

Scrutiny for Policies, Children and Families Committee (Advisory Board meetings only from 19 January 2022 onwards)
Tuesday 25 January 2022
10.00 am Virtual Meeting via Microsoft Teams



SUPPLEMENT TO THE AGENDA

To: The Members of the Scrutiny for Policies, Children and Families Advisory Board meeting

We are now able to enclose the following information which was unavailable when the agenda was published:

Item 7	Children's Services Business Plan and resourcing through the Medium-Term Financial Plan for 2022 - 2023 (Pages 3 - 26) PowerPoint presentation outlining the context to the Children's Services Business Plan.
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Published on 21 January 2022

Democratic Service Team, County Hall, Taunton, TA1 4DY

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Children & Families Scrutiny Committee

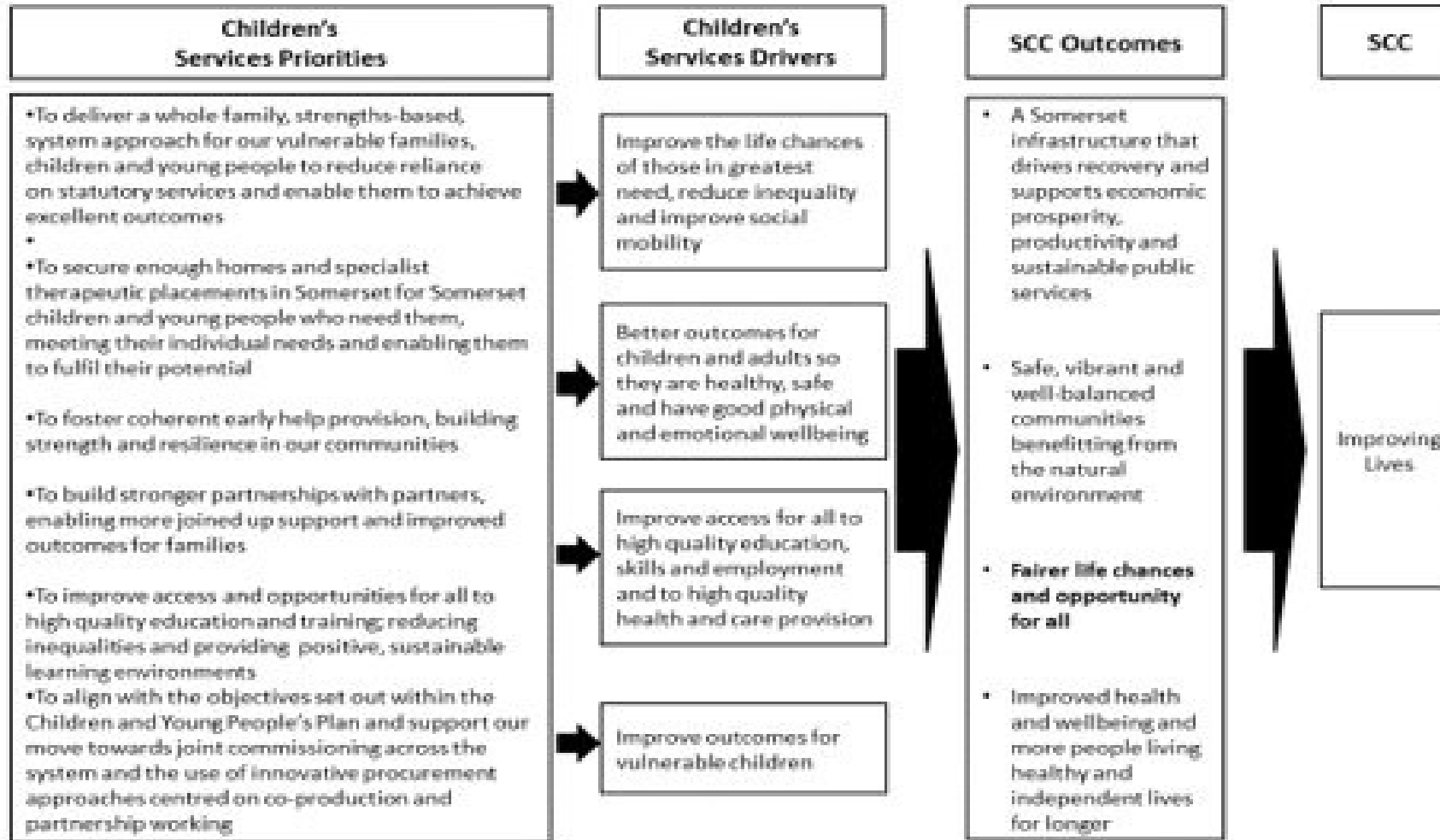
25 January 2022



Agenda item 7

Improving
LIVES

How Children's Services Supports SCC's Business Plan



CHILDREN & YOUNG PEOPLE'S PLAN

CHILDREN'S SERVICES PRIORITIES

CHILDREN'S TRANSFORMATION PROGRAMME

STRENGTHENING UNIVERSAL SERVICES

SEND IMPROVEMENT

WRITTEN STATEMENT OF ACTION IMPROVEMENT PRIORITIES 1-9

SENDIAS

EDUCATION PARTNERSHIPS

LA MAINTAINED SCHOOLS MODEL

COMMUNICATIONS & DIGITAL

EDUCATION STRATEGY

CREWKERNE & ILMINSTER

SOMERSET WORKS (NEETS 16-18)

EARLY HELP

EARLY HELP DESIGN

EARLY HELP STRATEGY

WEST SOMERSET OPPORTUNITY AREA

FAMILY SOLUTIONS SOMERSET

FAMILY SAFEGUARDING

FDAC

PAUSE

SAFE FAMILIES

BUILDING LOCAL CAPACITY & SUFFICIENCY

RESIDENTIAL

JOINT COMMISSIONING

FOSTERING

STRATEGIC PARTNER

Children's Homes, High Needs Fostering & Therapeutic Education

16+ YOUTH HOMELESSNESS

FOSTERING DEVELOPMENT

AFFILIATED PROGRAMME

JOINT COMMISSIONING

INTEGRATED CARE SYSTEM

CAMHS TRANSFORMATION PLAN



Timelines



		2021-2022				2022-2023				2023 - 2024			
		Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4
SEND Improvement	Written statement of Action SEND & Improvement plan	→				→				→			
	ICS System Development (Children's input)	→				→							
Commissioning	CAMHS - Mental Health and Emotional Health and Wellbeing	→				→							
	Strategic Partner	→				→				→			
Building Local Capacity	16+ Homelessness	→				→							
	Fostering Development	→				→							
Early Help	Early Help Strategy & Design	→				→							
Family Solutions	Family Safeguarding	→				→				→			
	FDAC	→				→							
	Safe Families	→				→				→			
	Pause	→				→				→			
Education	Crewkerne & Ilminster	→				→				→			
	Schools Communications and Partnership	→				→							
	Education Funding & Trading Strategy	→				→				→			
	Climate Emergency	→				→				→			
Stand Alone	Social Workers in Schools	→				→							
	West Somerset Opportunity Area	→				→							

Childrens Services MTFP 2022/23



The Committee is requested to **consider the proposed budget for 2022/23** for Children's and Family Services budgets.

The Committee is asked to **review specific proposals for changes from previous years**, so that they can **comment on them, offer assurance to Cabinet and/or identify any matters for consideration that they would like to highlight to the Cabinet.**



Budget Headlines

- Balanced budget with no use of reserves to support on-going expenditure
- Increased investment in services:
 - Adults £18.1m (13%)
 - Childrens £12.3m (13%)
 - ECI £2.5m (4%)
- No reductions to service level or staff redundancies
- Capital
 - £48.4m of new capital schemes
 - Total SCC programme £150.5m (Total commitment to borrow £490m)
- Increase in Council Tax of 2.99%
 - 1.99% C Tax + 1% ASC precept - £1,353.53 to £1,394.00 = £40.47 or £0.78p per week increased (Band D)
 - Still one of the lowest charging County Councils
- General Reserves at £23m (compared to £19.7m last year)
- Further £10m set aside for our share of the LGR implantation costs



Robust Financial Planning

- Lots of uncertainty (detailed in the scrutiny paper appendix A)
- Important that the process for producing the budget is robust and takes account of the very latest information
- Focus on 2022/23 but key part of good financial management is to set out a forecast for future years (Medium-Term Financial Plan – MTFP) - indicative budgets for 2023/24 and 2024/25
- 2022/23 budget will be the last budget of Somerset County Council prior to the creation of the new Somerset Council from April 2023
- Predicting future years demand is always difficult and Covid-19 has further increased this difficulty
- Key challenge is identifying what is on-going demand and what is temporary demand
- Budget proposals have therefore tried to strike the balance and to ensure the budget proposals are robust

Checklist/Toolkit used to ensure robust budgets

- ✓ Managing pressures (demand, demography and inflation)
- ✓ Base budget review
- ✓ New Ways of Working & Transformation savings
- ✓ Staffing establishment & turnover factor
- ✓ Commissioning/Procurement
- ✓ Fees & Charges
- ✓ Grants
- ✓ Benchmarking
- ✓ Invest to Save
- ✓ Future Years



CHILDREN'S TRANSFORMATION PROGRAMME

- Additional funding
- Cost reductions previously agreed
- New cost reduction proposals
- Use of reserves for transformation

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Investment in
Children's Services
of £12.3m
(13.3% increase)

Children's Services	£m	£m
2021/22 Original Budget		96.005
Removal Of Once Off Budgets for 2021/22	(3.211)	
In Year Permanent Virements	(0.063)	
		(3.274)
2021/22 Base Budget		92.731
Additional Funding Requirements:		
Inflation (Contractual and General)	2.227	
Demographic and other Demand Increases	5.683	
Other Funding Requirements	1.895	
Growth	0.014	
Total Additional Funding Requirements		9.819
Pay Award		2.113
Savings Previously Agreed		(1.276)
Prior Year Savings Not Delivered		0.690
New Savings Proposals		(0.816)
Use Of Reserves		1.780
Technical Adjustments		0.007
2022/23 Proposed Base Budget		105.048
Change £m		12.317
Change %		13.28%

Table 1 of the Scrutiny Report

Director Confidence in the Budget



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Director's Confidence Level in:	H/M/L	Comments
2022/23 Budget	M	Unclear impact of legacy from covid Challenges re recruitment of staff Risk of LGR disruption Residential care market re placement of children with complex needs Proposal re providing standards for 16+ accomodation
Achieving cost reduction from Transformation	M	The above will impact on ability to achieve cost reductions

Overview of Challenges

National

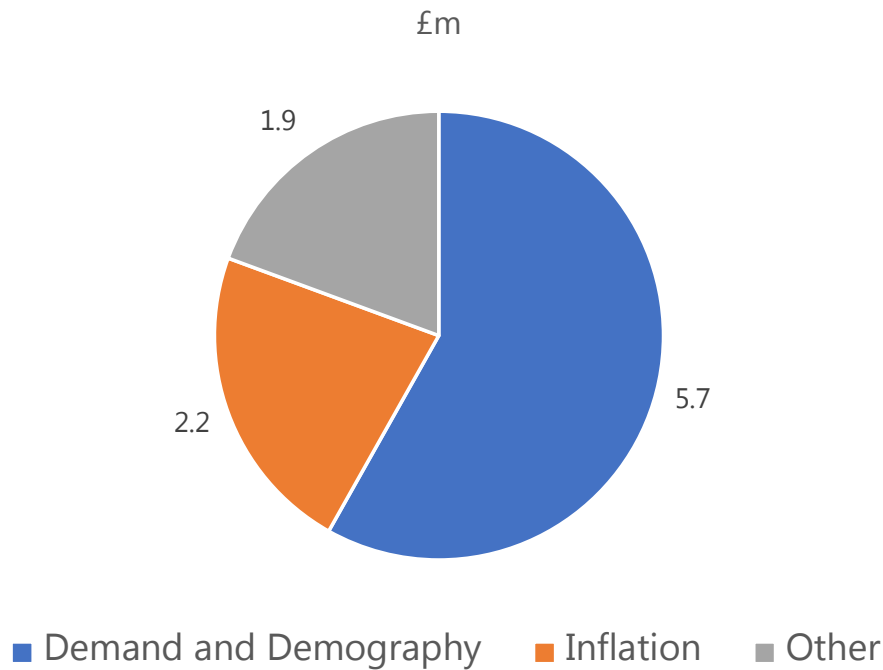
- Impact of legacy from COVID on complexity of children's needs, particularly for SEND and children needing Local Authority Care (CLA)
- Legislation/regulation and inspection on SEND and Children's Social Care
- Spend on CLA over the last 5 years has increased by 35% across England but 44% for CCN councils. Similar pattern in SEND
- Care & SEND Reviews – creating uncertainty

Local

- Evidence of increasing complexity of need identified nationally, adding to direct costs (e.g. agency, placement costs, home to school transport) and indirect costs (e.g. capacity of partners, children being placed some distance from home)
- Rising child population and increasing poverty – seen in other counties
- Staffing capacity challenging across health, social care and education sectors



Additional Funding of £9.8m



Demand and Demography

- Working with more Children and Families
- More complex needs
- Spending more on meeting needs – in the context of challenging market
- Priority areas to improve performance

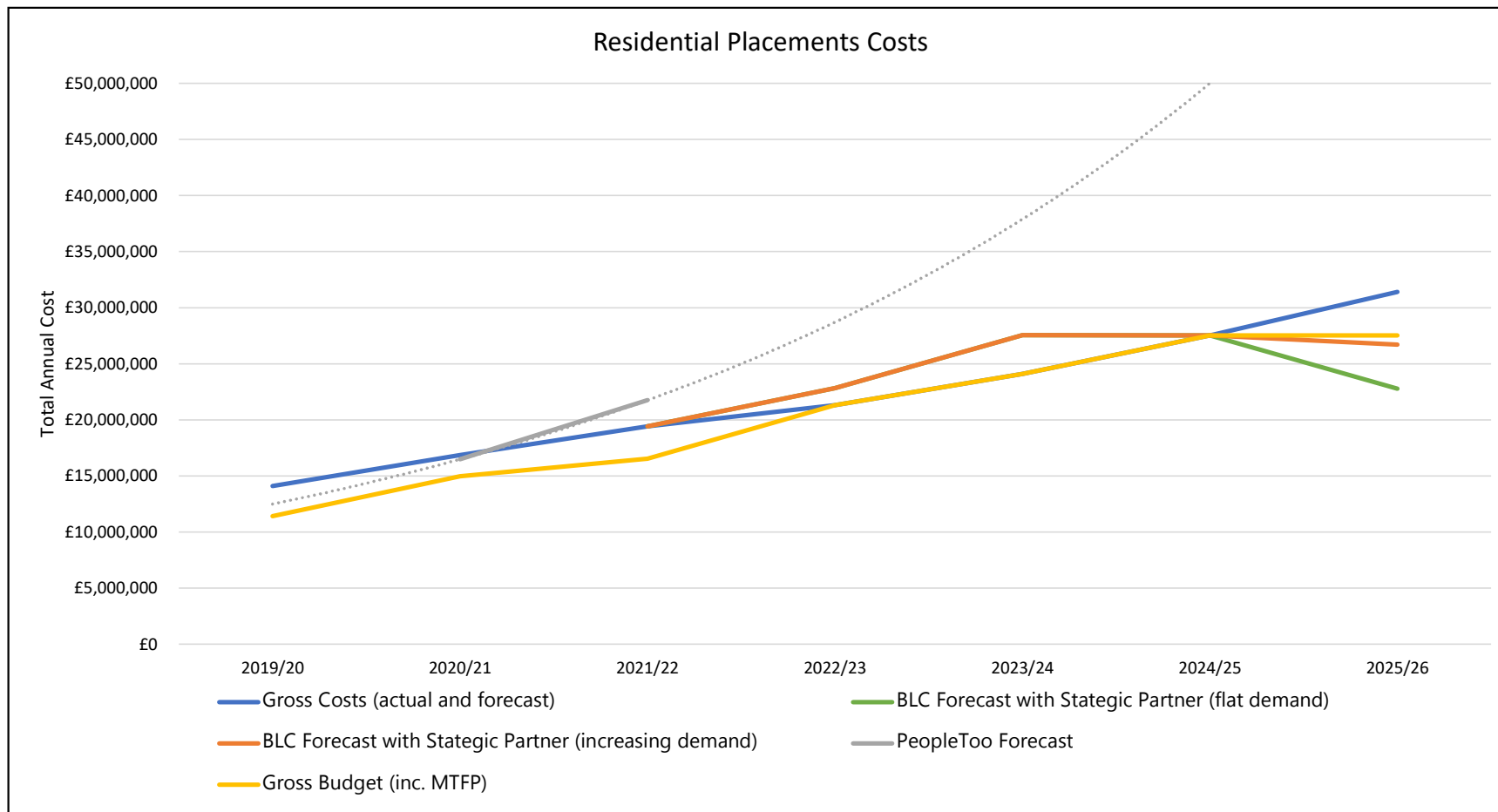
Other

- Realignment of DSG and LA funding
- Change in legislation

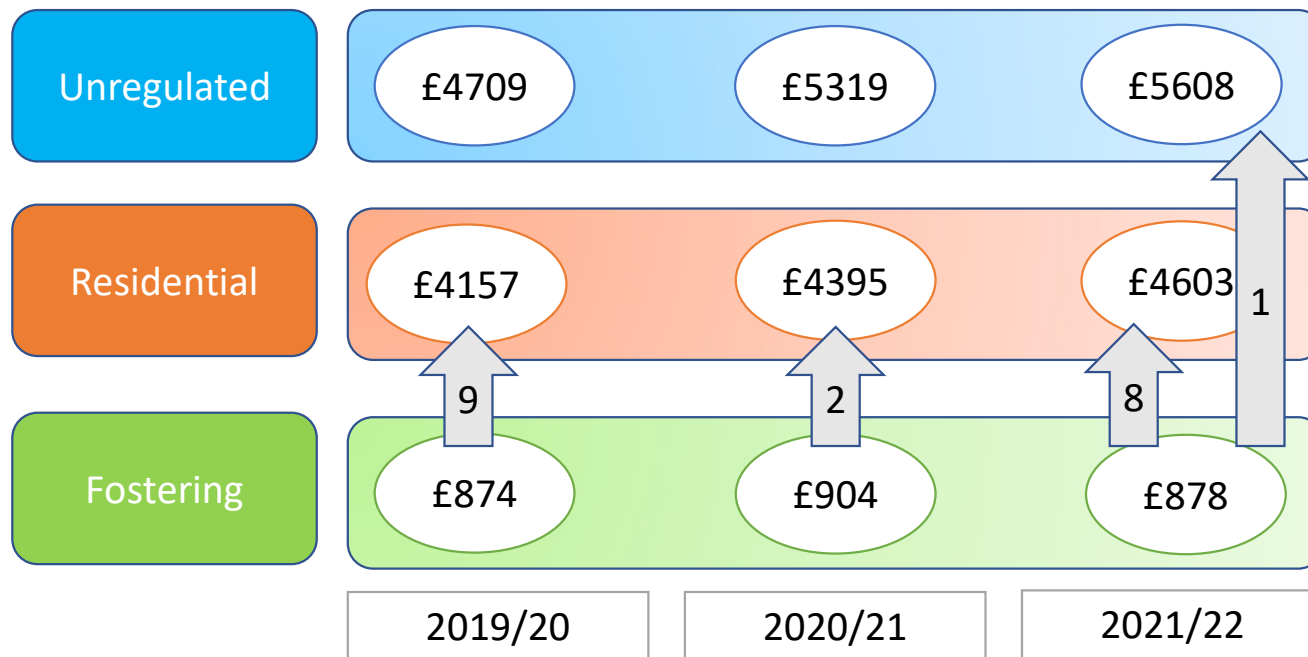


External Placements – Residential

BUILDING LOCAL CAPACITY & SUFFICIENCY



External Placements – Complexity of Need



FAMILY SOLUTIONS SOMERSET

BUILDING LOCAL CAPACITY & SUFFICIENCY

EARLY HELP

Why is this needed?

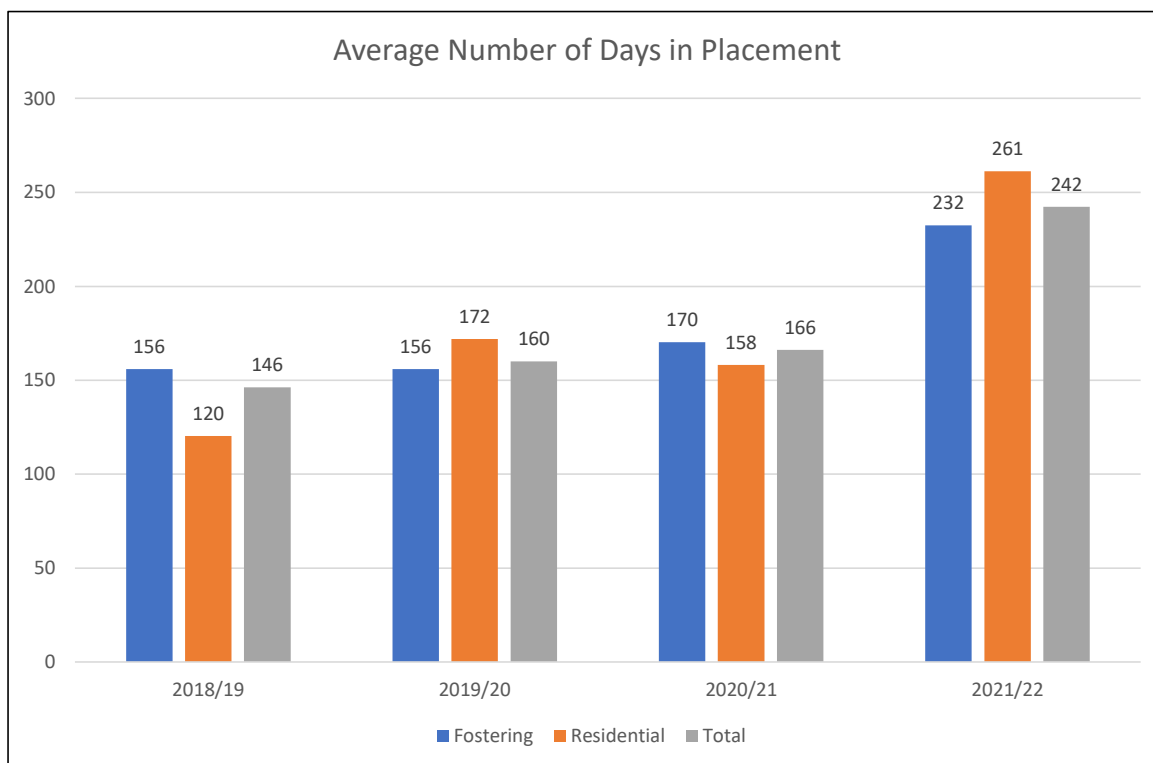
Higher cost placements due to increasing numbers of children with complex needs. There is an increased demand nationally for these placements which is impacting on sufficiency and cost in the placements market.

There is a statutory obligation in the Childrens Act 1989 to provide accommodation and support to children who have been significantly harmed at home where there are no alternative carers within the family and friends network. If funding is not available the budget will overspend.

£ = average weekly cost



External Placements - Increased Care Days

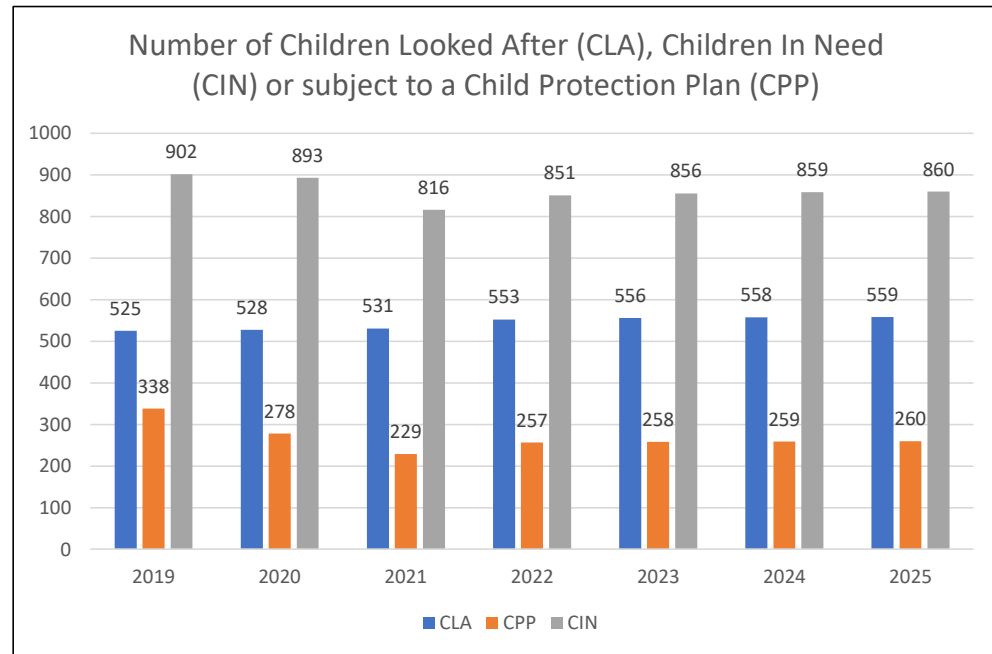
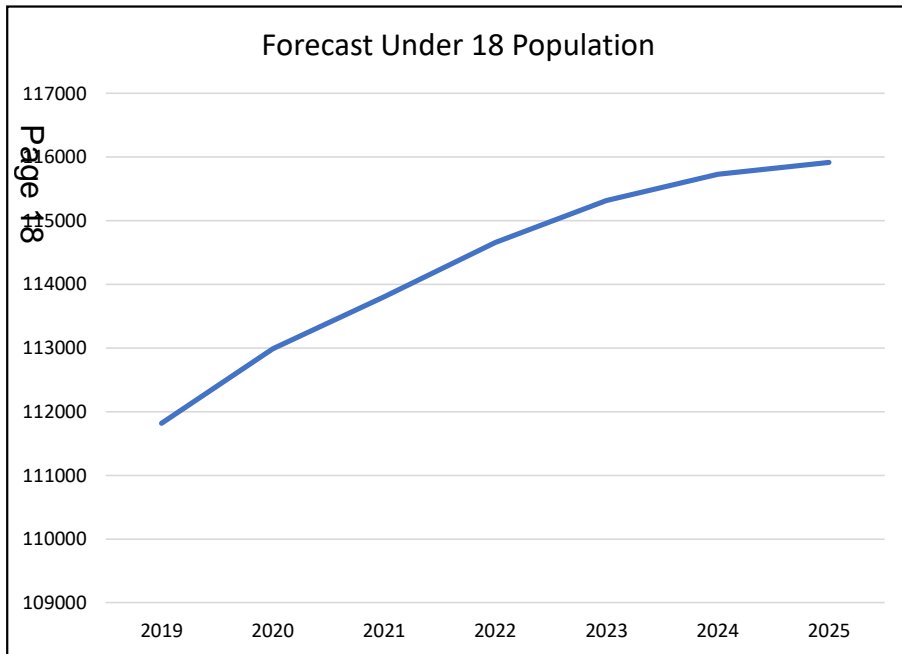


Why is it needed?

Those children in care remain in the care of an external placement provider for longer periods than previously. There is a statutory obligation in the Childrens Act 1989 to provide accommodation and support to children who have been significantly harmed at home where there are no alternative carers within the family and friends network. If funding is not available the budget will overspend



Demographic Growth

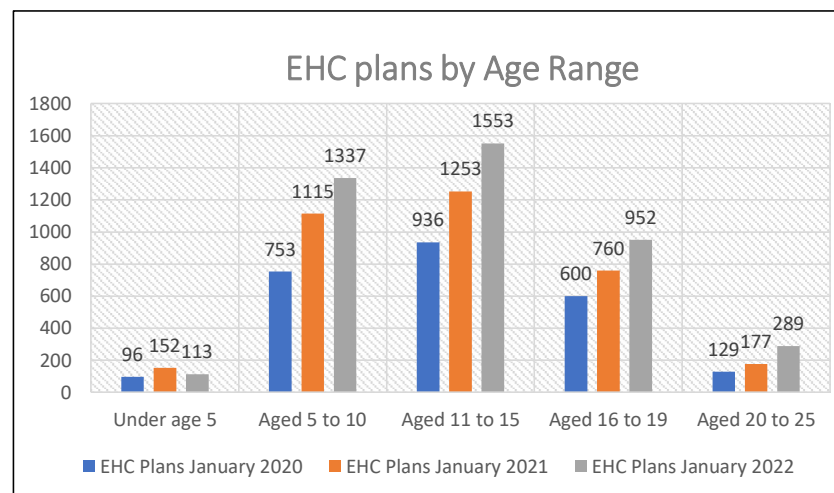
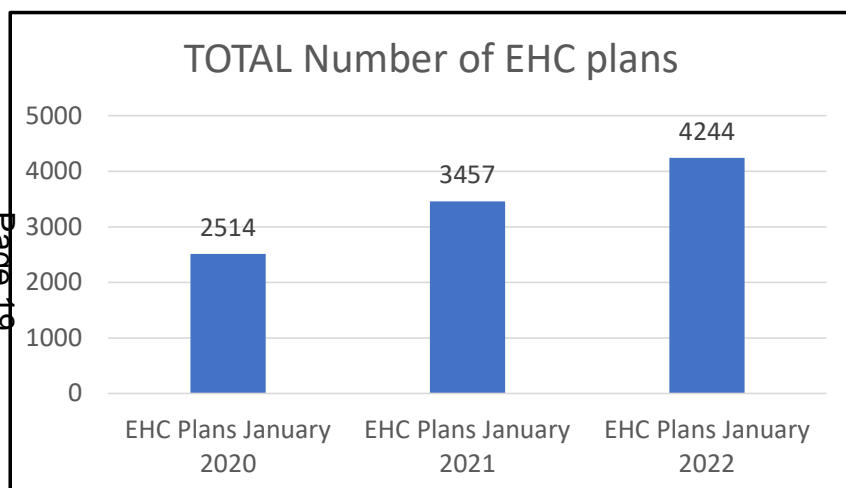


May be affected by the impact of the pandemic and the publication of the new census anticipated early 2022

Education health and care plans

SEND IMPROVEMENT

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Why is it needed?

SEND Casework:

EHC assessment requests and the issuing of plans continue to grow. We do have management activities underway to try and support a more gradual request for EHC assessments than currently in place. This coupled with the LA statutory duty to maintain the 4000+ EHCP requires a stable staff team to support the continued improved experience for children, young people and their families.

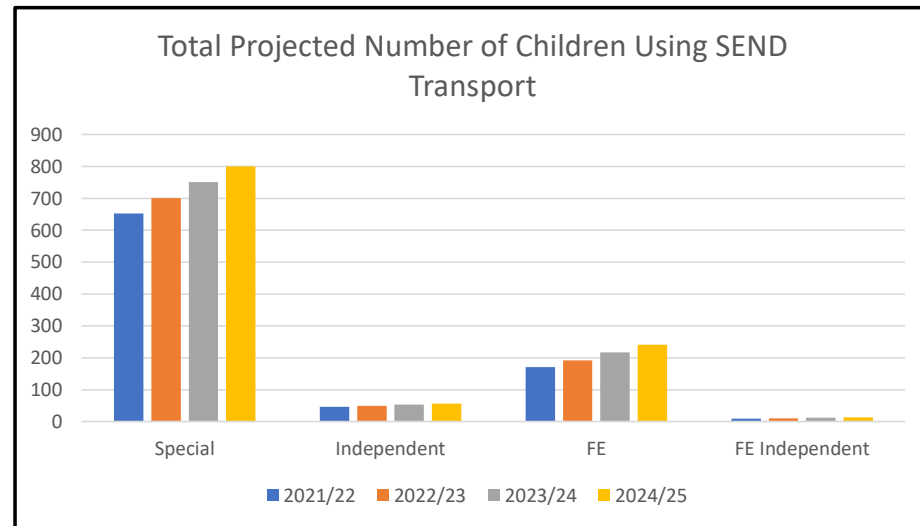
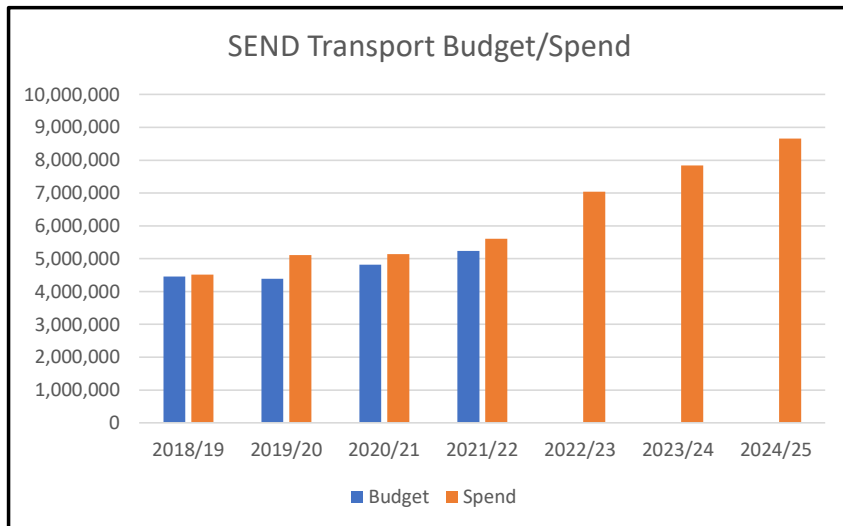
Educational Psychology:

Statutory demand has increased in all areas in Somerset. Educational Psychologists are integral to the requirements of the SEND Code of Practice. This includes the assessment and writing of statutory reports as part of the EHCP assessment process, supporting annual reviews of CYP with EHCPs, supporting issues around exclusion, tribunals and placement risks.

Traded demand has increased from schools and other commissioners (e.g. Public Health, CCG, other LAs). This work is preventative in terms of CYP with SEND, and should reduce further statutory demand. Commissions, cost will be covered by traded income.



SEND Transport (1)



Why is it needed?

SEN Transport pressure significantly increased between Financial year 18/19 and 19/20. Routes in 18/19 were 660 and by the end of financial year 19/20, this had increased to 743 there was no recognition of this change of pressure.

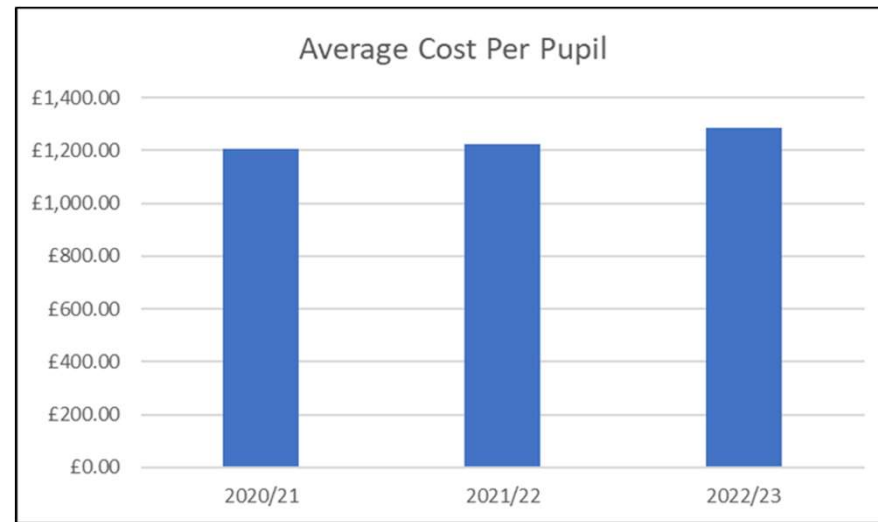
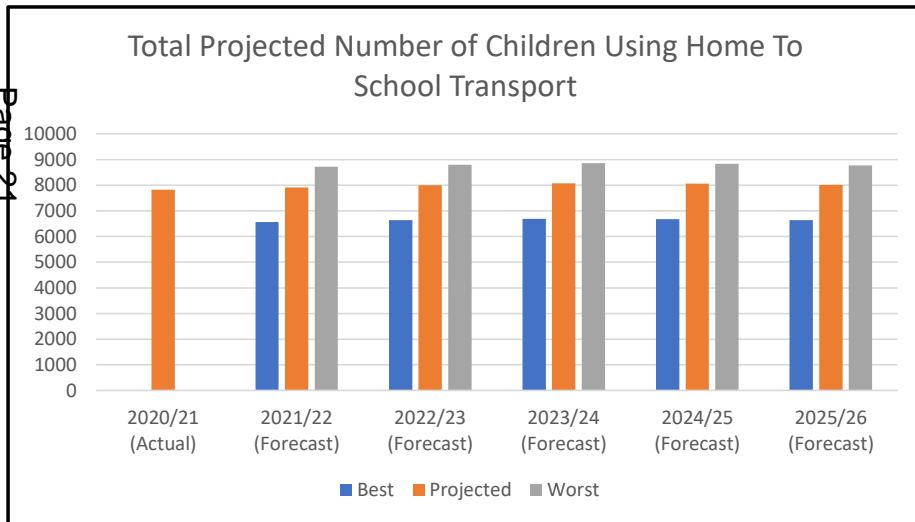
- The transfer of children and young people from high needs funding to having an EHC plan is one of the reasons for this growth coupled with the increased availability of local special school placements has meant that more children have become eligible for transport.
- Where there are no available routes or the costs associated with individual transport are high, families are offered a personalised budget to fund transport which is arranged by the parent. This is currently offered to families where the proposed cost of transport is high or transport is unavailable.
- Travel Training is focussed towards children and young people preparing to go to Further Education. Currently the Travel Trainers are preparing a training package to skill up wider partners such as Special Schools, post -16 providers and Micro-Providers through Adult Social Care. This will help us to make sure that Travel Training becomes part of a Preparing for Adulthood curriculum and focus the capacity within to deliver targeted training for young people to promote their independence.





Home To School Transport

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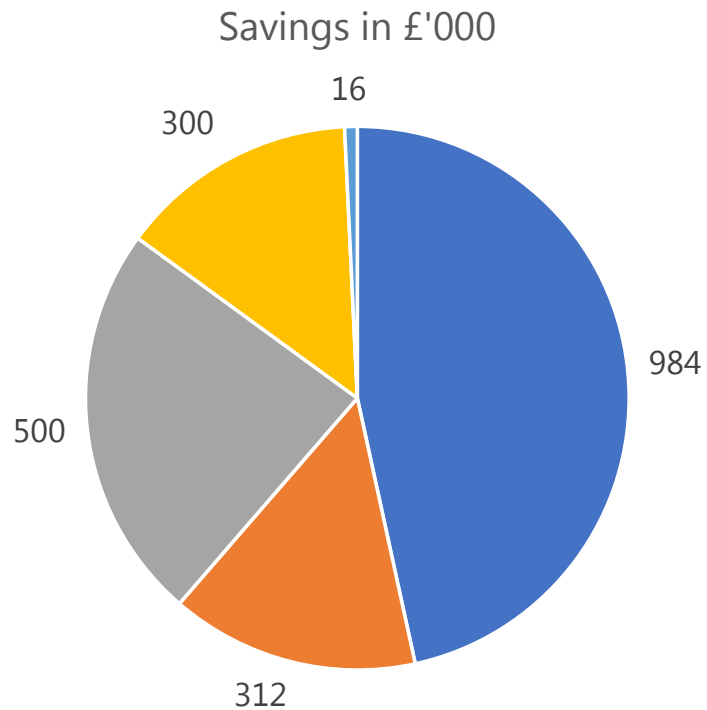
Why is it needed?

It is a contractual factor on some Home to School routes. The inflationary uplift prevents operators ceasing their contracts and submitting higher costs through re-tender. It is based on CPI at a given point in the year. The service already has a statutory only policy - all discretionary entitlements have been removed.

Anticipated cost reduction from Transformation



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Family Safeguarding – reducing the need for care

Strategic Partnership – providing local care placements for children and reducing external placements

Turnover factor – recognising natural turnover in the service

Pathway to independence – reduction in cost

FAMILY SOLUTIONS SOMERSET

BUILDING LOCAL CAPACITY & SUFFICIENCY

Use of Reserves

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2022/23
£m

Family Safeguarding

1.350

Family Safeguarding investment agreed in the 2019 business case

School Reorganisation

0.430

Crewkerne and Ilminster reorganisation

Total

1,780

FAMILY SOLUTIONS SOMERSET

EDUCATION PARTNERSHIPS



Capital Programme – new bids

Scheme	New MTFP Request and Profiled Expenditure			
	2022/23	2023/24	2024/25	Total MTFP Bid Request
	£m	£m	£m	£m
Children and Young People				
Children's Residential	0.1	2.4	0.1	2.6
Schools Services	1.8	5.1	0.4	7.3
Total CYP Capital Programme	1.9	7.5	0.5	9.9
Financed by				
Borrowing	0.1	5.2	0.5	5.8
Grants	1.8	2.3		4.1
Total	1.9	7.5	0.5	9.9

BUILDING LOCAL
CAPACITY &
SUFFICIENCY

- Purchase of residential properties for care placements
- Investment in homes for Children with Disabilities
- Schools condition programme



Next Steps

- Comments from this Committee feedback to Cabinet
- End Jan – Final Finance Settlement figures from Government
- 4 February – LGR Joint Committee – reviews 5 Somerset Councils budget proposals
- 7 February – Member Budget Briefing
- 14 Cabinet – considers comments from Scrutiny & recommends final budget proposals
- 17 February - Member Budget Briefing
- 23 February – Full Council – Sets Revenue & Capital Budgets for 2022/23 & Council Tax levels



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