number of placements in one setting. Meetings are scheduled throughout the rest of the academic year, with independent special schools and colleges being the main priority, to ensure that quality is being maximised and value for money is being achieved.
- ii. There has been a reduction in cost in Further Education (FE) colleges on a per pupil, per placement basis compared to last year. 66% of FE colleges have committed not to pass on inflationary increases

for the 22/23 academic year, 33% of FE colleges have confirmed that they will be applying for price increases, the impact of this is to be fully analysed following the 31st March 2022, which is the phase transfer deadline.

- iii. A system is being trialled for the SEND team to directly refer individual young people to commissioners when in-year fees appear too high, the young person has not attended the placement or the placement has not been able to provide full range of delivery within EHCP. This level of individual pupil work is starting to result in cost reductions.
- iv. The recruitment process for the permanent roles within the SEND Commissioning team is underway with interviews scheduled for early February.

Concerns

- v. The post pandemic placement market is exceedingly complex. There are difficulties in negotiating price on current placements and the ongoing fee increase requests that exceed normal levels of inflation. These increases continue to present budgetary pressures.
- vi. Due to the impact of inflation there is uncertainty around providers' willingness to hold 2021 prices into the new academic year.
- vii. Recruitment and retention issues and COVID related absences are driving up staff costs both teaching and to a greater degree therapists.
- viii. Overly high expectations about the levels of funding that will be made available to local authorities with the introduction of the National Funding Formula (NFF) and what this could mean for fee increases.
- ix. There is significant price inflation for placements across SEND education settings, in borough and regionally, particularly in post-16 provision and also in out of borough specialist placements due to growing demand and a lack of specialist places. It is important to note that the average age of a child or young person (CYP) who has an Education, Health and Care (EHC) plan is going up and there is now a larger percentage of total plans at post-16 which is causing further budgetary pressures.

Priorities and milestones for next three months

- vii. There continues to be a strong focus on negotiating better value SEND placements, both in terms of quality and cost, through the SEND Placements Commissioners. There is a specific focus on post-16 placements within the borough.
- viii. Commissioning procedures and processes to be fully reviewed and commissioner and provider handbooks to be produced. The handbooks will include best practice and guidance on the purpose of SEND commissioning across a broad range of topics.
- ix. A data dashboard of providers to be created to summarise providers' performance to identify more focussed commissioning work and allow ongoing "real time" assessment.
- x. Post 16 curriculum planning reviewed with a focus on special independent providers.

Therapies and emotional wellbeing and mental health

- i. Matters relating to therapy provision and emotional wellbeing and mental health are included under Workstream 3.

Short Breaks Commissioning

- i. The tender process has now closed and all bids that were received are being evaluated with regards to compliance, quality and value for money. This process is to be completed prior to the contracts being issued in March 2022.

Special Educational Needs & Disabilities Information Advice and Support Service (SENDIASS)

- i. Following the extension of the SENDIASS contract with the current provider until March 2023 the CCG and Achieving for Children have agreed to increase the annual contract value for 2022/23 and have also revised the service specification. The agreed service specification will ensure compliance with the SEND Code of Practice and will include the additional element of supporting families with tribunal cases.
- ii. Work has begun to develop a project timeline for the engagement and procurement of the new contract which will commence on 1st April 2023.

Direct Payment Support Service

- iii. Joint CCG and AfC providers meetings have resulted in ways to improve service delivery and the communications between providers and families.
- iv. Recent months have seen joint contract monitoring, between the CCG and AfC, with specific focus on spend and activity of personal budgets has improved governance of the contract.
- v. Work has begun to develop a project timeline for the engagement and procurement of the new contract which will commence no later than 1st April 2023.

4. Workstream 3: Local provision

a. Therapies

- i. A briefing note has been produced and is being presented at the next Therapies Oversight Group meeting this month. The briefing note sets out the investment to date compared to the original level of investment stated and highlights funding gaps based on a needs assessment and associated delivery risks. This is to clarify realistic expectations about what can be delivered in terms of the Balanced System at this stage. A timeline is being developed to explain the journey towards the Balanced System which will be shared with parents, carers and schools. The intention is to increase understanding about what the new system will look like and timescales for fully delivering the model.
- ii. Investment priorities for year 3 are to be agreed by January and service specifications reviewed and revised early this year for year 3 to ensure that all services are aligned.
- iii. Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) are being developed in collaboration with the CCG, providers, the PCF and children and young people. A meeting has been held with representatives from the PCF to begin work in relation to outcome measures and KPIs. As a result of the meeting, we will be distinguishing between service data indicators (i.e. caseloads, number of referrals, waiting lists) and outcome data that sets out how each therapy service is performing. We will refine the service data indicators with the providers following feedback received from the PCF.

b. Emotional wellbeing and mental health

- i. Waiting list funds have been provided to reduce waiting times for Cognitive Behavioural Therapy and Family Therapy.
- ii. A virtual waiting room with more contacts have been established whilst children and young people are waiting to access the Emotional Health Service and additional resources have been provided.

- iii. Wave 6 of the Mental Health Support Teams launches at the end of January 2022, this will ensure that all primary and secondary schools in the borough will have dedicated support, there will also be a team dedicated to SEND. There has been good engagement from schools to ensure these teams are integrated.
- iv. New Assistant Psychologists focusing on support post diagnosis are starting in early 2022.
- v. A series of iThrive webinars were held and an initial mapping exercise completed with key partners across November and December 2021. The next phase of work that is underway, prior to the implementation of the new model, involves mapping the current service and partnership offer, understanding current service pressures and service gaps; this will ensure that a priority list across all key stakeholders is agreed and the model can be implemented to improve service delivery.
- vi. A 3-6 month action plan is now in place to redesign the CAMHS SPA, improve communication for preventative work and the universal offer, prioritise plans to implement the iThrive model and adopt good practice in waiting list management.

c. Local Places

- i. A contractor has been appointed for the new special free school, at the Moor Lane site, and the planning application is expected soon. The Department for Education and Ambitious About Autism are aiming for a 2023 opening, however due to delays beyond the Council's control this may be delayed until 2024.
- ii. Good progress continues to be made towards establishing a new post-16 SEND centre in the borough which would provide, on one campus, a second site for the sixth forms of the three Orchard Hill special schools (Bedelsford, Dysart and St Philip's) plus the re-location of Orchard Hill College's local centre, currently based in New Malden. This would provide up to 80 new post and pre-16 places in the borough. The initial consultation is completed and approvals have been obtained, a site-search is still ongoing.
- iii. Work is progressing with regards to delivery of phase 2 of the post-16 social emotional and mental health provision at Malden Oaks, due to open in September 2022.
- iv. Robin Hood Primary School is in consultation with regards to opening an ASC SRP in September 2022.

d. 16 to 25 Years

- i. Support has been secured from the [National Development Team for Inclusion](#) to embed pathways into post 16 for learners with SEND. Further support has also been secured to develop a post 16 transitions framework mapping out key roles and responsibilities for all partners.
- ii. Vocational pathways: At the end of quarter 3, 10% of young people with EHCPs (post-16) are in vocational pathway destinations (45 out of 453 young people with EHCPs (post-16)).
- iii. The Next Steps programme is now delivered as an integral part of EHC Plan annual reviews in Year 9 and 11 and offered as a one-to-one interview to EHC plan and SEN support learners in Year 10. The Next Steps programme is an integral part of the transitions pathway and to date 72 learners up to Year 11 have been supported (40% of borough baseline target).

Concerns

- i. Waiting times for Speech and Language Therapy (SALT), occupational therapy, physiotherapy and also for CAMHS continue to be significant, this combined with the reported increased level of demand and

level of need this is presenting significant pressures on the services.

- ii. It is becoming increasingly difficult to meet demand for therapies across the borough. There are also challenges around direct funding/ spot commissioning arrangements.
- iii. Recruitment of therapists and specialist staff in Kingston remains an issue across the board, including Educational Psychologists, Speech and Language Therapists and Occupational Therapists. This is leading to challenges around statutory provision and ensuring that statutory deadlines are met.
- iv. Due to the lack of specialist SEND places in the borough and a higher than usual number of in-year admissions requiring specialist provision, a number of children and young people are beginning school in mainstream schools whilst waiting for specialist places. The lack of specialist SEND placements is a regional issue, with the DfE reporting that a number of LAs are continuing to report difficulties meeting requests for special school placements.
- v. Timescales for opening new schools may be delayed causing there not to be sufficient local specialist places.
- vi. The complexity of the iThrive plans and the time they will take to deliver and see benefits.
- vii. Ensuring that partners are aware of their role with regards to transitions and vocational pathways, there has been a lower than expected uptake of placements within the local offer, COVID is hampering progress in this area, and there are some schools that are not engaged in the Next Steps programme. There is also a lack of understanding from some independent training providers as to how to meet the needs of young people with SEND.

e. Priorities and milestones for next three months

- i. Therapies' KPIs are to be agreed and signed off by the Therapies Oversight Group. A briefing paper is being presented at the next Therapies Oversight Group for sign off.
- ii. Agreement to be sought for therapy investments for 2022/23 and also for the Section 75 budget for 2022/23.
- iii. Progression of temporary and permanent additional school places for children and young people with Autism, Social Emotional and Mental Health needs and Moderate and Severe Learning Difficulties.
- iv. Establish Kingston Transitions Board.
- v. Key leads from RBK to be established to ensure a collaborative approach to improve transitions and pathways for 16-25 year olds.
- vi. The iThrive model is to be scoped with all partners.
- vii. Ensure statutory functions are delivered whilst immediate capacity challenges are addressed. Plan has been put into place with Your Healthcare and is to be closely monitored. Work is ongoing to ensure statutory provision can be delivered in spite of these workforce challenges.

5. Workstream 4: Early intervention and transitions

a. Recent impact and progress - Early Years onwards

Significant initiatives to upskill the wider workforce continue; key progress items below:

- i. The Inclusion Charter resource continues to be developing well. The Inclusion Charter itself is complete, alongside the school audit, systemic and operational guides. The next steps of implementing this resource is to promote the work that has been completed to professional partners.
- ii. Transition framework is in the final stages of development; this has been produced in collaboration with school partners, AfC colleagues and other key partners. A number of resources have been developed including a google form, checklist, timeline and FAQs which will improve the transitions process at both primary to secondary school and secondary to post-16.
- iii. Work continues around the consistency of the Local Offer in terms of Quality First Teaching.

b. Recent impact and progress - First 1,001 Days and Early Help

- iv. The Partnership audit of the impact of Resilience Networks on families has been completed and findings shared with relevant stakeholders, report is to be produced.
- v. Interactive Video Guidance is now available to families of children of any age (previously only those under 1 year old) and open to social care to help support and guide them.
- vi. The Children’s Centre Partnership held a review of the previous strategy and work carried out to support the new strategy in 2022.
- vii. Funding secured for Reducing Parental Conflict, via the Department for Work and Pensions which is led by Learning and Development and supported by the Parenting Coordinator. Family Coaches have been identified that will deliver the programme.
- viii. Funding secured from Violence Reduction Unit that will be used for a parenting program where parents are harmed by their children, titled ‘Who’s in Charge?’.

c. Areas of concern

- i. Funding for the Key Stage 4 alternative curriculum pathway is proving to be a challenge.
- ii. Attendance at Resilience Networks has dropped as a result of services returning to more face-to-face work.

d. Priorities and Milestones

- i. Complete draft Inclusion Charter toolkit resource and share with key stakeholders.
- ii. Complete transition framework and ensure that stakeholders have framework in readiness for the summer term.
- iii. Finalise the standard and accessible Ordinarily Available documents.
- iv. Establish a clear strategy with health for supporting entrenched ERSA cases.
- v. Practitioners to be identified that will deliver the “Who’s in Charge” programme and support mechanisms are to be agreed alongside the Domestic Violence team.
- vi. Referral pathways and criteria for new parenting groups are to be confirmed and agreed with relevant parties.

6. Workstream 5: Assessment and planning

a. Recent impact and progress

- i. Project work has begun with the National Development Team for Inclusion around preparation for adulthood with a focus on careers guidance and development of holistic outcomes.
- ii. Deep dive activity around the timeliness of health advice continues at a granular level and is leading to process changes to support an improvement in timeliness of advice.
- iii. The schools quality assurance team are now undertaking quality assurance work of EHC Plans.
- iv. The EHC Needs Assessments multi-agency review group is developing a targeted approach to the increase in EHC Needs Assessment requests in collaboration with the School Improvement Partners and an action plan is being developed.
- v. As a result of multi-agency participation work in the Council for Disabled Children's Holistic Outcomes session, bespoke workshop sessions have been introduced on Multi Agency Development of Holistic Outcomes. The initial session was delivered in December with participants attending from across the system, further sessions have been scheduled.
- vi. SENDCo Bitesize training is in progress; workshops for secondary schools are starting week commencing 17th January 2022.
- vii. Outcomes training has been delivered to professionals to ensure that outcomes that are written are person centred and holistic; impact on this is to be confirmed.
- viii. All services, including Social Care, Education and Health, are developing specific quality assurance guidance for advice and annual review.
- ix. Bimonthly multi agency quality assurance of Education, Health and Care plans continues to happen. There has been continued improvement of quality, the amount of plans that have been assessed to be good or better has increased every quarter , particularly around specification and quantification of provision.
- x. Strategic outcomes have been embedded into key performance indicators as part of the Therapies review following input from Parent Carer Forum and Children and Young People's health participation group.
- xi. The Education, Health and Care Needs Assessment panel, which began in September, has continued and provides a multi agency forum to moderate decision making and is providing more robustness around decision making.

b. Areas of concern

- i. Challenges with the delivery of provision, especially therapies.
- ii. Timeliness of advice continues to be monitored, this is impacting the timeliness of EHCP and annual review process and the ability to ensure that they are issued within statutory timeframes.
- iii. Timing of some workforce development activity (e.g. Helen Sanderson) in the context of wider pressures across services.
- iv. Further work is needed in all service areas to upskill knowledge and understanding of the role and quality of statutory advice in relation to EHC activity.

- v. Annual reviews from providers in educational settings are sometimes late and therefore are impacting on statutory timeframes and KPIs. More collaborative working with these providers is needed to ensure that information is provided on time.

c. Priorities and milestones for next three months

- i. Development of holistic outcomes across the system and ensuring that they are consistent across the services.
- ii. Further training with teams on compliance and how that applies to specific service areas is to be conducted.
- iii. Focus on quality assurance of EHC Plan activities through increased school involvement.

d. Number of education, health and care plans

- i. The total number of Education Health and Care plans maintained by Kingston on 17th January stood at 1546. This is an increase of 112 plans over the previous 12 months, or 7.8%. The latest national data for the increase in Education Health and Care plans is for calendar year 2020 when the number of plans increased by 10.4% in England and 9.6% across London boroughs.

7. Finance update

- i. The Borough is currently projecting a Dedicated Schools Grant (DSG) overspend of £5.2m, including £0.40m spend relating to EHC plans that have not yet been approved but are expected to be approved before the end of the financial year. Assuming the Council is successful in claiming £5m in “Safety Valve” funding this year, and including a contribution of £1.2m from the Council, this would result in a £11.4m cumulative DSG overspend at the end of this financial year. This position is summarised below (note the budgets in this table exclude the £67.1m Schools Block and £5.55m High Needs Block Academy Recoupments). Note this forecast cumulative DSG overspend is higher than was forecast in September.

2021/22 DSG Outturn	Budget £m	Outturn £m	Variance £m	Future Demand £m	Variance incl Future Demand £m	Last month £m
Schools Block	50.403	50.188	(0.215)	0.000	(0.215)	(0.215)
Central School Services Block	1.128	1.128	(0.000)	0.000	(0.000)	(0.000)
Early Years Block	13.651	13.180	(0.470)	0.000	(0.470)	(0.470)
High Needs Block	20.804	26.678	5.875	0.040	5.915	5.848
Sub-Total	85.986	91.175	5.189	0.040	5.229	5.162
2020/21 Carry forward	(12.401)	0.000	12.401	0.000	12.401	12.401
Safety Valve Funding	5.000	0.000	(5.000)	0.000	(5.000)	(5.000)
Council Funding	1.200	0.000	(1.200)	0.000	(1.200)	(1.200)
Total	79.785	91.175	11.390	0.040	11.430	11.363

 Nicola Moore
 SEND Policy & Project Officer
 nicola.moore@achievingforchildren.org.uk

RBK - SEND FUTURES PLAN RISK REGISTER - MARCH 2022

New risks have been identified in this quarter's risk register and some moved into the all workstream risks section (newly introduced); they are shaded in yellow for ease of identification. If a risk score has been adjusted since the last quarter then there is an arrow in the risk score column that has been added.

Risks	Impact	Strategy	Actions	Risk Score
Partnership Board				
Lack of partner engagement and shared ownership of the plan with resultant lack of investment	There is no or limited traction in delivering the system change and behaviours that are necessary to transform services and achieve better outcomes for children and young people with SEND within the financial resources available.	Mitigate	Provide strong leadership of the SEND Partnership Board. Maintain current engagement from all key partner agencies to the vision, shared values and key activities. Obtain support from the Health and Wellbeing Board. Maintain the current schedule of regular meetings and reporting to share progress and achievements.	Moderate ↓
Ineffective governance of the SEND Partnership Board and workstreams.	There is a lack of focus and pace in delivering activities, and drift and delay in decision making. There is duplication and mixed messaging from partnership boards and other organisations working in this arena, including the Health and Wellbeing Board, SEND Partnership Board and Schools Forum.	Mitigate	Strengthen governance structures that are all clearly understood and adhered to by all stakeholders, and supported by additional project management capacity. Ensure there is effective stakeholder representation on the SEND Partnership Board and five workstreams. Deliver a detailed communications plan.	Moderate
Lack of capacity and capability to drive and deliver transformation.	Key activities in the plan cannot be delivered within the timescales necessary. Partner organisations, parents and carers lose faith in their ability to achieve system change.	Mitigate	Sufficient resources from all partner organisations are allocated to deliver the activities in the plan. There is strong senior leadership of the five workstreams. There is a programme to upskill the workforce to deliver the plan. Additional resources and expertise are sourced externally where this is required.	High
Lack of agreement on how DSG funding is shared between different blocks.	There is a significant financial gap in the plan which will need to be met from other activities.	Mitigate	Build consensus across the whole system for how DSG funding should be shared. Continue discussions with the Department for Education on the national DSG funding formula. Contingency plans are established to allocate the funding shortfall to other actions within the plan.	High
The impact of the COVID pandemic on education delivery and restricted capacity of school	The delivery of SEND services and progress of children and young people with SEND are impacted by a range of COVID related matters. It is important to note that although the impact of COVID on education delivery	Mitigate	Frequent communications between agencies, providers and families to identify and respond to related matters as quickly as possible. For those with an EHC plan, the annual review process will provide more information. The impact of COVID on the	Moderate ↓

professionals	has reduced, the impact of the pandemic on increased level and complexity of need is still very apparent and needs to be monitored moving forward.		content and number of requests for EHC needs assessments will also be monitored, assessed and actions to address taken	
SEND Futures Plan: All workstreams				
Increased level and complexity of need	The total number of Education, Health and Care plans is in excess of the number that was forecast in the Safety Valve Agreement and as previously reported we are continuing to see increased levels in need, in both volume and complexity, across the borough. The impact of COVID on the level and complexity of need is still emerging and the full impact is not yet known.	Mitigate	Work in workstream 4 and 5 of the SEND Futures Plan is taking action to mitigate this barrier. We will also explore securing additional resources to manage increased EHC needs assessments requests and EHC Plan case loads.	High
Inability to recruit professionals into certain roles across the service. Specific examples of this in certain services are: Educational Psychologists, Clinical Psychologists, Occupational Therapists, Physiotherapists, Speech & Language Therapists and SEND Case Workers.	<p>This will impact the progress of the SEND Futures Plan as there may be insufficient capacity or skill in certain areas to drive the agenda forward. This may also impact other service areas and delivery on the SEND Futures Plan as they will have reduced capacity to deliver.</p> <p>There is a risk that shortage of staff will lead to a lack of available / appropriate staff, causing a struggle to deliver statutory duties in a timely manner and insufficient capacity, skill and expertise within the service to drive up the quality of work and maximise the benefits.</p>	Mitigate	<p>The following actions are being taken:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Job profiles, salary levels, adjustment to T&Cs and salary/contract alignment with other providers and the recruitment process attract good candidates with relevant expertise and experience. - There is an effective induction, development and support package available to all professionals involved. - We are working with all providers and the AfC workforce board to combat recruitment and retention issues within the services. Creative solutions are being sought across the service to combat current recruitment issues. - Flexible working arrangements are available including secondments from schools. 	High
Implementation of the Integrated Care System (ICS) and the impact that will have on the SEND system	There is uncertainty around the potential impact of implementation on the health provision across SEND services and what this means for children and young people. There may be an impact on delivery and health provision in the borough moving forward.	Mitigate	We are working with the CCG to ensure that SEND is a priority within the ICS and ensuring that SEND families are involved in the co-production of the system. CCG to inform AfC of the on-going process and how ICS changes need to be adapted for/ how they will affect SEND services.	Moderate
Uncertainty regarding the funding split between Education, Social Care, Health and Adult Services	Future financial uncertainty and inability to forward plan due to funding arrangements not being transparent. Longer term putting financial pressure on the DSG.	Mitigate	Continue to improve joint commissioning arrangements and funding panels, especially at 16 to 25 years so that all partners meet their statutory duties	High

Workstream 1: Participation , Engagement and Co-production				
Inability to secure an effective and engaged parent-carer forum (PCF) that is able to work collaboratively in the SEND partnership.	The voices and opinions of parents and carers do not inform strategic decision-making. Implementation of the plan is not successful as parents are not informed, aware or signed up to the system change required.	Mitigate	Develop ways to incentivise and reward parents and carers to be involved. PCF membership of the SEND Partnership Forum and workstreams. Having productive parent carer consortium meetings that strengthen the relationship we have with parents and promote a transparent and honest working relationship. Use the new investment / SEND Parent carer Engagement Officer to support the PCF.	Moderate
Workstream 2: Joint Commissioning				
Commercial negotiations with SEND providers are unproductive. Costs of placements continue to increase through provider costs, inflationary pressures and supply/demand pressures.	Placement costs are not reduced, meaning that additional savings have to be found from other areas of the plan. Additional pressure of inflationary increases are impacting the cost of placements and making further negotiations challenging. Due to the demand for specialist places and lack of available spaces, inborough and regionally, costs are increasing.	Mitigate	There is an effective induction, development and support package available to all professionals involved in placement brokerage. Expertise in commercial contract management is secured from the Council or brought in from an external consultant on a risk and reward basis. AfC commissioning capacity is increased through a new team structure allowing more opportunity to reduce costs and improve the quality of placements. The strategic approach to commissioning is to be strengthened through improved commissioning practice and processes	High
Future uncertainty around joint commissioning once ICS is implemented.	The current processes and practice around joint commissioning may not continue past July 2022 and who will be leading this work moving forward is uncertain. This provides some uncertainty around processes in the workstream and also for the services that are being provided to children, young people and their families.	Mitigate	Joint working between the ICS/CCG and AfC needs to be carried out to ensure that services/ joint commissioning will not be disrupted in the transition between the CCG and ICS. Clarity to be provided by the CCG/ICS on future arrangements.	Moderate
Workstream 3: Local Provision				
Support from schools for the local SEND provision plan is not consistent or sufficient to create the additional school places required.	There are insufficient local special school and specialist places to meet the needs identified in the SEND provision plan, making the Council more reliant on maintained and special schools outside the borough and on non-maintained and independent school provision	Mitigate	There is effective engagement and communication with schools through existing networks to agree to the local provision plan. Proposals are based on a detailed analysis of local needs. Good consultation with schools and other stakeholders leads to strong proposals and well managed plans to develop new provision.	Low

Parents and carers do not feel confident that local mainstream schools, specialist resource provisions and special schools are able to meet their child's assessed needs.	There is an increase in the number of disputed EHCPs and appeals to the First-Tier SEND Tribunal on the basis of parental preference. The workload for SEND professionals is increased and there is a potential for the tribunal to direct that the local authority makes alternative and higher cost provision.	Mitigate	There is a clear strategy to promote the resources and facilities available in local provision and the outcomes they achieve for children and young people with SEND. The quality of local provision is actively promoted by all practitioners in their relationships with parents and through their professional networks.	Moderate
Lack of available specialist places	That there are not sufficient specialist places within the borough, or out of borough and children and young people may be left without appropriate provision. Lack of specialist places is also increasing the price of placements and therefore increasing overall spend.	Mitigate	Ensure that the development of new specialist placements including the new special free school open as soon as possible. This will need collaborative work from multiple partners and looking for alternative solutions wherever possible. Continue to ensure future mapping of appropriate provision.	High
Local therapy provision is unable to be delivered to meet the identified needs of children with disabilities.	Children's therapeutic needs cannot be met locally leading to placements in more specialist school provision and at a higher cost. Strain on the therapies service means that there is less support/ provision for early intervention and SEN support.	Mitigate	The recommendations of the therapy review are implemented asap, and sufficient funding and resources secured. Balanced model is to be implemented as soon as possible with a structured and staggered approach.	High
Emotional wellbeing and mental health needs amongst children and young people with and without SEND increase	Expenditure from the High Needs Block increases to meet their needs.	Mitigate	Develop the universal early intervention offer, recruit and redeploy staff to meet needs as quickly as possible and prevent escalation where possible, develop iThrive model asap.	High
Increased waiting times for CAMHS, EHS and therapies.	Waiting times are increasing and therefore children and young people are not getting the support they need early or quick enough.	Mitigate	We are working with all providers and the AfC workforce board to combat recruitment and retention issues within the services.	High
Transition arrangements between children's services and adult social care services are not always consistent.	Young adults with SEND do not receive the support they need in a timely way from the appropriate services. Ineffective transition and working arrangements between children's services and adult social care lead to fragmentation and build higher costs into the system.	Mitigate	The preparation for adulthood strategy, transitions protocol and inclusion in the Council's Maximising Independence transformation programme facilitates early consideration and planning for young people's transition. Funding responsibilities are made clear within the protocol and are agreed in each individual case.	High
Lack of awareness of	Transitions for CYP will not be clear, defined or	Mitigate	Continuation of multi agency workstream meeting; with a clear	High

transition pathways across the system	identified early enough. Pathways will not be successful for CYP in supporting them into adulthood and providers will not be able to support as needs will not be identified early enough by relevant partners.		focus and collaborative approach to improving pathways for CYP, to ensure that there is a joint understanding of the different transition pathways. To ensure that pathways, where possible, are aligned and that they are developed to ensure that the transitions pathway is as clear and defined as it can be for CYP.	
Lack of engagement from health partners for the 18-25 year old cohort	That health transitions for this cohort will not improve due to lack of representation from individuals that can affect change	Mitigate	Engage a lead from health for the 18-25 cohort. Ensure that once engaged ensure they are participating and engaged in the work that is happening in sub group 4 and the workstream so that transitions for this cohort can be improved in health	Moderate
Lack of engagement from key partners in improving the transitions process	Actions cannot be completed as partners not engaged and contributing	Mitigate	Workstream 3 Group established to lead the work - this will be used to hold partners to account and ensure they are fully engaged.	Moderate
Workstream 4: Early Interventions and Transitions				
School professionals do not support inclusion and early intervention, or there is inconsistent support across schools.	Children and young people with SEND cannot be supported within mainstream schools or specialist resource provisions, meaning that they have to be transferred to special schools or non-maintained and independent schools at a higher cost.	Mitigate	There is effective engagement and communication with professionals through the SENCO and headteacher networks. There is an effective learning, development and support offer to schools to support inclusive practice. The shape of the offer is informed by learning from EHCP assessments, tribunals and other feedback.	Moderate
Phase transfer for children and young people is not planned early enough and is not as effective as it could be	Young adults with SEND do not receive the support they need in a timely way from the appropriate services during phase transfer. Ineffective transition between phases / not being planned early enough may impact the new placement setting not being properly equipped and also the child/ young person not receiving the support they need. Poorly planned transitions between phases of education may see escalating level and complexity of need.	Mitigate	Review transition practice (pathway planning, information sharing, staff briefing / training etc) at all early years, schools and colleges, for both SEN Support and EHCPs, to identify best practice and share widely to support improvements where gaps exist. Transition framework being developed and has been produced in collaboration with school partners, AfC colleagues, parents and carers and children and young people	Moderate
Schools having limited capacity, funding and resources to deliver on inclusivity and deliver change on SEND practice.	The quality of support inclusion and early intervention does not improve at the required pace and therefore children and young people are not supported at the earliest opportunity. There is inconsistent support across the schools in the	Mitigate	The Inclusion Charter to be embedded throughout the schools system and adopted by schools across the borough. Regional School Commissioner to be made aware of this risk and what impact this has with academy schools. SENDCO network to be reminded of the graduated response	Moderate

	borough. The influence that AfC can have with academy schools on inclusion is limited which creates barriers to improving this across the borough as a whole. Schools are experiencing lots of different pressures which are impacting their ability to deliver on the SEND agenda.		triangle and the options of early intervention that are available to them. This will assist with schools meeting needs earlier and being more inclusive.	
Workstream 5: Assessment and Planning				
Annual EHCP reviews and updates to plans following quality assurance require substantial changes to plans.	There is insufficient capacity within the SEND service to make required changes to EHCPs. Proposed changes to plans result in parental challenge, disputed EHCPs and appeals to the SEND tribunal, which may result in higher cost provision.	Mitigate	The management structure and staffing of the SEND service is regularly reviewed to ensure sufficient capacity. There is a priority programme for annual EHCP reviews and quality assurance and this is well coordinated and managed by specific senior staff. There is engagement with parents and carers. Assessments and plans are well evidenced by all contributing professionals.	High
Annual EHCP reviews do not reduce the costs of individual plans to an affordable funding level that meets the child's or young person's needs.	Proposed changes to plans result in increased parental challenge, disputed EHCPs and appeals to the SEND tribunal, which may result in higher cost provision	Mitigate	Annual EHCP reviews and quality assurance are well coordinated and managed. There is engagement with parents and carers. Assessments and plans are well evidenced by all contributing professionals.	High
The SEND service does not have the systems, processes and support it needs to drive up the quality of EHCP assessments and plans.	The quality of EHCP assessments and plans does not improve at the required pace. EHCPs do not robustly and sufficiently evidence how and where children's and young people's education, health and care needs can be met. This may result in increased parental challenge, disputed EHCPs and appeals to the SEND tribunal, which may result in higher cost provision.	Mitigate	There is a priority programme for annual EHCP reviews and quality assurance.	High
Annual review process being late and lack of capacity for SENDCOs to complete in line with person centred approach	Schools not completing Annual Reviews on time impacts timeliness therefore meaning that reviews will not be delivered within statutory timeframes. Annual Reviews not being person centred will affect independence of the child/ young person and may not see their aspirations or needs met whilst they are at school.	Mitigate	Providing relevant training to schools through various forums including Headteacher meetings and SENDCO forums to inform them of the process and the impact of late annual reviews. Whole system holistic outcome training is being delivered to embed the person centred approach and ensure that SENDCOs are trained to the appropriate level to deliver.	High
Advice required from	This is one of the biggest factors in the delay of an EHC	Mitigate	Joint working with the CCG to find solutions to the shortage of	High

<p>health professionals not being timely or of the required quality</p>	<p>Plan/ Annual Review beyond the statutory deadlines and is having a detrimental impact on that statistic.</p>		<p>health professionals across the service is being undertaken and creative solutions are being adopted where possible. The timeliness of advice is mainly due to inability to recruit and retain staff; there are actions listed under the “Inability to recruit and retain professionals” risk earlier in the risk register.</p>	
---	---	--	--	--