

To: Councillor Brock (Chair)
Councillors Page, Barnett-Ward, Ennis,
Duveen, Emberson, Hoskin, Jones, Pearce,
Robinson, Rowland, Skeats, Stanford-Beale,
Stevens, Terry and White

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26 February 2021

Your contact is: **Simon Hill - Committee Services (simon.hill@reading.gov.uk)**

NOTICE OF MEETING - POLICY COMMITTEE 8 MARCH 2021

A meeting of the Policy Committee will be held on Monday, 8 March 2021 at 6.30 pm via Microsoft Teams. The Agenda for the meeting is set out below.

1. CHAIR'S ANNOUNCEMENTS
2. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST
3. MINUTES 3 - 14
4. PETITIONS AND QUESTIONS

To receive any petitions from the public and any questions from the public and Councillors.

5. 2020/21 QUARTER 3 PERFORMANCE AND MONITORING REPORT BOROUGH WIDE 15 - 82

This report sets out the projected revenue and capital outturn positions for 2020/21 for both the General Fund and the Housing Revenue Accounts as at the end of December 2020 (Quarter 3).

ITEMS FOR CONSIDERATION BY THE COMMITTEE ACTING AS SOLE MEMBER FOR BRIGHTER FUTURES FOR CHILDREN LIMITED

6. BRIGHTER FUTURES FOR CHILDREN LIMITED - GOVERNANCE & RESERVED MATTERS BOROUGH WIDE 83 - 86

This report asks the Policy Committee, in its capacity as the sole member of Brighter Futures for Children Limited, to make decisions regarding the ongoing Company Executive Leadership Team and Board.

7. **BRIGHTER FUTURES FOR CHILDREN 2021/2022 BUSINESS PLAN** **BOROUGH WIDE** 87 - 114

This report sets out the Business Plan submitted by Brighter Futures for Children in response to its obligation to agree an annual Business Plan and contract sum.

ITEMS FOR CONSIDERATION IN CLOSED SESSION

8. **EXCLUSION OF THE PRESS AND PUBLIC**

The following motion will be moved by the Chair:

“That, pursuant to Section 100A of the Local Government Act 1972 (as amended) members of the press and public be excluded during consideration of the following items on the agenda, as it is likely that there would be disclosure of exempt information as defined in the relevant Paragraphs of Part 1 of Schedule 12A (as amended) of that Act”

9. **DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST FOR CLOSED SESSION ITEMS**

10. **ELECTRICAL MAINTENANCE & INSTALLATION - TENDER ACCEPTANCE - CORPORATE PROPERTIES, SCHOOLS AND OTHER ASSOCIATED BUILDINGS** **BOROUGH WIDE** 115 - 118

Present: Councillor Brock (Chair);
 Councillors Page (Vice-Chair), Barnett-Ward, Duveen, Emberson, Ennis, Hoskin, Jones, Pearce, Robinson, Rowland, Skeats, Stanford-Beale, Stevens, Terry and White

Apologies: Councillors

RESOLVED ITEMS

89. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Councillors Duveen and Stanford-Beale declared a prejudicial interest in Item 100, on the basis that they had been appointed by the Council as directors of Readibus. They left the meeting and took no part in the debate or decision.

90. MINUTES

The Minutes of the meeting held on 18 January 2021 were agreed as a correct record and would be signed by the Chair.

91. QUESTIONS

Questions on the following matters were submitted by members of the public:

	<u>Questioner</u>	<u>Subject</u>	<u>Reply</u>
1.	David McElroy	Feeling Safe In Our Green Spaces	Cllr Rowland
2.	David McElroy	Rent Holidays For Local Businesses	Cllr Brock
3.	Peter Bowyer	Changes to Waste collections	Cllr Barnett-Ward

Questions on the following matters were submitted by Councillors:

	<u>Questioner</u>	<u>Subject</u>	<u>Reply</u>
1.	Cllr Duveen	Future Development of Reading	Cllr Page
2.	Cllr White	Insulating Houses In Reading	Cllr Ennis
3.	Cllr White	£20 Universal Credit Top Up	Cllr Emberson

(The full text of the questions and responses was made available on the Reading Borough Council website).

92. DECISION BOOKS

The Assistant Director of Legal & Democratic Services submitted a report listing the Decision Books that had been published since the report to the previous meeting of the Committee held on 18 January 2021.

Resolved -

That Decision Book Nos 620-623 be noted.

93. 2021/22 BUDGET & MEDIUM-TERM FINANCIAL STRATEGY 2021/22 - 2023/24

Further to Minute 65 of the meeting held on 14 December 2020, the Executive Director submitted a report providing an update on the results of the consultation on the Draft Budget and Medium Term Financial Strategy (MTFS) and asking the Committee to recommend to Council the Draft 2021/22 General Fund and Housing Revenue Account budgets, Draft Capital Programme and Medium Term Financial Strategy. The following appendices were attached to the report:

- Appendix 1 - Summary of General Fund Budget 2021-22 to 2023-24
- Appendix 2 - General Fund Revenue Budget by Service 2021-22 to 2023-24
- Appendix 3 - Detailed General Fund Budget Changes 2021-22 to 2023-24
- Appendix 4 - Housing Revenue Account Budget & Reserves 2021-22 to 2023-24
- Appendix 5 - General Fund and HRA Capital Programme 2021-22 to 2023-24
- Appendix 6 - Flexible Capital Receipts Strategy
- Appendix 7 - Fees and Charges
- Appendix 8 - Equality Impact Assessment
- Appendix 9 - Dedicated Schools Grant (DSG) Funding 2021-22
- Appendix 10 - Budget Consultation
- Appendix 11 - Residents Survey 2020

The report provided an update on the results of the budget consultation exercise, changes arising from the publication of the Local Government Finance Settlement as well as other changes that had arisen since the draft budget had been submitted to the meeting on 14 December 2020. The Final Local Government Financial Settlement had been published on 4 February 2021 and initial review indicated that there had been no changes from the Provisional Settlement that affected Reading.

The report explained that the proposed MTFS was informed by and supported delivery of the Council's Corporate Plan priorities including its commitment to address the climate change emergency. The underpinning rationale of the MTFS was to deliver a balanced and affordable 2021/22 budget and ensure that the Council's finances were robust and sustainable over the medium term, and that in the longer term the Council's finances were not reliant on the unsustainable use of one-off reserves or funding.

The report noted that preparation of the Budget and MTFS had been particularly challenging due to uncertainty caused by the implications of the Covid-19 pandemic. Savings proposals of £28.0m had been identified to mitigate against budget pressures, but it had not been possible at this stage to completely close the budget gap in 2022/23 and 2023/24 on a recurring and permanent basis. The 2021/22 budget had been balanced by utilising £2.776m of one-off earmarked reserves, but continued use of earmarked reserves to balance the budget was not sustainable so additional savings of £3.649m

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would need to be identified as part of the 2022/23 budget setting process. The MTFs also assumed the use of £9.906m of the Direct Revenue Financing of Capital Earmarked Reserve in the current financial year (2020/21) to reduce the ongoing Minimum Revenue Provision (MRP) charge to the revenue budget. This reserve had been set aside to mitigate against capital receipts not being realised and available for use as previously expected. Other budget assumptions including on council tax, efficiencies and increased income, contingency provision and government funding were set out in the report.

The report explained that an in-year underspend on the General Fund Revenue Budget of circa £4.8m in 2020/21 was currently forecast. This was primarily due to the Corporate Contingency budget not being required due to Covid grants from Central Government mitigating against non-delivery of savings in-year. It was assumed that any budget surplus would be transferred into earmarked reserves to offset the budgeted drawdown from reserves referred to above.

The report noted that the Strategy built on previous work to stabilise the Council's financial position and build reserves back to more robust levels. This had enabled investment in core infrastructure to drive efficiency improvements, facilitate service redesign and thereby manage pressures within demand-led services. This invest to save approach provided for a robust financial position going forward and enabled services to continue to be delivered. The Budget Strategy relied on significant service transformation to drive increased efficiency savings and income generation, but service cuts were not required.

Items 93-95 were considered together for recommendation to the Council meeting on 23 February 2021.

Resolved -

That, taking due regard of the results of the budget consultation exercise and resident's survey (as outlined in Section 3 and 4, and set out in more detail in Appendices 10 and 11), the Draft 2021/22 General Fund and Housing Revenue Account budgets, Draft Capital Programme and Medium Term Financial Strategy as set out in Appendices 1-9 be endorsed and recommended to the Council meeting on 23 February 2021, noting the following:

- a) **the Council's General Fund Budget Requirement of £146.166m for 2021/22 and an increase in the band D Council Tax for the Council of 1.99% plus an additional 3.00% Adult Social Care Precept, or £84.44 per annum, representing a band D Council Tax of £1,776.60 per annum, excluding precepts from Police and Fire, as set out in paragraph 9.2;**
- b) **the proposed utilisation of one-off grant funding in 2021/22 to award £70 to residents in receipt of Local Council Tax Support to help mitigate the increase in Council Tax in the current circumstances as set out in paragraph 5.3;**

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- c) the proposed efficiency and invest to save savings of £13.7m together with additional income of £1.4m in 2021/22 required to achieve a balanced budget for that year as set out in Appendices 2 and 3;
- d) the overall savings proposed within the MTFs of £28.0m (of which increases to income, fees and charges is £5.4m) and three-year growth changes to service budgets of £19.5m as set out in Appendices 2 and 3;
- e) the budgeted draw from earmarked reserves totalling £2.776m to balance the 2021/22 budget (as set out in paragraph 5.18);
- f) the Housing Revenue Account budget for 2021/22 of £43.647m as set out in Appendix 4 and the average increase of 1.5% in social dwelling rents from April 2021 giving a revised weekly average social rent of £104.11;
- g) the General Fund and Housing Revenue Account Capital Programmes as set out in Appendices 5a and 5b;
- h) the Strategy for the use of flexible capital receipts to deliver future transformation and ongoing savings as set out in Appendix 6;
- i) the Fees and Charges set out in Appendix 7 of the report;
- j) the Equalities Impact Assessment as set out in Appendix 8;
- k) the allocation of Dedicated Schools Grant (DSG) as set out in Appendix 9.

94. TREASURY MANAGEMENT STRATEGY STATEMENT (2021/22); MINIMUM REVENUE PROVISION POLICY (2021/22) AND ANNUAL INVESTMENT STRATEGY (2021/22)

The Executive Director of Resources submitted a report asking the Committee to recommend to Council the Treasury Management Strategy Statement, Treasury Management Policy, Minimum Revenue Provision, Annual Investment Strategy and Prudential and Treasury Management indicators, as set out in Appendix A.

The report noted the Council was required to approve a Treasury Management Strategy before the start of each financial year. The Treasury Management Strategy Statement (TMSS) was attached to the report at Appendix A, and set out the parameters for the Council's planned treasury activity during 2021/22. The TMSS reflected the Council's Draft Capital Programme 2021/22 - 2023/24.

The report set out information on the economic background, the Council's borrowing and investments, the implications of the Markets in Financial Instruments Directive II, approved investments and counterparties and risk controls.

Items 93-95 were considered together to recommend to the Council meeting on 23 February 2021.

Resolved -

That Policy Committee endorse and recommend to Council:

- The Treasury Management Strategy Statement for 2021/22 as set out in Appendix A;
- The Treasury Management Policy for 2021/22 as set out in Appendix A;
- The Minimum Revenue Provision (MRP) Policy for 2021/22 as set out in Appendix A;
- The Annual Investment Strategy for 2021/22 as set out in Appendix A, noting the revised total limit for Non-Specified Investments; and
- The Prudential and Treasury Management indicators as set out in Appendix A.

95. CAPITAL STRATEGY 2021/22

The Executive Director of Resources submitted a report asking the Committee to recommend to Council the adoption of the Capital Strategy, as required by The Chartered Institute of Public Finance and Accountancy' (CIPFA) revised Prudential Code for Capital Finance in Local Authorities. The Strategy was attached to the report at Appendix 1.

The report noted that the CIPFA 2017 Prudential and Treasury Management Code required the Council to prepare a Capital Strategy report which set out the Council's capital requirements arising from policy objectives, as well as the associated governance procedures and risk appetite of the Council. The Capital Strategy provided a high-level overview of how capital expenditure, capital financing and treasury management activity contributed to the provision of services; along with an overview of how associated risk was managed and the implications for future financial sustainability. It showed how revenue, capital and balance sheet planning were integrated and set out the Council's approach to asset management planning, development and monitoring of the Capital Programme. Appendix B to the Strategy set out a prioritisation matrix for new capital schemes.

The report explained that the Capital Strategy has been updated in several respects. The most significant change related to the removal from the Capital Programme of further commercial property acquisition following new restrictions on borrowing from the PWLB. The updated Strategy also provided a more balanced reflection of all asset types owned by the Council and clearer referencing to supporting strategies. The report asked the Committee to note an updated Action Plan, attached at Appendix D to the Strategy, which identified areas of ongoing work required for the Council to become fully compliant with the CIPFA code requirements. Actions completed on the previous action plan were also summarised in the report.

Items 93-95 were considered together to recommend to the Council meeting on 23 February 2021.

Resolved -

- (1) That the adoption of the Capital Strategy, as attached to the report at Appendix 1, be recommended to Council;**
- (2) That the updated Action Plan that formed Appendix D of the Capital Strategy (Appendix 1) together with the associated financial implications, be noted.**

96. CHILDREN'S ACTIVITY CENTRE AT PROSPECT PARK

The Executive Director of Economic Growth and Neighbourhood Services submitted a report outlining proposals to extend the recreational facilities at Prospect Park to include educational, chargeable and support activities for young people, children and families and seeking scheme and spend approval for the project.

The report explained that the proposals for Prospect Park would provide a unique mix of indoor and outdoor facilities focused at the primary school age range. This would create outdoor attractions, generate commercial revenue for the Reading Play Service and enhance the play-based education offer the service provided for schools and other clients. The proposal would be funded through a mixture of section 106 and CIL funding. A range of facilities were proposed to complement the broader park facilities such the play area and open space. These included:

- Skytrail - An indoor adventure low ropes course for children up to 7 years old;
- Outdoor family mini golf designed to accommodate wheelchair access;
- A multi-functional space for hire, suitable for parties, meetings and outreach;
- Space for a commercial café to complement the activities;
- Outdoor enclosed education zone to support the outreach programmes, features to include archery, portable climbing structure and team building activities.

It was proposed to convert redundant garaging into ropes and climbing wall and consolidate offices to provide the café and classroom. Open space to the front of the building would be converted into the family mini golf course and redundant yard space behind the pavilion would accommodate the outdoor activity area. Plans showing the current layout and proposed layout were attached to the report at Appendix 1.

The report noted that the proposals included accessible activities that would cater for a range of physical abilities, and ensure that established support services for vulnerable and disadvantaged young people and children could be further developed.

Resolved -

- (1) That scheme, spend, and consultation approval be agreed for the development of the Children's Activity Centre at Prospect Park;**

- (2) That a planning application be submitted for the proposed development of facilities at Prospect Park;
- (3) That the Executive Director for Economic Growth and Neighbourhood Services, in consultation with the Lead Councillor for Culture, Heritage and Recreation, the Lead Councillor for Children, the Lead Councillor for Corporate and Consumer Services, and the Assistant Directors of Procurement, Legal and Democratic Services, and Property and Asset Management, be authorised to enter into a contract for the works and equipment required for the development of the facilities at Prospect Park within the agreed budget and including the letting of café space to an external operator within the premises;
- (4) That the land be advertised as a disposal of open space in accordance with S123 of the Local Govt Act 1972.

97. COMMUNITY INFRASTRUCTURE LEVY - 15% LOCAL CONTRIBUTION

The Executive Director of Economic Growth and Neighbourhood Services submitted a report providing an update on the use of Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL), in particular the 15% of collected CIL which should be allocated to the local area in which development takes place. The following documents were attached to the report:

- Appendix 1 - Equality Impact Assessment
- Appendix 2 - Update on existing 15% local CIL projects
- Appendix 3 - Schemes consulted upon in 2018 that did not receive funding
- Appendix 4 - Amended CIL protocol
- Appendix 5 - Proposed consultation on allocation of 15% local CIL

The report noted that following public consultation on a schedule of preferred projects the Committee had agreed at its meeting on 26 November 2018 (Minute 49 refers) an allocation of CIL to a range of projects in each neighbourhood zone. Officers in consultation with the relevant lead councillors had been authorised to vary the provisional allocations within each zone and using this delegation additional funding had been allocated towards the High Street Heritage Action Zone project and proposed refurbishment of the seating areas in Broad Street (Decision Book 608 refers). Attached to the report at Appendix 2 was a schedule of the projects that had been allocated funds so far and progress on their delivery. A number of schemes had already been delivered and others represented longer term projects or delivery was expected to take longer.

The report explained that, of the £1.670m 15% local CIL collected up to the end of 2018-19, the allocation of £1.339m had been identified (£1.204m by Policy Committee in November 2018 plus £0.135m by Decision Book) and £0.332m therefore remained unallocated. An additional £1.337m of 15% local CIL had been collected in 2019-20, meaning that there was £1.669m available to allocate. There were a significant number of schemes included in the original schedule that had been subject to consultation in July 2018 which had not been allocated funds but were still both necessary and deliverable,

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and these were listed in Appendix 3. These remaining schemes had been re-examined to consider deliverability, necessity and the degree to which infrastructure would relate to the areas where development was taking place, and an allocation of CIL funds to 19 schemes totalling £1.187m was recommended. In addition, the High Street Heritage Action Zone project would need local CIL funding to make up much of the required match funding and an additional allocation of £0.275m was recommended. The provisional allocation, to be subject to a further consultation, would therefore total £1.462m with the balance of £0.207m being carried over.

It was proposed and agreed at the meeting that an additional allocation of £0.095m be made for a Skate Park at Rabson's Rec, Northumberland Avenue, in place of the proposal for a Skate Park in Cintra Park.

The report explained the limitations of taking a strict zonal approach towards allocating 15% local CIL and proposed that the allocation of 15% local CIL already collected not be undertaken in strict accordance with the four neighbourhood zones. As this differed from the zonal approach upon which the 2018 consultation had been based, it was proposed that the preliminary allocation be subject to further public consultation, as part of the consultation document set out in Appendix 5 attached to the report. This consultation would be undertaken in March and April 2021 and reported back to Policy Committee for a decision on the final allocation.

The report also summarised difficulties that had emerged with the approach to consultation on and allocation of 15% local CIL, as well as the recommendations made by an audit report on the processes around local CIL, which had been taken into account in the proposed future approach to consultation and allocation of funds collected after 31 March 2020 (and any funds carried over from before that date). This new approach would require amendment to the CIL protocol and a proposed amended protocol was attached to the report at Appendix 4.

The report explained that the proposed new approach was to consult on general priorities every three to four years and use the outcomes as one of the main considerations in the annual allocation of CIL to specific schemes by Policy Committee. Specific schemes would be put forward by officers from the relevant sections, but there would also be an opportunity for Councillors, community groups and members of the public to make nominations. There would also be a move away from the four neighbourhood zones. The proposed consultation document to identify future spending priorities for the next few years was attached to the report at Appendix 5.

Resolved -

- (1) That the progress on the projects benefitting from the 15% local CIL allocated by Policy Committee on 26 November 2018, as set out in Appendix 1, be noted;**
- (2) That the following further allocations of 15% local CIL collected up until 31st March 2020 be agreed, with a total allocation of £1.462m:**

£0.050m for town centre monuments and statues
£0.100m for war memorials and public art
£0.075m for Borough-wide graffiti removal project
£0.100m for Thames cycle path in Kings Meadow
£0.100m for Palmer Park play area improvements
£0.275m for the High Street Heritage Action Zone project
£0.005m for Morpeth Close road marking
£0.050m for pedestrian crossing on Addington Road
£0.015m for landscaping improvements at South Whitley Park
£0.095m for Waterloo Meadows play area improvements
£0.075m for Shinfield Road Recreation Ground improvements
£0.050m for pedestrian crossing on Church End Lane
£0.010m for lining alteration on The Meadway
£0.050m for pedestrian crossing on Norcot Road
£0.100m for Arthur Newbery Park play area improvements
£0.095m for Oxford Road Recreation Ground play area improvements
£0.085m for Dover Street play area improvements
£0.030m for Moriston Close play area improvements
£0.002m for laptops for Coley Park Community Centre
£0.100m for Brook Street West improvements
£0.095m for a Skate Park at Rabson's Rec, Northumberland Ave

- (3) That the relevant Assistant Directors be authorised to complete the necessary procurement processes to deliver the programme of work;
- (4) That the relevant Assistant Directors be authorised to give spend approval in accordance with the funds approved in (2) above, and that variation to the allocations above be delegated to the relevant Assistant Directors in consultation with the Lead Councillors for Strategic Environment, Planning and Transport and Corporate and Consumer Services and the Assistant Director of Finance;
- (5) That changes to the CIL protocol (Appendix 4) setting out a new process for local consultation and allocation of 15% local CIL be agreed;
- (6) That the consultation document on spend of collected and future 15% local CIL (Appendix 5) be agreed for consultation.

98. COUNCIL TAX, COUNCIL TAX REDUCTION AND HOUSING BENEFIT PENALTIES

The Executive Director of Resources submitted a report seeking approval for a Council Tax, Council Tax Reduction Scheme & Housing Benefit Civil Penalty Policy. The proposed Policy was attached to the report at Appendix A.

The report noted that the Council was responsible for the billing, collection and enforcement of Council Tax, the administration of Housing Benefit (on behalf of the DWP), and the administration of the Council Tax Reduction Scheme. There were a wide

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range of Council Tax exemptions and discounts and the Council had a responsibility to ensure that where a discount, exemption, Housing Benefit or Council Tax Reduction award had been made, the recipient remained entitled to it. It was therefore proposed to introduce a Council Tax, Local Council Tax Reduction Scheme and Housing Benefit Civil Penalty Policy to encourage customers to promptly report to the Council when their circumstances changed.

The report explained that the proposed policy would be part of a pro-active approach to preventing and reducing the risks associated with fraud, error and other irregularities in the administration of Council Tax, the Local Council Tax Reduction Scheme and Housing Benefit, and reinforce the message that the Council would take positive action against abuse of these schemes and public funds. There were legal statutory powers which allowed the Council to impose civil penalties. The timely reporting of changes in respect of Council Tax discounts, exemptions, reductions and liability would also ensure that the Council was able to more accurately calculate the Council Tax income base.

Resolved -

That Policy Committee approve the Council Tax, Council Tax Reduction Scheme & Housing Benefit Civil Penalty Policy as set out at Appendix A, noting the following levels of penalty as prescribed by Regulation:

- A penalty of £50 may be imposed for failure to notify the Council of a change in circumstances which affects an award of Housing Benefit;
- A penalty of £70 may be imposed for failure to notify the Council of a change in circumstances which affects an award of Council Tax Reduction;
- A penalty of £70 may be imposed for failure to notify the Council of a change in circumstances which affects entitlement to a Council Tax discount or exemption;
- A penalty of £70 may be imposed where the Council has requested but not been supplied with the information necessary to establish liability for Council Tax;
- A penalty of £280 may be imposed where a £70 penalty has been imposed for not supplying information to establish liability and a further request for the information has not been complied with.

99. CENSUS 2021 PREPARATIONS

The Executive Director of Resources submitted a report setting out plans for the national Census on 21 March 2021 and the Council's role in supporting the census.

The report noted that for the first time it would be a digital-first Census, with help available for people to take part online and paper surveys available for those who needed it. In order to ensure as many Census returns as possible from the local area, local

authorities had been asked to help in a number of areas, particularly in identifying more hard-to-reach communities and routes for engagement with those groups, as well as developing a general communications plan. To facilitate this, ONS had employed Census Engagement Managers to work with local authorities in their areas. Community Advisors had also been employed to work with particular communities. There would also be two Census Support Centres in Reading funded by ONS and run by Reading Voluntary Action at Central Library (if open), and by Communicare in East Reading. These would support people to fill in the Census online.

The report explained that the first outputs of the census would be available by March 2022, with all results available by March 2023. In the event of the Covid-19 lockdown situation continuing into March, the Census would still go ahead, with support for completion provided by telephone and online.

Resolved -

That the report be noted.

100. COMMUNITY TRANSPORT - CONTRACT EXTENSION

The Executive Director of Economic Growth and Neighbourhood Services submitted a report seeking approval for the proposed extension of the existing Community Transport contract with Readibus Limited from April 2021 for a further two years, in accordance with the provisions contained within the current contract. The contract encompassed both the provision of dial-a-ride services and transport provision for the Council's Adult Social Care service. Attached to the report at Appendix A was a Benchmarking Review carried out by WSP Ltd.

The report explained that the Council had commissioned an independent benchmarking exercise, undertaken by external consultants WSP Ltd, to investigate the value for money provided by the current contract. The review had shown that Readibus' community transport services appeared to provide good value for money.

The report also proposed a review of future requirements for community transport provision and set out a timetable for procuring a new contract for this service, to commence in April 2023 following the end of the proposed extension period to the existing contract.

Resolved -

- (1) That the agreement for the provision of Community Transport Services (Dial-a-Ride) with Readibus be extended for a further period of two years until 31 March 2023, in accordance with the terms of the contract;**
- (2) That the proposed timetable for undertaking a review of future community transport requirements be endorsed and re-procurement of a new Community Transport Services contract to commence from 1 April**

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2023, upon the expiry of the existing contract with Readibus, be authorised.

(Councillors Duveen and Stanford-Beale declared a prejudicial interest in this item on the grounds that they had been appointed by the Council as directors of Readibus. They left the meeting and took no part in the debate or decisions.)

(The meeting started at 6.30 pm and closed at 8.36 pm)

READING BOROUGH COUNCIL

REPORT BY EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR OF RESOURCES

TO:	POLICY COMMITTEE		
DATE:	8 MARCH 2021		
TITLE:	2020/21 QUARTER 3 PERFORMANCE AND MONITORING REPORT		
LEAD COUNCILLOR:	COUNCILLOR EMBERSON	PORTFOLIO:	CORPORATE & CONSUMER SERVICES
SERVICE:	FINANCIAL SERVICES	WARDS:	BOROUGHWIDE
LEAD OFFICER:	PETER ROBINSON	TEL:	
JOB TITLE:	ASSISTANT DIRECTOR OF FINANCE	E-MAIL:	Peter.Robinson@reading.gov.uk

1 PURPOSE OF REPORT AND EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

- 1.1 This report sets out the projected revenue and capital outturn positions for 2020/21 for both the General Fund and the Housing Revenue Accounts as at the end of December 2020 (Quarter 3). These forecasts include best estimates of the additional pressures arising as a result of Covid-19 and associated government funding received up to the end of December.
- 1.2 The financial reporting of the Council and Brighter Futures for Children (BFfC) have now been aligned and this report also includes the Quarter 3 projections for BFfC.
- 1.3 The forecast General Fund revenue outturn position as at the end of Quarter 3 is a (£4.820m) underspend. This is an improvement of (£5.487m) since Quarter 2. This forecast includes gross revenue pressures of £19.969m arising as a direct result of Covid-19.
- 1.4 The Housing Revenue Account (HRA) is currently projecting an underspend of (£5.133m) as at the end of Quarter 3. This is an increase of (£3.253m) since Quarter 2.
- 1.5 The General Fund Capital Programme is forecast to underspend by (£39.938m) this year. The HRA Capital Programme is currently forecast to underspend by (£18.138m) due to delays to the delivery of the Major Repairs Scheme and Phase 2 and Phase 3 of the New Build and Acquisitions Schemes.
- 1.6 This forecast General Fund position assumes the use of £9.906m of the Direct Revenue Financing of Capital Earmarked Reserve in the current financial year (2020/21) to reduce the ongoing Minimum Revenue Provision (MRP) charge to the revenue budget in future years. This reserve was set aside to mitigate against capital receipts not being realised and available for use as previously expected. The impact of Covid-19 has meant that this reserve has had to be

released, but it is hoped that as the economy picks up the reserve will be able to be replenished.

- 1.7 The combined gross revenue and capital pressures as a result of Covid-19 total £20.269m, which is a decrease of (£0.081m) from Quarter 2. This is offset by a total allocation of (£13.269m) of Central Government general support grant, (£0.981m) furlough grant and an estimated (£6.000m) in income compensation, as well as (£0.989m) of Arts Council grant to support Cultural Services.
- 1.8 Central Government published the final guidance document in respect of the local government income compensation scheme for lost sales, fees and charges on the 24th August. The first grant claim has been submitted for (£3.186m) for the period April to July 2020 and was received on the 3rd of December. It is anticipated that the total level of compensation that the Council would receive is (£6.000m). Changes to this assumption and the impact on the forecast outturn position will continue to be reported through future reports.
- 1.9 The financial implications of Covid-19 will continue to be refined and reported on a monthly basis.
- 1.10 Appendix 2 sets out the various Covid-19 related grants allocated to the Council. This register will be updated and refined monthly as part of future reports.

The detail supporting this report is included in:

- Appendix 1 - Financial Monitoring for Quarter 3
- Appendix 2 - Performance for Quarter 3
- Appendix 3 - Covid-19 Related Grants Register

2 RECOMMENDED ACTION

That Policy Committee notes:

- 2.1 The forecast General Fund revenue outturn position as at the end of December 2020 is a net underspend of (£4.820m), due to an overspend of £17.260m on services budgets mitigated by an underspend of (£1.830m) on corporate budgets and Government Covid-19 Grants of (£20.250m) which comprises (£13.269m) of general support funding, an (£0.981m) furlough claim and an estimated (£6.000m) income compensation claim.
- 2.2 The Housing Revenue Account is forecast to underspend by (£5.133m) as at the end of December 2020.
- 2.3 The General Fund Capital Programme is forecast to underspend by (£39.938m). The HRA Capital Programme is forecast to underspend by (£18.138m) due to delays to the delivery of the Major Works Scheme and Phase 2 and Phase 3 of the New Build and Acquisitions Schemes as at the end of December 2020.

That Policy Committee approve:

- 2.4 To draw £9.906m from the Direct Revenue of Financing of Capital Earmarked Reserve in 2020/21 to reduce the ongoing Minimum Revenue Provision (MRP) charge to the revenue budget.
- 2.5 That the 2020/21 General Fund underspend, currently forecast to be (£4.820m), will be added to earmarked reserves to mitigate against the release of reserves per paragraph 2.4 and the anticipated use to balance the 2021/22 budget gap.

3 POLICY CONTEXT

- 3.1 The Council approved the 2020/21 Budget and Medium-Term Financial Strategy in February 2020. The Covid-19 situation has meant that forecasts for 2020/21 are significantly different to the budget that was set. The Government has allocated the Council (£13.269m) of general support funding as well as the Council claiming (£0.981m) to cover Furlough costs and an estimated (£6.000m) in compensation for lost income.
- 3.2 The financial impact of Covid-19 will continue to be monitored closely throughout the year and the ongoing impacts are being reviewed as part of the refresh of the Medium-Term Financial Strategy.

4 GENERAL FUND REVENUE

- 4.1 The forecast outturn as of Quarter 3 is a (£4.820m) underspend and is broken down in the following table:

Table 1. General Fund Forecast 2020/21

	Budget	Forecast	Variance
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	£m	Outturn £m	£m
Adult Social Care and Health	38.273	39.620	1.347
Economic Growth and Neighbourhood Services	17.128	31.116	13.988
Resources	15.434	15.456	0.022
Chief Executive	1.550	1.581	0.031
Children's Services retained by Council	0.710	0.710	0.000
Children's Services delivered by BFfC	48.421	50.293	1.872
Total Service Expenditure	121.516	138.776	17.260
Capital Financing Costs	24.637	26.099	1.462
Contingencies	3.522	0.000	(3.522)
Other Corporate Budgets	1.245	1.475	0.230
Total Corporate Budgets	29.404	27.574	(1.830)
Net Budget Requirement	150.920	166.350	15.430
Financed by:			
Council Tax Income	(96.014)	(96.014)	0.000
NNDR Local Share	(34.357)	(34.357)	0.000
New Homes Bonus	(3.988)	(3.988)	0.000
Section 31 Grant	(3.994)	(3.994)	0.000
Revenue Support Grant	(2.030)	(2.030)	0.000
One-off Collection Fund Surplus	(10.537)	(10.537)	0.000
Government Covid-19 Funding	0.000	(20.250)	(20.250)
Total Funding	(150.920)	(171.170)	(20.250)
Over / (under) Budget	0.000	(4.820)	(4.820)

4.2 The following table reconciles Covid-19 and other pressures to the forecast outturn position:

Table 2. Covid-19 Revenue Pressures Impact on the 2020/21 Outturn Forecast

	Covid-19 Pressures £m	Other Net Pressures/ (Savings) £m	Forecast Outturn £m
Adult Social Care & Health Services	1.796	(0.449)	1.347
Economic Growth & Neighbourhood Services	15.097	(1.109)	13.988
Resources	1.138	(1.116)	0.022
Chief Executive	0.105	(0.074)	0.031
Children's Services (RBC)	0.000	0.000	0.000
Children's Services (BFfC)	1.633	0.239	1.872
Total Service Budgets	19.769	(2.509)	17.260
Capital Financing Costs	0.000	1.462	1.462
Contingency	0.000	(3.522)	(3.522)
Other Corporate Budgets	0.200	0.030	0.230
Total Corporate Budgets	0.200	(2.030)	(1.830)
Government Covid-19 Funding	(20.250)	0.000	(20.250)
Total	(0.281)	(4.539)	(4.820)

Adult Care and Health Services (DACHS)

- 4.3 Adult Care and Health Services is forecasting a net overspend of £1.347m at Quarter 3, which is the same position reported at Quarter 2. Pressures totalling £1.796m are as a result of Covid-19 which is partially offset by net underspends of (£0.449m).
- 4.4 The forecast overspend is due to:
- £0.248m of additional PPE costs;
 - £0.292m to support care homes with high levels of void beds;
 - £1.256m of savings not able to be delivered as a result of the impact of Covid-19;
 - (£0.449m) of underspends largely relating to staffing.
- 4.5 Adult Care and Health Services has £3.100m of savings and additional income targets to deliver in 2020/21. Currently, £0.820m of savings have been categorised as red and no delivery is currently anticipated in year as a result of the impact of Covid-19. There are also £0.871m of amber savings of which it is projected that only 50% will be delivered. These savings are listed in Appendix 1.
- 4.6 The forecast assumes that the NHS fund all hospital discharges (Scheme 1's) in April-August for the duration of 2020/21 and that they fund the first 6 weeks of hospital discharge costs for September onwards (Scheme 2's) in line with the guidance. To date all claims are being paid promptly.

Economic Growth and Neighbourhoods Services (DEGNS)

- 4.7 The Directorate of Economic Growth and Neighbourhood Services is forecasting a net overspend of £13.988m at Quarter 3, an improvement of (£0.671m) on the forecast at Quarter 2. £15.097m of the overspend is due to the impact of Covid-19, partially offset by net underspends of (£1.109m).

Transportation - £7.203m overspend

- 4.8 There is a £7.203m income shortfall in Transportation, an adverse movement of £0.500m from the last period, due to the impact of the changing Covid-19 measures on income generated from Car Parking On-Street and Off-Street as well as Civil Enforcement Services. These income streams had started to gradually recover towards the end of Quarter 2 but have fallen again during Quarter 3 although not to the extent seen in Quarter 1. Latest monthly revenue streams still represent circa 50% of budgeted income. We are assuming partial recovery of parking income in February and March. If Quarter 4 were to show a similar percentage shortfall as was seen in April and May (the height of the 1st Lockdown), then we can expect to see another £1.500m added to the current pressure.

Planning and Regulatory Services - £1.525m overspend

- 4.9 The service is forecasting a £1.525m overspend, an improvement of (£0.210m) on the reported position last period. The improvement is in a forecast lower

spend on contracted services which provide specialist advice. There is an income shortfall of £1.790m across Building Control, license fees, planning applications and planning fees and charges as a result of Covid-19, which includes budgeted MTFs income increases of £0.446m that cannot be achieved under pandemic conditions. There are two significant unbudgeted legal cases which are ongoing, the cost of which are forecast at £0.400m for 2020/21. This pressure is partially mitigated by a staffing underspend due to vacancies within the service of (£0.490m) and other net underspends (£0.175m).

Housing and Neighbourhood Services (General Fund) - £0.760m overspend

- 4.10 The pressure on Housing and Neighbourhood services of £0.760m at Quarter 3 is an improvement of (£0.123m) from last period. The pressure is due to increased demand on bed and breakfast, including hotel beds, given the need to accommodate homeless individuals during the Covid-19 pandemic. The improvement from the prior period is principally due to the receipt of an Emergency Assistance Grant for Food and Essential Supplies from the Department for Environment, Food & Rural affairs (DEFRA). There has been a further small reduction due to a revision of the cost modelling based on actual costs to the end of December and projected costs for the remainder of the year as the service projects less users than previously anticipated at the end of November.

Cultural Services - £3.383m overspend

- 4.11 Cultural Services is forecasting an overall overspend of £3.383m at Quarter 3, no change on the position forecast last period. This forecast position is £3.920m of income forgone as a result of Covid-19, partially offset by an underspend of (£0.537m) due to the delay in the new Leisure contract with GLL. The current Covid-19 related pressures are:

- A £1.254m income shortfall across the theatres and Town Hall, assuming no shows are possible until April 2021. This position includes a successful grant bid of (£0.989m) from the Arts Council in respect of the Cultural Recovery Fund. This funding will cover pressures incurred at the Hexagon, South Street and the Museum until the end of March 2021, including staffing, utilities and Covid-19 adaptations.
- Leisure Services only operating limited services related to Play Services supporting SEND and key worker children. Leisure Centres were allowed to reopen from the 25th July, however there remains uncertainty over the level of income achievable, and a shortfall of £2.002m is anticipated.
- A £0.203m shortfall has been reported due to the Reading Festival being cancelled.
- An income shortfall of £0.180m has been forecast for Library Services.
- There is an additional £0.281m of undeliverable savings relating to the service's various income streams.

Environment and Commercial Services - £0.227m overspend

- 4.12 The service is reporting a pressure of £0.227m at Quarter 3, similar to the position reported last period. Environment & Commercial Services is anticipating income shortfalls of £0.534m as a direct result of Covid-19, and this includes a £0.086m pressure on the Food Waste and Smaller Bins saving

and pressures across Business Development, Parks Service, Green Waste and Recycling totalling £0.448m.

- 4.13 There are also non-Covid related pressures on this service; a £0.138m pressure on refuse collection; a £0.060m pressure on street lighting; a £0.090m Section 38 income pressure and a £0.111m pressure on inspection service income. There are underspends on waste disposal (£0.400m) and staffing as a result of vacancies in Parks Services of (£0.305m).

Regeneration & Assets - £0.890m overspend

- 4.14 Regeneration & Assets is reporting an overspend of £0.890m at Quarter 3, no change on the position forecast last period. This pressure is all due to Covid-19. There is a pressure on income of £0.200m for community lettings and a £0.530m forecast shortfall on commercial property rental income. There is a £0.150m pressure due to the delay in moving into the newly refurbished Bennet Road depot and disposal of the Darwin Close building. The service has also forecast additional costs of cleaning of £0.100m. The pressures are partly mitigated by reduced utility costs (£0.090m) for the year due to reduced use of buildings during the Covid-19 pandemic.

Resources (DoR)

- 4.15 The Directorate of Resources is currently reporting a net overspend of £0.022m at Quarter 3, which is a decrease of (£1.078m) from what was reported at Quarter 2. This is mainly due to improvements to the forecasts in Financial Services and IT Services. Pressures totalling £1.138m are as a result of Covid-19 which is partially offset by other net underspends of (£1.116m).

Customer & Corporate Improvement - (£0.072m) underspend

- 4.16 The service is currently forecasting an underspend of (£0.072m), an improvement of (£0.027m) from the previous period. Savings that were anticipated from the delivery of the Customer Experience strategy have been delayed due to Covid-19. There are existing pressures on salary budgets across the service offset by additional income in the Registration & Bereavement Service.

Human Resources & Organisational Development - £0.174m overspend

- 4.17 Human Resources & Organisational Development is forecasting an overspend of £0.174m, unchanged from last period, as a result of pressure on Kennet Day Nursery income resulting directly from Covid-19. Some staff have been furloughed to manage the current restrictions around social distancing.

Audit & Insurance - (£0.054m) underspend

- 4.18 Audit and Insurance is currently forecasting a (£0.054m) underspend which is unchanged from last period. This variance is due to a vacancy within the Corporate Investigations Team. It is still too early to anticipate the volume and severity of any insurance claims arising out of Covid-19 and the impact on the Council of associated increased premiums etc.

Procurement - £0.250m overspend

- 4.19 The overspend of £0.250m within Procurement is unchanged from last period and is a direct result of setting up the One Reading Community Hub in response to Covid-19.

Financial Services - £0.045m overspend

- 4.20 Financial Services is forecasting an overspend of £0.045m, an improvement of (£0.504m) from the previous period. This variance is primarily due to a reduction in court costs income of £0.625m within the Revenues and Benefits Service due to courts being closed for part of the year as a result of Covid-19 offset by net underspends of (£0.580m) across the Service due to additional one-off new burdens grant funding in respect of Covid-19.

Legal & Democratic Services - (£0.053m) underspend

- 4.21 Legal & Democratic Services are forecasting an underspend of (£0.053m), unchanged from last period. This consists of £0.054m of pressures within Legal Services due to a steep decline in demand for Land Charges services and £0.035m from an anticipated shortfall of income for sales of properties and CIL/S106, all as a direct result of Covid-19. There is also a pressure of £0.036m on supplies and services budgets, offset by a (£0.018m) underspend on staffing budgets in Committee Services and an underspend of (£0.160m) in Electoral Services as there is no anticipated local election this year.

IT & Digital Services - (£0.268m) underspend

- 4.22 IT & Digital Services is showing an underspend of (£0.268m), an improvement of (£0.350m). While there have continued to be upward pressures in Digital and ICT as previously reported, these have been more than offset through the realisation of savings from the move to new mobile telephony contracts and by the fact that some licence expenditure to which we have committed falls into 21-22.

Chief Executive (including Corporate Communications)

- 4.23 Chief Executive is currently reporting a net overspend of £0.031m, which is the same position reported last period. Pressures of both expenditure and income totalling £0.105m as a result of Covid-19 are offset by expenditure underspends of (£0.074m).

Chief Executive budget - £0.046m overspend

- 4.24 The Chief Executive's budget is reporting an overspend of £0.046m, which is due to Covid-19 pressures of £0.070m relating to the Temporary Place of Rest at Wexham Park, offset by a (£0.024m) underspend in the service. Note the forecasted cost to Reading of the Temporary Place of Rest is estimated at £0.070m at this time and does not reflect any cost associated with a second wave of Covid-19.

Communications budget - (£0.015m) underspend

- 4.25 The Communications is forecasting an underspend of (£0.015m). Covid-19 related income pressures of £0.035m have been identified as a result of the cancellation of events but these are being actively mitigated by compensating underspends on expenditure budgets.

Children's Services Retained by the Council

- 4.26 Children's Services retained by the Council are forecast to be on budget for 2020/21.

Children's Services Delivered by BFfC

- 4.27 The forecast outturn for Children's Services delivered by Brighter Futures for Children (BFfC) is a £1.872m overspend, of which £1.633m is the in-year pressures BFfC have indicated is due to Covid-19. This is an improvement of (£0.235m) from Quarter 2. The non-Covid related net pressures totalling £0.239m. The overall council's forecast budget position assumes that it will recompense BFfC for these Covid pressures, subject to a review of their Covid-related expenditure.
- 4.28 During Quarter 3, children looked after numbers have decreased slightly to 271 from 278 in Quarter 2, which is reflected in the improvement in the forecast budget variance.

Corporate Budgets

- 4.29 Corporate Budgets are forecasting a variance of (£1.830m) as at the end of Quarter 3, which is an adverse movement of £0.138m from Quarter 2.
- 4.30 A draw from the Direct Revenue Financing of Capital Earmarked Reserve is required in the current financial year (2020/21) to reduce the ongoing Minimum Revenue Provision (MRP) charge to the revenue budget by paying-off debt on short-life assets. This reserve was set aside to mitigate against capital receipts not being realised and available for use as previously expected. The impact of Covid-19 has meant that this reserve has had to be released, but it is hoped that as the economy picks up the reserve will be able to be replenished.
- 4.31 The Capital Financing budget is currently forecasting an overspend of £1.462m due to the profiling of the budget in respect of the net capital financing costs and associated savings in relation to the purchase of commercial properties in 2020/21.
- 4.32 There are unallocated Contingency budgets of (£3.522m) and a net overspend on Other Corporate Budgets of £0.230m consisting of: a projected underspend against corporate provisions of (£0.722m), offset by unrealisable corporate savings totalling £0.250m and other corporate net pressures totalling £0.702m.

5 FUNDING

- 5.1 The Council's net budget requirement of £150.920m is financed from Council Tax, Business Rates and the New Homes Bonus Grant. Whilst it is highly likely that the Covid-19 situation will impact collection rates for 2020/21, this will not impact the Council's budget until 2021/22 as the precepts for 2020/21 have already been agreed.
- 5.2 Government support funding in respect of Covid-19 totals (£20.250m). The Government has, to date, allocated the Council general support funding for the additional pressures due to Covid-19, totalling (£13.269m). Additionally (£0.981m) is anticipated in respect of furloughed council staff.
- 5.3 Additionally, the sum currently forecast to be reimbursed in respect of lost fees and charges is (£6.000m), which is subject to fluctuations in the level of lost income. The first grant claim has been submitted for (£3.186m) of compensation for the period April to July 2020 and was received on the 3rd December. Changes to this assumption and the impact on the forecast outturn position will be reported through future reports.
- 5.4 Current forecasts in respect of collection of Council Tax and Business Rates indicate an overall in-year shortfall of £3.227m, which continues to be monitored on a monthly basis. This one-off pressure, should it materialise, will impact in future years as Government have announced that Collection Fund deficits will now be recovered over a three-year period to aid Local Authorities in spreading the financial impact. In addition, the Chancellor announced as part of the Spending Review that 75% of final losses will be covered by the Government.

6 SAVINGS PROGRAMME

- 6.1 Delivery of the Council's budget is predicated on achieving savings and additional income as agreed as part of the budget setting process in February 2020. Detailed monitoring of agreed savings is tracked on a monthly basis.
- 6.2 The projected financial impact of any non-delivery of savings have been included in the projected outturn position reported above.
- 6.3 The following table summarises the current forecast savings delivery for 2020/21 (a further detailed breakdown by saving is provided in Appendix 1):

Table 3. Delivery of 2020/21 Savings Programme

Service	Savings At Risk £'000s	Savings Delayed or at Risk £'000s	Savings on Track £'000s	Savings Achieved £'000s	Directorate Total £'000s
Adult Care and Health Services	820	871	386	1,023	3,100
Economic Growth and Neighbourhood Services	5,059	1,220	863	77	7,219
Resources	226	120	296	0	642

Chief Executive	0	0	5	0	5
Corporate	200	50	0	0	250
Children's Services Delivered by BFFC	0	0	0	4,128	4,128
Total	6,305	2,261	1,550	5,228	15,344

6.4 In general, the Medium Term Financial Strategy (MTFS) for 2021/22 - 2023/24 assumes all prior year budgets brought forward are deliverable, including savings targets. However, where it is clear that targets can no longer be met going forward these have been shown as pressures and effectively removed from the MTFS. Those savings targets not removed but not delivered in 2020/21 will cause an immediate pressure on 2021/22 unless mitigated with alternative ongoing savings.

7 OTHER CONSIDERATIONS

Sundry Debt

7.1 Total General Fund sundry debt as at the end of Quarter 3 is £6.830m, of which £6.336m relates to invoices over 30 days old. Total General Fund sundry debt has decreased by (£10.495m) compared to Quarter 2 where it totalled £17.325m. Community Care debt is £4.693m, which includes £0.419m which has been secured against properties. The following table shows the outstanding debt over 30 days old as at the end of December 2020:

Table 4. Outstanding Debt as at the End of Quarter 3 Over 30 Days Old

	1 to 2 months £000	2 to 3 months £000	3 to 6 months £000	6 months to 1 year £000	1 to 2 years £000	Over 2 years £000	Total Outstanding Debt £000
Resources and Facilities	23	112	189	8	5	119	456
Ex Berkshire County Council	-	-	-	-	-	1	1
Valuation	8	70	134	130	46	165	553
Environment	152	103	45	56	35	47	439
Education & Community Services	3	-	-	1	1	61	66
Culture & Sport	35	6	5	93	39	97	375
General Fund Housing	-	-	-	-	3	1	4
Community Care	180	170	297	671	1,036	2,188	4,542
Total General Fund:	401	461	670	959	1,166	2,678	6,336
Housing Revenue Account Housing	35	9	23	68	211	341	687
Intercompany Debt	-	-	588	2,932	1,573	-	5,092

Total Including HRA and Intercompany:	436	470	1,281	3,959	2,950	3,019	12,115
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- 7.2 A review of the Council's debt management arrangements to harmonise and streamline collection processes and ensure associated bad debt provisions are at the appropriate level is being undertaken as part of the work to mitigate against the current in-year financial gap resulting from Covid-19. The Council's Debt Management Strategy has been revised and was approved by Policy Committee in December.

Staffing

- 7.3 The Council currently has 49 agency contracts across the directorates costing £1m more than the substantive posts budgets in a full year. £0.038m has been spent on overtime during Quarter 3, bringing the total for the year to £0.308m.
- 7.4 There have been 6 redundancies to date during 2020/21.

8 HOUSING REVENUE ACCOUNT (HRA)

- 8.1 The forecast revenue outturn position on the HRA is currently an underspend to budget of (£5.133m) which is largely due to an underspend on the Major Works budget. The forecast underspend has increased by (£3.253m) from Quarter 2 due to the impact of the second wave of Covid 19 which is expected to have a significant impact on the ability to deliver programmes of work in the remaining months of the financial year. This reduces the budgeted (£1.845m) drawdown from reserve requirement to a contribution to reserves of £3.288m.

Table 7. Housing Revenue Account Forecast 2020/21

	Budget £m	Forecast Outturn £m	Variance £m
Responsive Repairs	3.290	2.820	(0.470)
Planned Maintenance	2.066	1.676	(0.390)
Major Works	13.981	10.208	(3.773)
Managing Tenancies	1.410	1.410	0.000
Management, Policy & Support	5.331	5.331	0.000
PFI	7.238	7.038	(0.200)
Rent Collection	1.363	1.363	0.000
Building Cleaning, Energy & other	2.953	2.953	0.000
Capital Financing	5.300	5.200	(0.100)
HRA Income	(41.087)	(41.287)	(0.200)
Over/(Under) Budget	1.845	(3.288)	(5.133)
Movement to/(from) HRA Reserve	(1.845)	3.288	5.133

- 8.2 The underspend on Major Works of (£3.773m) is due to underspends on Kitchen & Bathrooms of (£1.595m) caused by Covid-19 related delays, along with similar underspends on structural projects (£0.898m) and Low Carbon Trials (£1.940m) because they have not yet progressed from the development stage. This is partially negated by an in-year overspend of £1.355m on the Coley Water Mains project due to a timing delay in the works that arose in 2019/20. A further net underspend totalling (£0.695m) is forecast on the Decent Neighbourhood Fund, Hexham Road, Rewiring, Asbestos and other minor schemes; although this underspend has been reduced because of the increased spend on Fire protection works.
- 8.3 The underspend of (£0.470m) on responsive repairs is almost entirely due to less spend being predicted on minor voids work than anticipated after a revised projection of spend apportionment between revenue & capital voids work.
- 8.4 In relation to planned maintenance, the main reason for the projected underspend of (0.390m) is due to the team not being able to access premises due to Covid-19 which has reduced the spend on decorations (Communal, OAP & External).
- 8.5 The current forecast on the Capital Financing budget is a (£0.100m) underspend, due to delays to delivery of Phase 2 and Phase 3 of the New Build and Acquisitions Schemes. There is also expected to be an underspend on the PFI of (£0.200m).
- 8.6 The current forecast on HRA Income is a (£0.200m) overachievement against budget. HRA rent collection rates of 97.65% are continuing to hold slightly above the budgeted collection rate of 97.50%, though it is lower than the pre-pandemic collection rate. Therefore, this drop-in collection is currently manageable within existing budgets but is being kept under close review and forecasts will be updated as required.

9 CAPITAL PROGRAMME

- 9.1 The General Fund Capital Programme is forecast to underspend by (£39.938m) this year. The underspend has reduced by £71.293m since Quarter 2, when the forecast underspend was (£111.231). This is predominantly because the £80.000m budget for commercial property in 2020/21, which was not previously forecast to be spent, has now been removed following Policy Committee approval in December.
- 9.2 The DEGNS Capital Programme schemes are currently forecast to underspend by (£19.640m). This is predominantly due to construction related delays caused by Covid-19. The two largest variances are on the Dee Park Regeneration (£5.900m) and Leisure Procurement (£4.757m) Schemes.
- 9.3 The HRA Capital Programme is currently forecast to underspend by (£18.138m) due to delays to the delivery of the Major Repairs Scheme and Phase 2 and Phase 3 of the New Build and Acquisitions Schemes resulting from delayed starts relating to Covid-19 and additional planning conditions.

- 9.4 The revised budgets have been updated to include the net budget roll forward requests from 2019/20 that were approved by Policy Committee as part of the 2019/20 Quarter 4 Performance and Monitoring Report. The forecast outturn for the Capital Programme is set out in the following table:

Table 8. Capital Programme Forecast 2020/21

	Original Budget £m	Revised Budget £m	Forecast Spend £m	Forecast Variance £m
Adult Social Care and Health	1.405	1.522	0.980	(0.542)
Economic Growth and Neighbourhood Services	52.797	62.588	42.948	(19.640)
Resources	8.051	8.084	7.589	(0.495)
Children’s Services	19.024	21.526	8.912	(12.613)
Corporate	89.169	11.970	5.323	(6.647)
Total General Fund	170.446	105.691	65.753	(39.938)
Total HRA	34.974	36.507	18.638	(17.310)

10 CORPORATE PLAN PERFORMANCE

- 10.1 Due to the Covid-19 Pandemic and associated work pressures placed on senior officers, it was agreed that the 2019/20 Corporate Plan measures and targets will roll forward into 2020/21.
- 10.2 It is planned to publish a new one-year Corporate plan for 21/22 in March. Therefore, a revised set of performance measures will be developed for monitoring from April.
- 10.3 We are using the council’s performance management software system (InPhase <https://reading.inphase.com/login>) as the source for recording and monitoring progress against our performance objectives. The data for Corporate Plan performance reporting is taken from the system and the full set of quarterly data is attached at Appendix 2. Accessing the system online allows for further analysis and interaction with the data and a richer experience than when information is extracted and presented in a document format.

Key areas where we are performing well and areas for improvement as at the end of the third quarter of 2020/21

- 10.4 Paragraphs 10.5 - 10.10 below provide a summary of the areas where the Council is performing well and the areas for improvement which show significant variance. A selection of these measures are displayed as charts from InPhase in Appendix 2.

10.5 Securing the economic success of Reading

Measure	2019/20 Q3	2019/20 Outturn	2020/21 Q3	2020/21 Target	Performance against target
Performing well					
Superfast	On track	98.82%	99.10%	100%	BT Open Reach are progressing the

Broadband coverage				remaining town centre connections relating to private landlord multiple dwelling units, where it has not been possible to obtain Wayleave permission from a significant number of landlords to move distribution into the building BT have engaged specialist Wayleave company to chase landlords. However, if this final try is unsuccessful these remaining properties will be removed from the project and BT will terminate the connection at the outside of the property and await normal demand led activity from tenants to complete connectivity. The project would then be closed from a Reading Perspective
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10.6 Ensuring access to decent housing to meet local needs

Measure	19/20 Q3	19/20 Outturn	20/21 Q3	20/21 Target	Performance against target
Performing Well					
Numbers of families in bed & breakfast accommodation (shared facilities) - snapshot	0	0	0	0	This figure has remained at 0 throughout the year for families. This performance indicator only relates to families with dependent children. The figure quoted refers to single people only.

10.7 Protecting & enhancing the lives of vulnerable adults and children

Measure	19/20 Q3	19/20 Outturn	20/21 Q3	20/21 Target	Performance against target
Performing Well					
Decrease the permanent new admissions to Residential or Nursing care per 100,000 population for people 18-64	0.92	2.77	0.00	1.08	This number continues to be stable even though the target is ambitious which evidences the consistent approach across the service. The review team will consider alternatives to Residential & nursing care using a strength-based approach, TECH & community services
Decrease the permanent new admissions to Residential or Nursing care per 100,000 population for Older People (65+)	14.78	78.82	9.71	36	Number of permanent admissions to care homes continues to be low. A collaborative approach with partners supports people to remain at home. The ethos is home first with reablement services when discharging people from hospital

Areas for Improvement					
Increase the number of service users (Adults) receiving direct payments	18.83%	19.68%	20.8%	26.00%	Direct payments continue to increase although this is still below the target set. The dedicated worker has set targets for the rest of the financial year for each team to improve the number further. The worker will be working directly with the review team to support the transition to direct payments

10.8 Keeping Reading's environment clean, green and safe

Measure	19/20 Q3	19/20 Outturn	20/21 Q3	20/21 Target	Performance against target
Areas for Improvement					
Percentage of household waste sent for re-use, recycling and composting	37%	35.3%	33%	38%	Figures for Quarter 3 are provisional at this stage. Recycling rate is normally lower in the second half of the year than the first. However, the introduction of food waste collections in February are expected to result in an increase.

10.9 Promoting Health, Education, Culture & Wellbeing

Measure	19/20 Q3	19/20 Outturn	20/21 Q3	20/21 Target	Performance against target
Significant Covid Impact					
Increased participation at Council Cultural Venues (Town Hall & Museum, Hexagon, South Street)	120,100	340,394	13,679	Q3 Target 88,750	The Hexagon reopened for public performance in October, including comedy film and Noisy kids (RPO family concerts) before a further lockdown in November and tier change in December prevented further event programme. Sitelines pandemic themed show ('Behind closed doors') took place in Oct & Dec while restrictions allowed. The museum was open for pre-booked visits where restrictions allowed

10.10 Ensuring the Council is fit for the future

Measure	19/20	19/20	20/21	20/21	Performance against target
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	Q3	Outturn	Q3	Target	
Performing well					
Take up of online services - people signed up for an online account	91,266	95,338	115,189	86,488	Performance exceeding target set
Areas for Improvement					
Percentage of Council Tax collected (cumulative)	82.84%	96.17%	82.07%	83.99% Dec 97.5% Annual	Collection is 0.77% behind position last year and 1.92% behind in month target set to achieve 97.50%. We started the financial year with an increased debit from last year of 4.26% at £111.6m and have seen the overall debit reduce this month to the same starting value of £111.6m (to bear in mind the £812k CTS hardship which makes the debit change appear lower than it is, plus increased CTS claimants). We anticipated a reduced collection as a result of Covid-19 and the removal of further recovery. Bench marking with neighbouring boroughs still demonstrates a lesser reduction that they are experiencing, we are the lowest at 0.77%, with the highest at 4.57%. We are continuing to proactively contact our customers to maintain payments. We have produced 3 summons batch jobs to date, with the first virtual liability order hearing on 20th Jan
Percentage of Business Rates collected (Cumulative)	78.02%	97.71%	77.89%	80.99% Dec Sept 97.5% Annual	NNDR has significantly improved to -0.01%, however this is not a true reflection of the position. The RBC owed amounts were processed in December of £3.3m, which has inflated the collection position in comparison to last year (RBC accounts weren't processed until March 2020). The true position is closer to -3.9%, continue to track considering the RBC payments. This is however still an improvement on the prior month of approx. 0.5%. Collection is 3.1% behind in month target set to achieve 98.00%. The Civica error remains unresolved with £2.5m incorrectly posted to suspense, finance teams continue to work on resolving this but to date have not been able to confirm a date for resolution. A meeting is scheduled with finance colleagues on 19th Jan. Once corrected this may reduce the variance on last year. Benchmarking with neighbouring

				<p>authorities demonstrates significant variances across the Berkshire Authorities, the lowest with just a decrease of 0.05% in comparison and another a decrease as high as 10.17%. We start the financial year with a reduced debit from last year of 35.5% at £91,430,808 as a result of expanded retail relief, plus other measures announced in the March budget, this has reduced further to £87,623,671</p>
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11 CONTRIBUTION TO STRATEGIC AIMS

11.1 The Council’s vision is to ensure that Reading realises its potential - and to ensure that everyone who lives and works in Reading can share the benefits of its success. The Council has six priorities which contribute to delivering this vision. The priorities are:

- Securing the economic success of Reading;
- Improving access to decent housing to meet local needs;
- Protecting and enhancing the lives of vulnerable adults and children;
- Keeping Reading’s environment clean, green and safe;
- Promoting health, education, culture and wellbeing; and
- Ensuring the Council is fit for the future.

11.2 Delivery of the Council’s budget is essential to ensuring the Council meets its strategic aims and remains financially sustainable going forward.

12 ENVIRONMENTAL AND CLIMATE IMPLICATIONS

12.1 The Council declared a Climate Emergency at its meeting on 26 February 2019. Whilst the Covid-19 situation has put significant pressure on the Council’s finances, the work to tackle the Climate Change Emergency is continuing and has not yet been impacted by the financial position.

12.2 The Covid-19 pandemic has had a positive impact on air quality as a result of the initial lockdown and changes to the town centre that encourage increased walking and cycling.

13 COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT AND INFORMATION

13.1 Budget-related communications and consultations will continue to be a priority over the next three years as we work to identify savings.

14 EQUALITY IMPACT ASSESSMENT

14.1 The equality duty is relevant to the development of the Budget and Corporate Plan. The specific savings and income proposals included in the budget are

subject to consultation and equality impact assessments where required and these are being progressed as appropriate.

15 LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

- 15.1 The Local Government Act 2003 requires that the Authority reviews its Budget throughout the year and takes any action it deems necessary to deal with the situation arising from monitoring. Currently monitoring reports are submitted to Policy Committee quarterly throughout the year. Officers are currently undertaking a range of measures in order to present options to mitigate the financial implications of the pandemic. The latest forecasts indicate that for the current year at least the additional financial support from Government covers the financial pressures caused by Covid-19.

16 FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- 16.1 The financial implications are set out in the body of the report and Appendix 1 attached.

17 BACKGROUND PAPERS

- 2020/21 Budget and Medium-Term Financial Strategy, Council, February 2020

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MONTHLY FINANCIAL REPORT

End of December 2020

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For further information regarding this report, please contact:

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Total General Fund - Period 9

Latest Revenue Position and Forecast

	Budget to Date £'000	Actual to Date £'000	Variance to Date £'000	Approved Budget £'000	Forecast Outturn £'000	Full Year Variance £'000
Objective Analysis						
Adults Care and Health Services	28,693	29,296	602	38,273	39,620	1,347
Economic Growth & Neighbourhood Services	12,841	27,749	14,909	17,128	31,116	13,988
Resources	11,571	17,353	5,782	15,434	15,456	22
Chief Executive	1,162	1,355	193	1,550	1,581	31
Children's Services retained by the Council	1,647	1,647	-	710	710	-
Children's Services delivered by BfFC *	36,302	24,211	(12,091)	48,421	50,293	1,872
TOTAL SERVICE BUDGETS	92,216	101,611	9,395	121,516	138,776	17,260
Capital Financing Costs	18,473	6,891	(11,582)	24,637	26,099	1,462
Contingency	2,641	-	(2,641)	3,522	-	(3,522)
Other corporate budgets	930	(222,707)	(223,637)	1,245	1,475	230
TOTAL INCL CORPORATE	114,260	(114,204)	(228,465)	150,920	166,350	15,430
Funding:						
Council Tax Income	(71,982)	-	71,982	(96,014)	(96,014)	-
NNDR Local Share	(25,757)	-	25,757	(34,357)	(34,357)	-
New Homes Bonus	(2,990)	(2,991)	(1)	(3,988)	(3,988)	-
Section 31 Grant	(2,994)	-	2,994	(3,994)	(3,994)	-
Revenue Support Grant	(1,522)	-	1,522	(2,030)	(2,030)	-
One-off Collection Fund Surplus	(7,900)	-	7,900	(10,537)	(10,537)	-
Government Covid-19 Funding	-	(19,859)	(19,859)	-	(20,250)	(20,250)
TOTAL FUNDING	(113,145)	(22,850)	90,295	(150,920)	(171,170)	(20,250)
NET CONTROLLABLE COST	1,115	(137,054)	(138,170)	(150,920)	(4,820)	(4,820)
Subjective Analysis						
Employee Costs	94,234	91,953	(2,281)	125,681	126,248	567
Premises Costs	14,875	16,724	1,849	19,812	20,574	762
Transport-Related Costs	1,750	1,565	(185)	2,334	2,335	0
Supplies and Services	52,661	(16,625)	(69,286)	70,149	67,354	(2,796)
Contracted Costs	151,529	79,790	(71,739)	202,120	207,264	5,144
Transfer Payments	13,606	9,310	(4,296)	18,131	17,090	(1,041)
CONTROLLABLE COST	328,654	182,717	(145,937)	438,228	440,864	2,637
Fees & Charges	(60,601)	(51,765)	8,835	(82,413)	(82,031)	382
Traded Services Income	(55,366)	(108,513)	(53,147)	(73,694)	(60,290)	13,404
Grants & Contributions	(211,572)	(159,493)	52,080	(282,122)	(303,364)	(21,243)
CONTROLLABLE INCOME	(327,539)	(319,771)	7,768	(438,228)	(445,685)	(7,457)
NET CONTROLLABLE COST	1,115	(137,054)	(138,170)	-	(4,820)	(4,820)

*Note: the figures shown in each period for BfFC relate to their prior month reported figures

Adult Care and Health Services [DACHS] - Period 9

Revenue Forecast

	Budget to Date £'000	Actual to Date £'000	Variance to Date £'000	Approved Budget £'000	Forecast Outturn £'000	Full Year Variance £'000
<u>Objective Analysis</u>						
Commissioning & Improvement	634	583	(51)	846	768	(78)
Adult Services Operations	26,868	27,707	839	35,838	37,495	1,658
Public Health	(225)	(225)	0	(300)	(300)	(0)
Preventative Services	554	408	(145)	738	563	(175)
Directorate & Other	863	821	(42)	1,151	1,093	(58)
Suspense	-	0	0	-	-	-
Inactive Codes	-	-	-	-	-	-
NET TOTAL COST	28,693	29,296	602	38,273	39,620	1,347

Subjective Analysis

Employee Costs	9,750	9,738	(11)	13,005	12,720	(285)
Premises Costs	208	148	(60)	277	279	2
Transport-Related Costs	46	45	(2)	62	62	-
Supplies and Services	5,690	5,449	(241)	7,589	7,749	160
Contracted Costs	33,480	36,445	2,965	44,658	48,448	3,790
Transfer Payments	780	(149)	(929)	1,040	(0)	(1,040)
TOTAL EXPENDITURE	49,953	51,676	1,722	66,631	69,258	2,626
Fees & Charges	(244)	(230)	14	(325)	(325)	-
Traded Services Income	(6,192)	(6,183)	9	(8,259)	(8,251)	8
Grants & Contributions	(14,825)	(15,967)	(1,142)	(19,775)	(21,062)	(1,288)
TOTAL INCOME	(21,260)	(22,380)	(1,120)	(28,358)	(29,638)	(1,280)
NET TOTAL COST	28,693	29,296	602	38,273	39,620	1,347

There is significant uncertainty in respect of the assumed levels of forecast income throughout the directorate arising from the impact of Covid-19. These forecasts are closely monitored and are updated monthly.

Revenue Forecast

	Budget to Date £'000	Actual to Date £'000	Variance to Date £'000	Approved Budget £'000	Forecast Outturn £'000	Full Year Variance £'000
<u>Objective Analysis</u>						
Transportation	(126)	6,555	6,681	(168)	7,035	7,203
Planning & Regulatory Services	1,611	2,470	860	2,148	3,673	1,525
Housing and Neighbourhood Services	1,000	1,970	970	1,333	2,093	760
Cultural Services	3,075	5,077	2,001	4,102	7,485	3,383
Environmental and Commercial Services	10,801	11,640	839	14,408	14,635	227
Regeneration and Assets	(4,088)	(590)	3,498	(5,453)	(4,563)	890
DEGNS Overhead Accounts	568	643	75	757	757	(0)
Suspense	-	(20)	(20)	-	-	-
Inactive Codes	-	4	4	-	-	-
NET TOTAL COST	12,841	27,749	14,909	17,128	31,116	13,988

Subjective Analysis

Employee Costs	28,147	26,944	(1,203)	37,545	37,055	(490)
Premises Costs	10,904	13,433	2,529	14,544	15,304	760
Transport-Related Costs	1,679	1,421	(258)	2,240	2,240	0
Supplies and Services	20,586	16,072	(4,514)	27,459	27,764	305
Contracted Costs	7,286	6,260	(1,026)	9,718	9,638	(80)
Transfer Payments	(1,288)	(251)	1,037	(1,718)	(1,718)	(0)
TOTAL EXPENDITURE	67,314	63,880	(3,435)	89,788	90,283	494
Fees & Charges	(14,153)	(7,709)	6,444	(18,878)	(18,473)	405
Traded Services Income	(33,225)	(21,430)	11,795	(44,317)	(31,229)	13,089
Grants & Contributions	(7,096)	(6,992)	104	(9,465)	(9,465)	-
TOTAL INCOME	(54,474)	(36,130)	18,343	(72,661)	(59,167)	13,494
NET TOTAL COST	12,841	27,749	14,909	17,128	31,116	13,988

There is significant uncertainty in respect of the assumed levels of forecast income throughout the directorate arising from the impact of Covid-19. These forecasts are closely monitored and are updated monthly.

Revenue Forecast

	Budget to Date £'000	Actual to Date £'000	Variance to Date £'000	Approved Budget £'000	Forecast Outturn £'000	Full Year Variance £'000
<u>Objective Analysis</u>						
Resources Management	-	548	548	-	-	-
Customer Services	1,244	1,591	347	1,659	1,587	(72)
HR & Organisational Development	1,469	2,027	558	1,960	2,134	174
Audit & Insurance	1,213	1,536	322	1,619	1,565	(54)
Procurement Services	367	618	251	490	740	250
Financial Services	2,149	2,398	249	2,866	2,911	45
Legal & Democratic	1,764	4,831	3,067	2,353	2,300	(53)
IT Services	3,364	3,804	440	4,488	4,220	(268)
Suspense	-	(0)	(0)	-	-	-
Inactive codes	-	(0)	(0)	-	-	-
NET TOTAL COST	11,571	17,353	5,782	15,434	15,456	22

Subjective Analysis

Employee Costs	13,720	14,425	704	18,301	18,011	(290)
Premises Costs	225	236	10	301	301	-
Transport-Related Costs	25	79	55	33	33	-
Supplies and Services	4,625	5,716	1,090	6,170	6,373	203
Contracted Costs	3,919	3,536	(382)	5,227	4,790	(437)
Transfer Payments	1,313	1,583	270	1,751	1,751	-
TOTAL EXPENDITURE	23,827	25,575	1,748	31,782	31,258	(524)
Fees & Charges	(1,434)	(1,106)	328	(1,913)	(1,936)	(23)
Traded Services Income	(3,767)	(1,901)	1,866	(5,025)	(4,751)	274
Grants & Contributions	(7,055)	(5,216)	1,839	(9,411)	(9,116)	295
TOTAL INCOME	(12,256)	(8,222)	4,034	(16,348)	(15,802)	546
NET TOTAL COST	11,571	17,353	5,782	15,434	15,456	22

Risks and Opportunities (£,000's)

	Likelihood	Risk	Opportunity	Weighted
1 Decrease in Recovery of Court Costs	Medium	65		33
2 Grant Funding at risk for children not attending nursery	Medium	50		25
3				
4				
5				
Total		115	0	58

Chief Executive [CEX] - Period 9

Revenue Forecast

	Budget to Date £'000	Actual to Date £'000	Variance to Date £'000	Approved Budget £'000	Forecast Outturn £'000	Full Year Variance £'000
<u>Objective Analysis</u>						
Chief Executive	651	851	200	868	914	46
Communications	512	504	(7)	682	667	(15)
NET TOTAL COST	1,162	1,355	193	1,550	1,581	31

Subjective Analysis

Employee Costs	1,072	1,003	(69)	1,430	1,369	(61)
Premises Costs	-	-	-	-	-	-
Transport-Related Costs	-	20	20	-	-	-
Supplies and Services	152	515	363	203	262	59
Contracted Costs	-	-	-	-	-	-
Transfer Payments	5	8	2	7	7	-
TOTAL EXPENDITURE	1,230	1,546	316	1,640	1,638	(2)
Fees & Charges	-	-	-	-	-	-
Traded Services Income	(26)	0	26	(35)	(2)	33
Grants & Contributions	(41)	(191)	(150)	(55)	(55)	-
TOTAL INCOME	(67)	(191)	(123)	(90)	(57)	33
NET TOTAL COST	1,162	1,355	193	1,550	1,581	31

Risks and Opportunities (£,000's)

	Likelihood	Risk	Opportunity	Weighted
1 Temporary Place of Rest costs not shared out	Medium	35		18
2				
3				
4				
5				
Total		35	0	18

GENERAL FUND REVENUE FORECASTS AND SAVINGS TRENDS

General Fund Revenue Forecasts and Weighted Risks

DACHS	DEGNS	DOR	Chief Exec	Children's Retained	BFFC	CORP	Total
(£000's)	(£000's)	(£000's)	(£000's)	(£000's)	(£000's)	(£000's)	(£000's)

Forecast Outturn

Period 2	2,024	18,957	606	363	-	1494	4,495	27,939
Period 3	2,743	16,276	887	413	-	2531	(2,538)	20,312
Period 4	2,743	16,276	1036	33	-	2428	(2,454)	20,062
Period 5	1,791	16,026	1064	34	-	2032	(2,039)	18,908
Period 6	1,347	14,659	1100	34	-	2107	(1,968)	17,279
Period 7	1,347	12,987	914	9	-	1670	(1,933)	14,994
Period 8	1,347	13,821	904	33	-	2001	(1,870)	16,236
Period 9	1,347	13,988	22	31	-	1,872	(1,830)	15,430
Period 10								
Period 11								
Per 9 Change	-	167	(882)	(2)	-	(129)	40	(806)

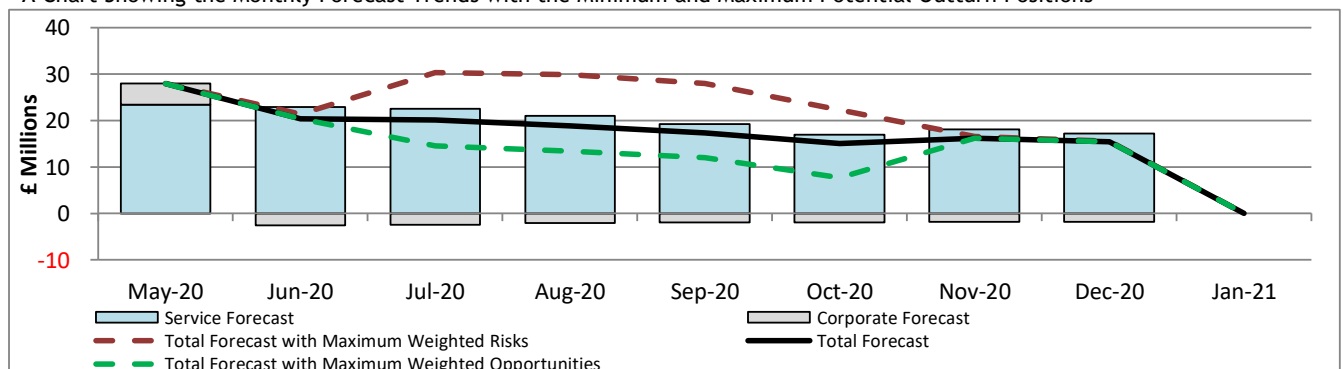
Weighted Risks

Period 2	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Period 3	719	-	330	35	-	-	-	1,084
Period 4	719	-	330	35	-	4,044	-	10,256
Period 5	719	-	330	35	-	4,401	-	10,970
Period 6	719	-	265	35	-	4,306	-	10,650
Period 7	719	-	265	35	-	2,641	-	7,320
Period 8	-	-	265	35	-	-	-	300
Period 9	-	-	115	35	-	-	-	150
Period 10								
Period 11								
Per 9 Change	-	-	(150)	-	-	-	-	(150)

Weighted Opportunities

Period 2	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Period 3	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Period 4	-	-	-	-	-	(2,784)	-	(5,568)
Period 5	-	-	-	-	-	(2,743)	-	(5,486)
Period 6	-	-	-	-	-	(2,616)	-	(5,232)
Period 7	-	-	-	-	-	(3,650)	-	(7,300)
Period 8	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Period 9	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Period 10								
Period 11								
Per 9 Change	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-

A Chart Showing the Monthly Forecast Trends with the Minimum and Maximum Potential Outturn Positions



GENERAL FUND REVENUE FORECASTS AND SAVINGS TRENDS

GENERAL FUND SAVINGS TRACKER

DACHS	DEGNS	DOR	CEX	CORPORATE	BFFC	TOTAL
(£000's)	(£000's)	(£000's)	(£000's)	(£000's)	(£000's)	(£000's)

Period 8

Red	820	5,059	226	-	200	-	6,305
Amber	871	1,220	120	-	50	-	2,261
Green	386	863	296	5	-	-	1,550
Blue	1,023	77	-	-	-	4,128	5,228
Total	3,100	7,219	642	5	250	4,128	15,344

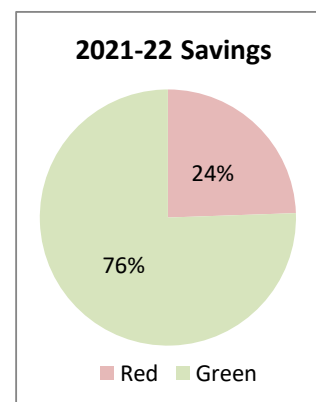
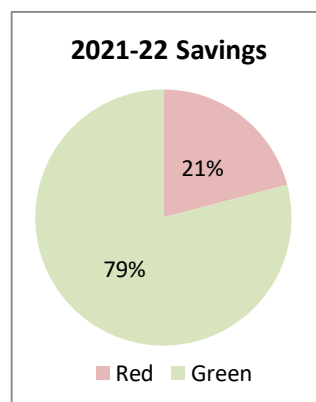
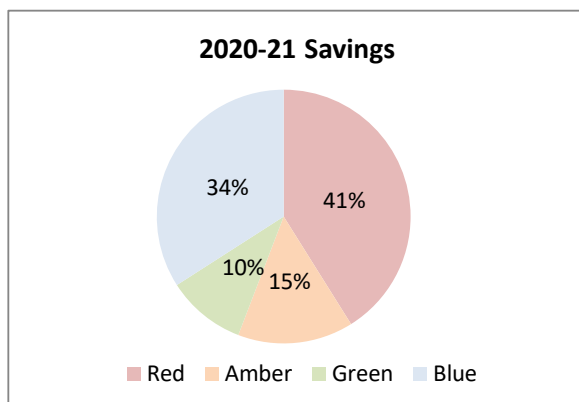
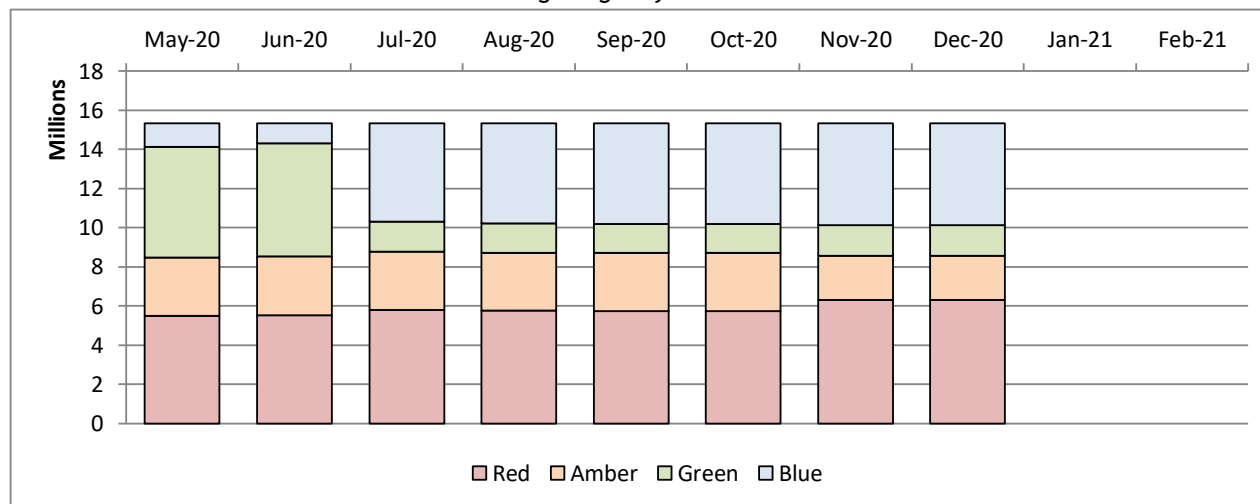
Period 9

Red	820	5,059	226	-	200	-	6,305
Amber	871	1,220	120	-	50	-	2,261
Green	386	863	296	5	-	-	1,550
Blue	1,023	77	-	-	-	4,128	5,228
Total	3,100	7,219	642	5	250	4,128	15,344

Period 9 Change

Red	-	-	0	-	-	-	0
Amber	-	(0)	-	-	-	-	(0)
Green	-	(0)	-	-	-	-	(0)
Blue	-	0	-	-	-	-	0
Total	-	0	(0)	-	-	-	-

The below bar chart shows the rated 20-21 Savings target by "RAGB".



Housing Revenue Account [HRA] - Period 9

Revenue Forecast

	Budget to Date £'000	Actual to Date £'000	Variance to Date £'000	Approved Budget £'000	Forecast Outturn £'000	Full Year Variance £'000
<u>Objective Analysis</u>						
Responsive Repairs	2,468	1,389	(1,079)	3,290	2,820	(470)
Planned Maintenance	1,550	824	(726)	2,066	1,676	(390)
Major Works	10,486	6,839	(3,647)	13,981	10,208	(3,773)
Managing Tenancies	1,058	800	(257)	1,410	1,410	-
Management, Policy & Support	3,998	4,143	145	5,331	5,331	-
PFI	5,429	5,133	(295)	7,238	7,038	(200)
Rent Collection	1,022	921	(102)	1,363	1,363	-
Building Cleaning, Energy & other	2,215	2,491	276	2,953	2,953	-
Capital Financing	3,975	3,600	(375)	5,300	5,200	(100)
HRA Income	(30,815)	(30,513)	303	(41,087)	(41,287)	(200)
Movement to/(from) Reserve	(1,384)	-	1,384	(1,845)	3,288	5,133
NET TOTAL COST	-	(4,373)	(4,373)	-	-	-

Subjective Analysis

Employee Costs	2,935	2,620	(315)	3,915	3,915	0
Premises Costs	13,768	10,687	(3,081)	20,895	16,262	(4,633)
Transport-Related Costs	25	3	(22)	33	33	-
Supplies and Services	681	402	(280)	909	909	-
Contracted Costs	5,466	5,140	(326)	7,291	7,091	(200)
Transfer Payments	9,760	7,349	(2,411)	13,018	13,018	(0)
TOTAL EXPENDITURE	32,635	26,201	(6,434)	46,061	41,228	(4,833)
Fees & Charges	(2,548)	-	2,548	(3,399)	(3,399)	(0)
Traded Services Income	(27,090)	(27,532)	(442)	(38,665)	(33,832)	4,833
Grants & Contributions	(2,997)	(3,042)	(45)	(3,997)	(3,997)	-
TOTAL INCOME	(32,635)	(30,574)	2,061	(46,061)	(41,228)	4,833
NET TOTAL COST	-	(4,373)	(4,373)	-	-	0

Scheme Name	2020/21 Original Budget (£,000's)	2020/21 Revised Budget (£,000's)	2020/21 Forecast Spend (£,000's)	2020/21 Forecast Variance (£,000's)
General Fund Capital Programme				
Delivery Fund	4,069	5,550	4,552	(998)
Loan To RTL (Bus replacement programme)	5,000	6,349	700	(5,649)
Oracle Capital Works - financed through reduced rental	100	71	71	-
Purchase of Commercial Property	80,000	-	-	-
Corp Total	89,169	11,970	5,323	(6,647)
e-Marketplace & Equipment Renewal Portal Software	170	170	77	(93)
Mobile Working and Smart Device	150	150	150	-
Replacement of Community Re-ablement Software	85	85	85	-
Social Care Premises	1,000	1,117	668	(449)
DACHS Total	1,405	1,522	980	(542)
Additional School Places - Contingency	500	500	258	(242)
Avenue Expansion	9	92	120	28
Asset Management			280	280
Blessed Hugh Faringdon - Asperger Unit 30 place expansion (SEN)		(15)	-	15
Civitas- Synthetic Sports Pitch	319	329	212	(117)
Cranbury College at JMA	819	894	894	-
Crescent Road Playing Field Improvements	314	314	2	(312)
Critical Reactive Contingency: Health and safety (Schools)	727	757	727	(30)
Green Park Primary School	-	876	876	-
Heating and Electrical Programme - Manor Pry Power	154	154	10	(144)
Heating and Electrical Renewal Programme	929	1,254	1,124	(130)
Initial Viability work for the Free School at Richfield Avenue	160	209	80	(129)
Katesgrove Primary Trooper Potts Building	6,981	6,983	106	(6,877)
Meadway Early Years Building Renovation	100	238	238	0
New ESFA funded schools - Phoenix College	6,300	6,377	1,563	(4,814)
New ESFA funded schools - St Michaels Primary Schools Expansion Programme - 2013-2017	101	177	608	431
Schools - Fire Risk Assessed remedial Works	490	525	-	(525)
Thameside SEN Expansion	203	396	402	6
The Heights Permanent Site Mitigation	-	66	66	-
The Heights Temporary School	918	1,346	1,346	(0)
	-	53	-	(53)

Scheme Name	2020/21 Original Budget (£,000's)	2020/21 Revised Budget (£,000's)	2020/21 Forecast Spend (£,000's)	2020/21 Forecast Variance (£,000's)
DCEEHS Total	19,024	21,526	8,912	(12,613)
Abbey Quarter	457	447	250	(197)
Accommodation Review - Phase 2A & B	-	133	33	(100)
Accommodation Review - Phase 2C (19 Bennet Road)	1,824	2,528	2,528	(0)
Additional Storage Capacity at Mortuary	15	15	15	-
Air Quality Monitoring	33	33	18	(15)
Bridges and Carriageways	1,669	1,095	2,233	1,138
Car Park Investment Programme	226	452	452	-
Car Parking - P&D, Red Routes, Equipment	200	174	174	-
Cattle Market Car Park	503	523	523	-
CCTV	-	50	50	-
Central Library - Reconfiguration/Refurbishment Feasibility		50	50	-
Central Pool Regeneration	-	587	587	0
Chestnut Walk Improvements	40	55	35	(20)
Christchurch Meadows Paddling Pool	35	35	35	-
CIL Local Funds - Community	52	52	52	-
CIL Local Funds - Heritage and Culture	115	115	115	-
CIL Local Funds - Leisure and Play	338	446	446	-
CIL Local Funds - Transport	435	435	435	-
CIL Local Funds -Neighbourhood Allocation	238	477	477	-
Corporate Office Essential Works	50	50	50	-
Dee Park Regeneration - Housing	6,000	6,000	100	(5,900)
Infrastructure Fund (school)				
Defra Air Quality Grant - Bus Retrofit	388	388	238	(150)
Defra Air Quality Grant - Go Electric	54	52	35	(17)
Reading				
Development of facilities at Prospect Park/Play	550	550	550	-
Disabled Facilities Grants (Private Sector)	1,055	1,055	1,055	-
Eastern Area Access Works	100	200	200	-
Electric Vehicle Charging Points	200	200	200	-
Food Waste and Smaller Bins	1,489	1,489	1,300	(189)
Foster Carer Extensions	100	100	70	(30)
Green Park Station	11,500	13,674	12,282	(1,392)
Grounds Maintenance Workshop Equipment	50	26	26	(0)
Invest in Corporate buildings/Health & safety works	1,768	1,092	1,092	-
Invest to save energy savings - Street lighting	258	258	700	442
Leisure Procurement	5,662	5,707	950	(4,757)
Local Traffic Management and Road Safety Schemes	359	375	375	-

Scheme Name	2020/21 Original Budget (£,000's)	2020/21 Revised Budget (£,000's)	2020/21 Forecast Spend (£,000's)	2020/21 Forecast Variance (£,000's)
LTP Development	200	399	399	0
NCN Route 422	-	219	219	(0)
New Kit/Vehicles for Commercial Services Dvlpt	122	122	122	-
Oxford Rd Community Centre	-	147	-	(147)
Oxford Road Corridor Works	318	322	322	-
Playground equipment and Refreshment: Boroughwide	494	481	337	(144)
Private Sector Renewals	300	300	240	(60)
Pumping Station Upgrade Scheme (new) re3 extending range of recyclables	250	250	250	-
Reading Football Club Social Inclusion Unit to SRLC	86	94	10	(84)
Reading Town Centre Design Framework	1,496	1,496	-	(1,496)
	-	86	43	(43)
Reading West Station	3,400	3,539	1,500	(2,039)
Renewable Energy	500	500	-	(500)
Replacement Vehicles	176	897	-	(897)
Rogue Landlord Enforcement	-	75	75	-
S106 individual schemes list	284	334	334	-
Salix Decarbonisation Fund	600	600	384	(216)
Small Leisure Schemes	237	258	258	(0)
Smart City Cluster project and C-ITS	227	227	227	-
South Reading MRT (Phases 1 & 2)	-	362	362	0
South Reading MRT (Phases 3 & 4)	2,536	6,954	6,954	(0)
South Reading MRT (Phases 5 & 6)	1,000	1,000	250	(750)
The Keep	-	94	-	(94)
Town Centre Improvements	450	450	320	(130)
Town Centre Street Trading Infrastructure	40	34	34	-
Town Hall Equipment	205	205	-	(205)
Traffic Management Schools	295	390	390	-
Tree Planting	50	30	30	-
Western Area Access Works	-	128	128	-
Highway Infrastructure Works	3,000	3,000	1,500	(1,500)
Harden Public Open Spaces to Prevent Incursion	35	55	51	(4)
Salix Re-Circulation Fund	588	440	288	(152)
Sun Street - Final Phase	145	182	190	8
DEGNS Total	52,797	62,588	42,948	(19,640)
Customer Digital Experience	750	750	400	(350)
Universal Digital Systems	1,005	1,614	815	(799)
Future ICT Operating Model	5,429	5,081	5,964	883
ICT Infrastructure (Invest to save)	667	445	-	(445)
Re-Procurement / Reimplementation of Finance System	100	100	-	(100)
Cemeteries and Crematorium	100	94	60	(34)
Cremator	-	-	350	350
DoR Total	8,051	8,084	7,589	(495)

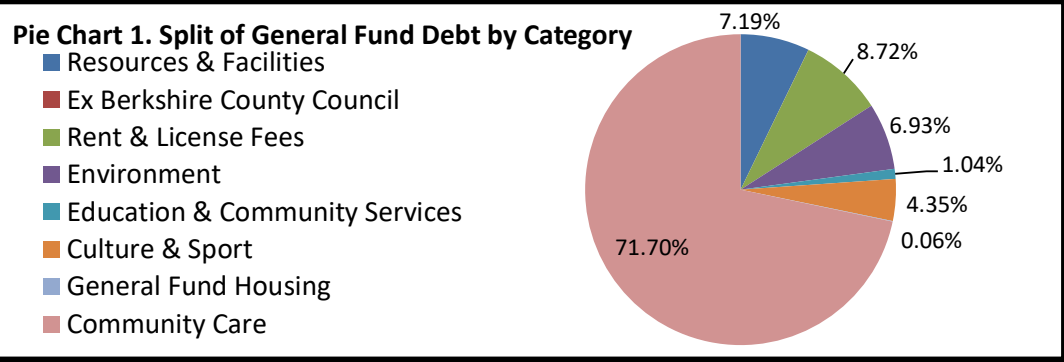
Scheme Name	2020/21 Original Budget (£,000's)	2020/21 Revised Budget (£,000's)	2020/21 Forecast Spend (£,000's)	2020/21 Forecast Variance (£,000's)
Grand Total	170,446	105,691	65,753	(39,938)

HRA Capital Programme

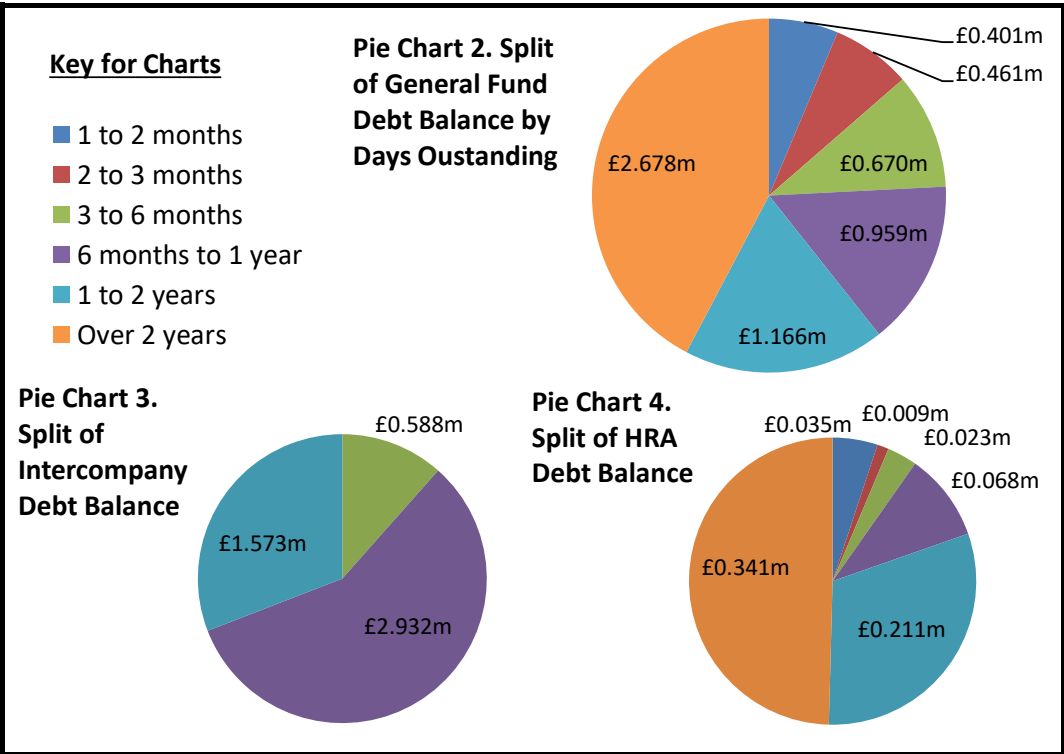
Major Repairs	11,066	11,650	7,470	(4,180)
Hexham Road	950	1,350	1,178	(172)
Disabled Facilities Grants	500	423	527	104
Fire Safety Works	977	971	1,033	62
New Build & Acquisitions - Phase 1	214	213	213	-
New Build & Acquisitions - Phase 2	12,205	12,869	4,774	(8,095)
New Build & Acquisitions - Phase 3	8,381	8,245	2,776	(5,469)
New Build & Acquisitions - (Ex General Fund)	77	71	70	(1)
Housing Mngt System	604	715	327	(388)
Grand Total	34,974	36,507	18,368	(18,138)

Debt Performance - End of December 2020

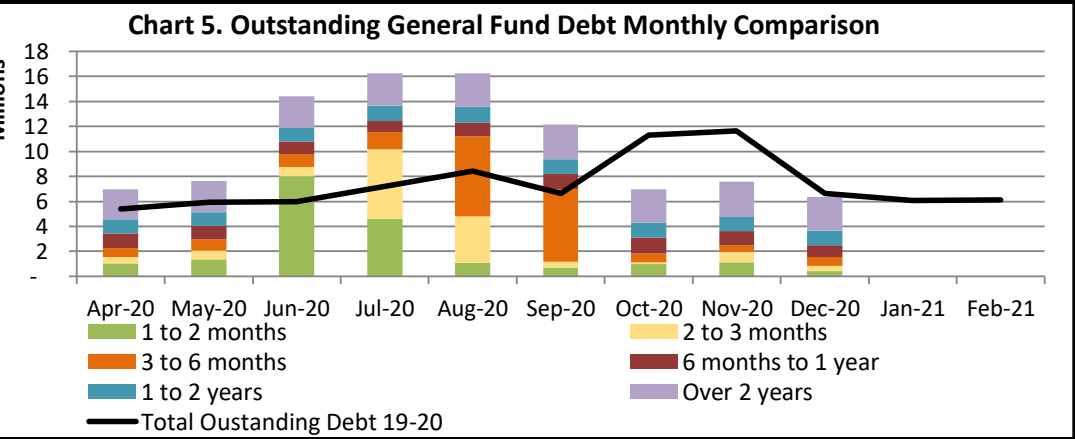
The pie chart below shows the sundry debt as at the end of Period 9 (in excess of 30 days old) to total £6.336m compared to £7.568m at the end of Period 8.



Note: Community Care includes Adult Client debt and invoices relating to NHS/CCG. As of Period 9, debt totalling £419k has been secured against properties, however there is no guarantee that 100% of this is recovered upon sale of the property. Education Services includes the majority of Schools service level agreement invoices.



Debt over 6 months old has decreased by £0.266m to £4.803m since the end of Period 8. Chasing these outstanding debts is being prioritised.



Agency and Staffing - End of December

Agency contracts with the council as at the end of Period 9.

Number of agency workers by directorate

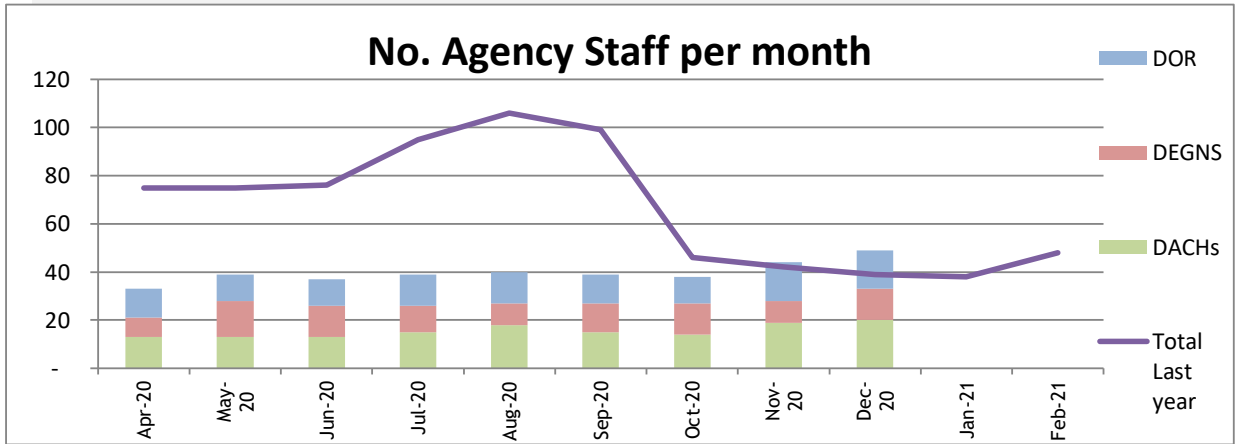
Directorate	Number of Agency Staff Period 9	Number of Agency Staff Period 8
DACHs	20	19
DEGNS	13	9
DOR	16	16
Total	49	44

Agency staff by post name (top 5)

Post name	No.
Social Worker	10
Occupational Therapist	5
Driver/Sweeper	4
Track & Trace Operative	3
Childcare Solicitor	3

Agency spend by directorate per quarter (£000s)

Directorate	2019-20 (£000s)				2020-21 (£000s)			
	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4
DACHs	344	394	410	437	356	344	323	
DEGNS	312	403	391	364	271	300	279	
DOR	314	447	231	233	230	315	232	
Total	969	1,244	1,032	1,034	857	959	834	



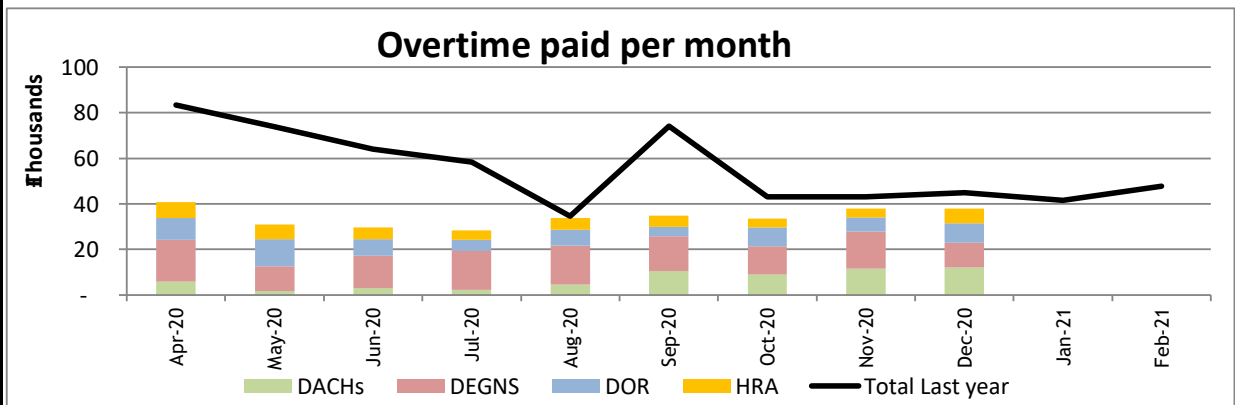
Redundancies within 2020-2021

Directorate	Redundancies Costs	No. of Redundancies
DACHs	£ 50,706	2
DEGNS	£ 8,542	2
DOR	£ 94,222	2
HRA	£ -	0
Total	£ 153,469	6

Overtime paid by directorate 2020-21

Directorate	December 2020 Only	Actual to Date 2020-21
DACHs	£ 12,056	£ 60,908
DEGNS	£ 10,813	£ 131,931
DOR	£ 8,492	£ 67,707
HRA	£ 6,464	£ 47,126
Total	£ 37,825	£ 307,672

Redundancy expenditure will either be funded through the capitalisation directive if the redundancy relates to transformation or through use of the redundancy revenue reserve. Currently 1 redundancy charge has been reflected in the Period 9 monitoring.

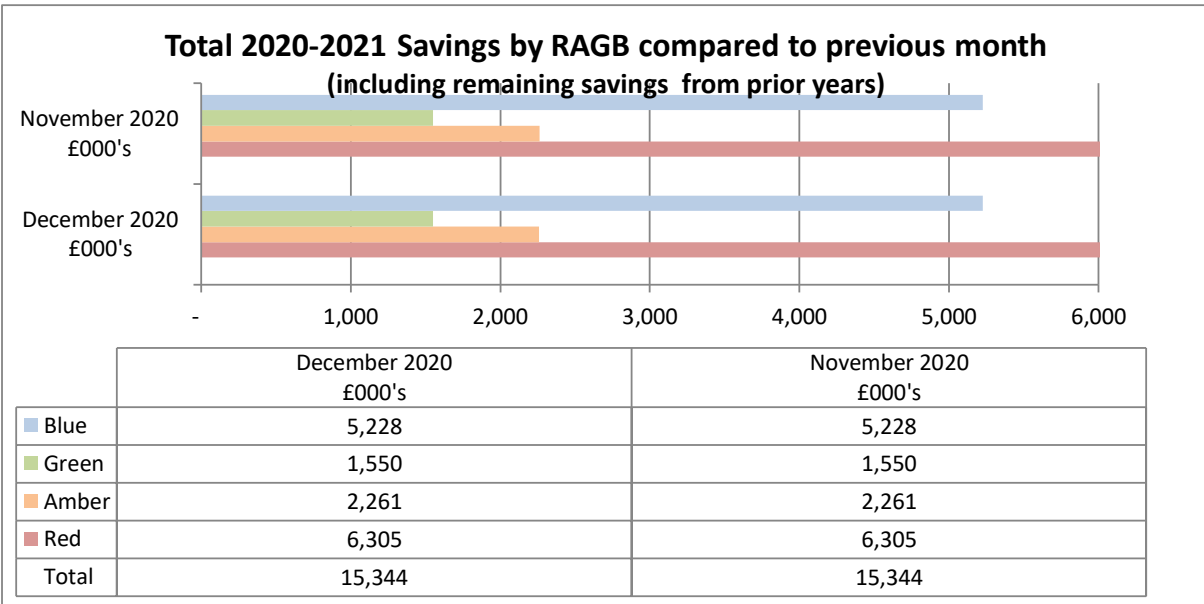


Savings 2020-2021 - End of December 2020

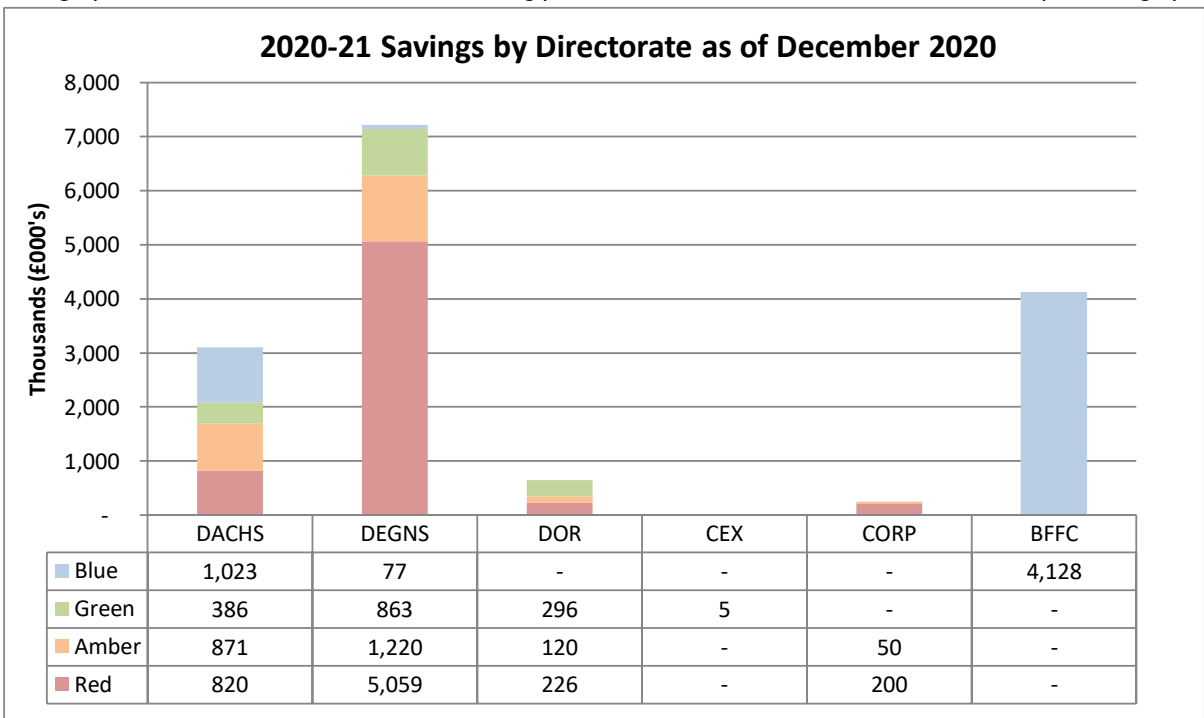
Savings

	Project delayed or unachievable and needs reviewing as part of MTFS
	Project has some issues or is at risk
	Project is progressing on track
	Project has been delivered and saving/income generation has been achieved

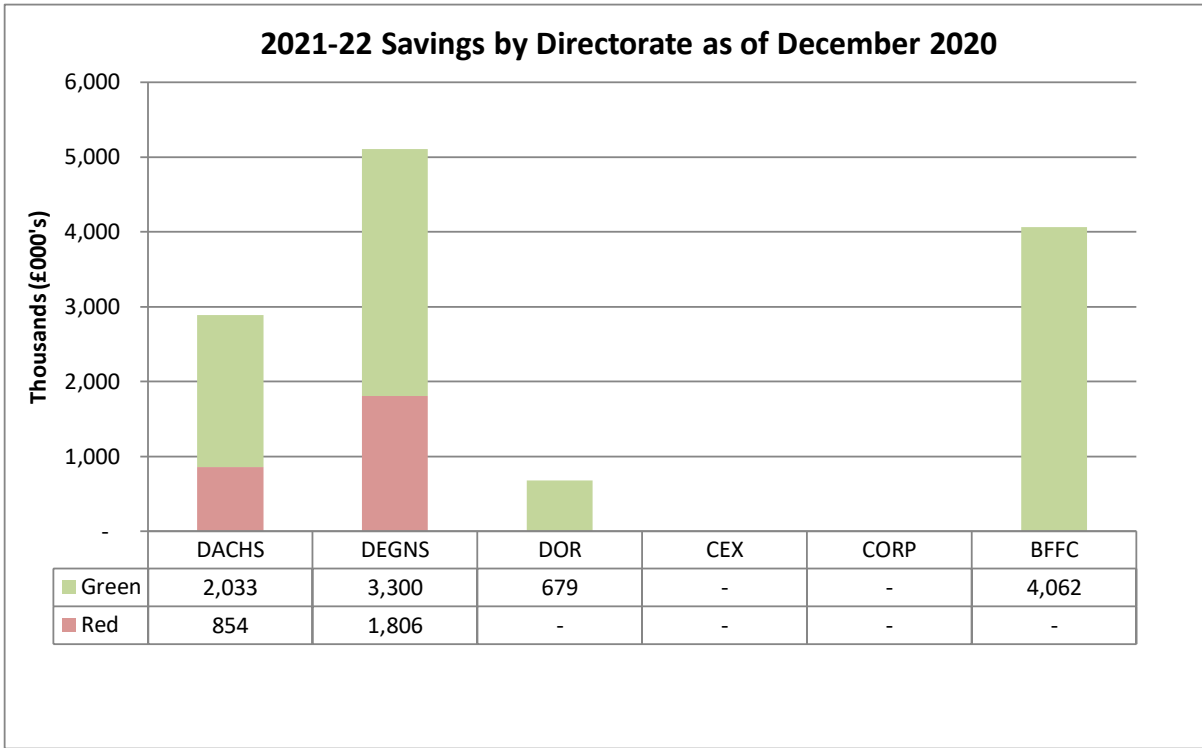
The below graphs shows the outstanding 2020-21 and prior year savings programme. This totals £15.344m for the overall council.



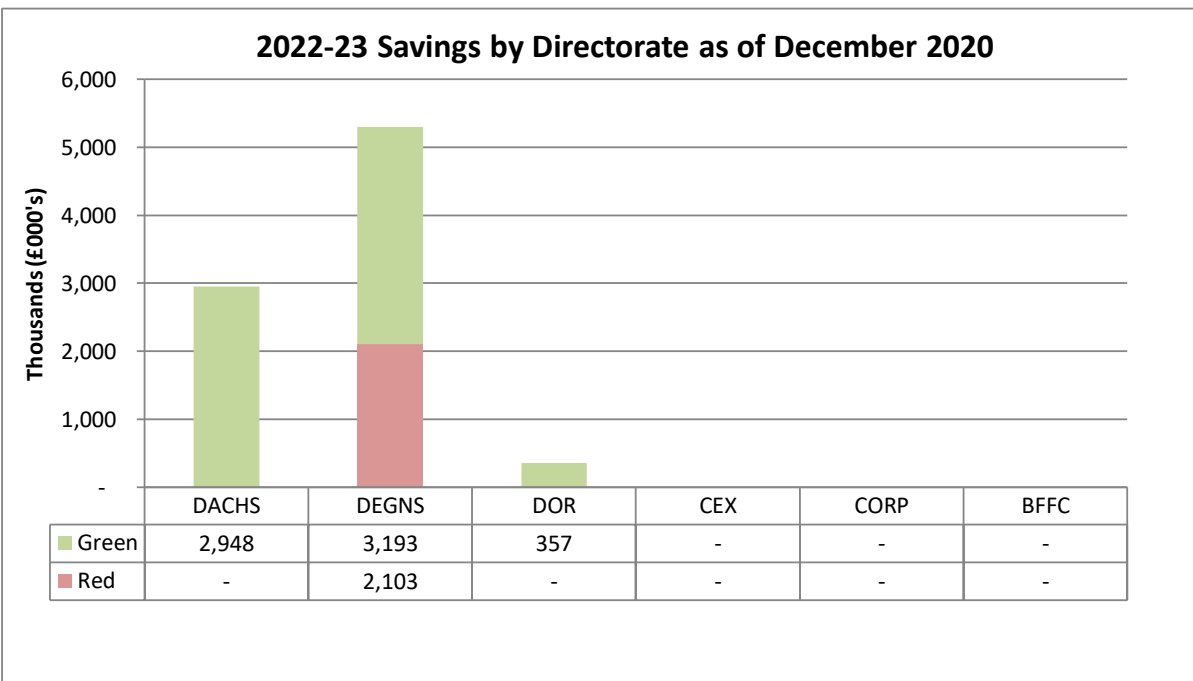
The graph below shows the 2020-21 RAGB rating per directorate as at December 2020 and the percentage per area.



The graph below shows the 2021-22 RAGB rating per directorate as at December 2020 and the percentage per area.

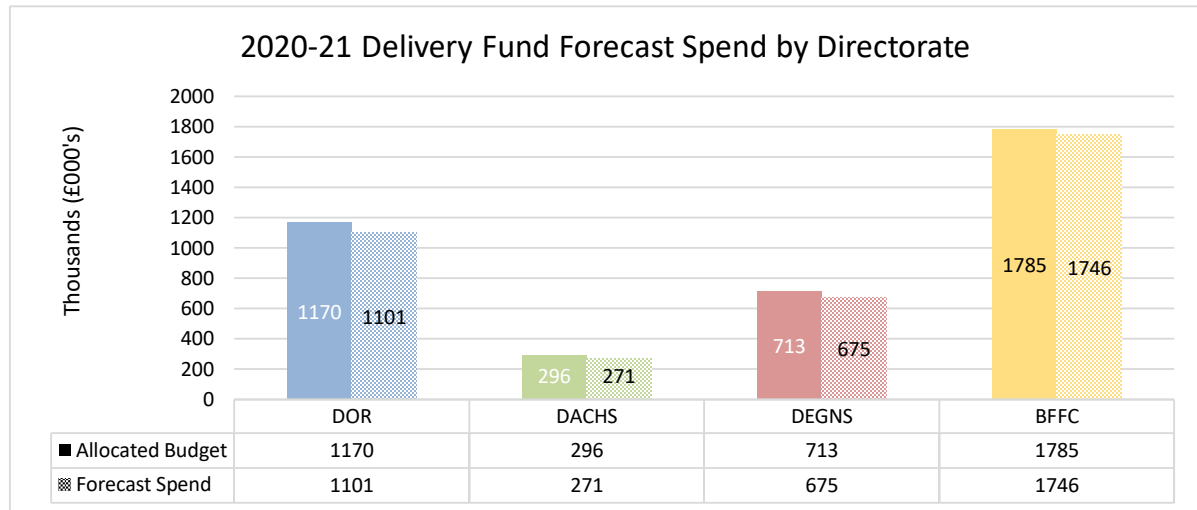


The graph below shows the 2022-23 RAGB rating per directorate as at and the percentage per area.

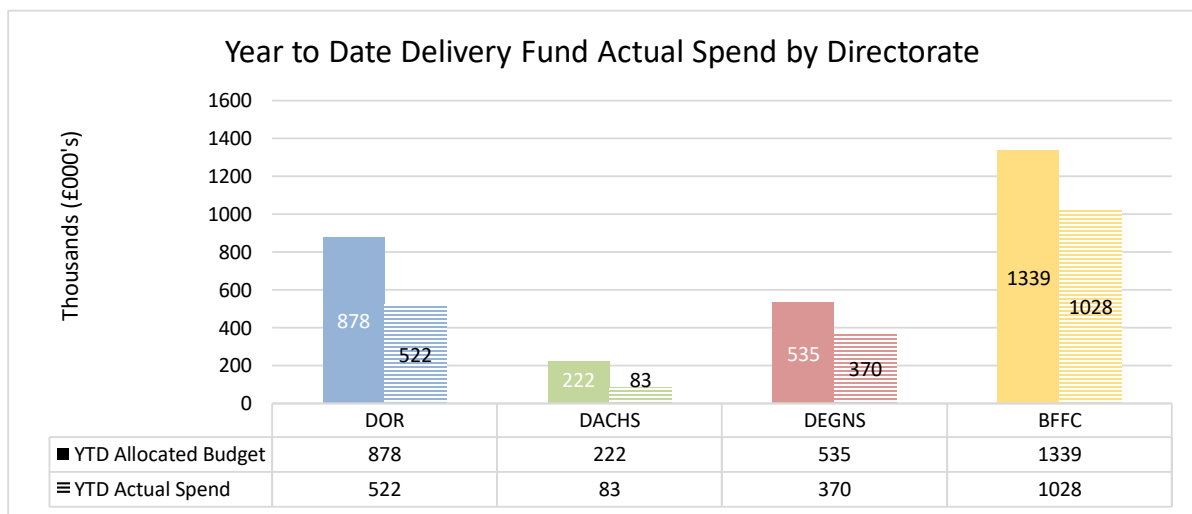


Delivery Fund 2020-2021 - End of December 2020

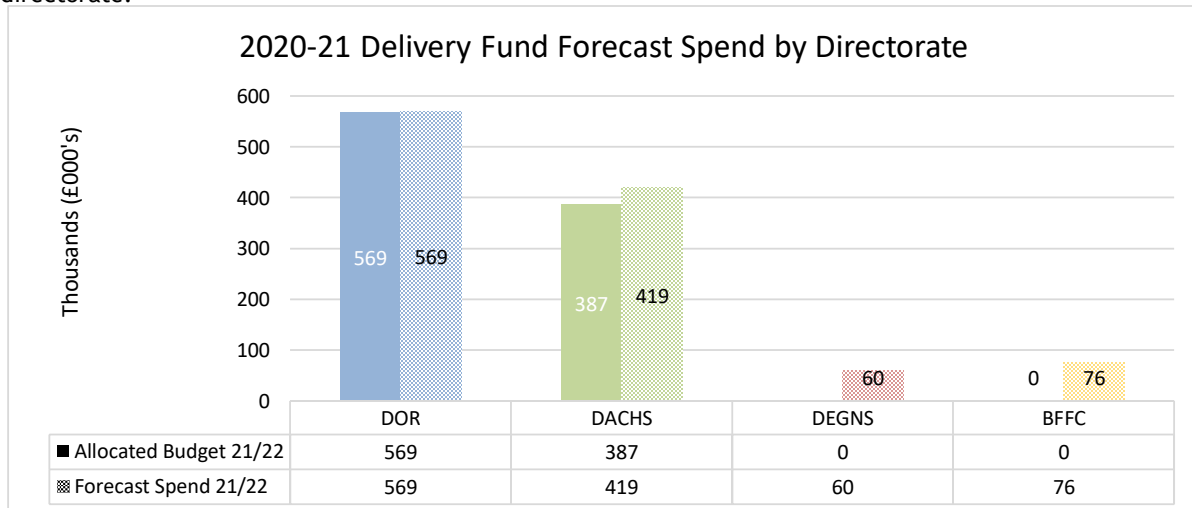
There are currently 46 approved Delivery Fund schemes being monitored across DACHS, DEGNS, DOR and BFFC. The graph below shows the current 2020-21 forecast spend compared to the budget of the Delivery Fund per directorate.



The graph below shows the 2020-21 Year to Date actual spend compared to the Year to Date budget of the Delivery Fund per directorate as of December 2020.



The graph below shows the current 2021-22 forecast spend compared to the budget of the Delivery Fund per directorate.



List of Savings within 2020-21

Savings

SAVINGS PROPOSAL	Current Year Savings (£000s)				
Directorate of Adults Care and Health Services	RED	AMBER	GREEN	BLUE	TOTAL
Extension of Front Door Project; Stretch for Front Door Project	0	50	0	0	50
Reducing Adult Social Care contracts spend (Commissioning Delivery Model)	63	276	265	0	604
Mitigated - Delivery Models for Commissioning, Prevention & Quality Services	0	0	0	750	750
Mental Health and Locality Team Restructure	0	145	0	0	145
Extension of Provider Services	0	100	0	0	100
Review of Non Staffing Expenditure Budgets	0	0	0	273	273
Extension of Assistive Technology Project	50	0	0	0	50
Increased usage of Direct Payments	50	200	0	0	250
Income Maximisation	395	0	0	0	395
Increased usage of Assistive Technology and Equipment	100	100	0	0	200
Public Health Grant Reduction and Alternate Delivery Model	93	0	121	0	214
Digitisation Saving	69	0	0	0	69
Total Directorate of Adults Care and Health Services	820	871	386	1,023	3,100

SAVINGS PROPOSAL	Current Year Savings (£000s)				
Directorate of Economic Growth & Neighbourhood Services	RED	AMBER	GREEN	BLUE	TOTAL
Strategic Transportation Savings	14	0	0	11	25
Smart Cities - communications saving	70	0	0	0	70
Review of Enforcement Contracts	0	0	50	0	50
Car park management processes through IT improvements and staff reductions	0	50	0	0	50
Bus Services Act - reduction in RBC requirement	0	0	0	15	15
Increased revenue from on-street Pay and Display	390	0	0	0	390
Increased income from Parking Enforcement	220	0	0	0	220
Increased provision of Red Routes	50	0	0	0	50
Extend Residents Parking permit areas	100	0	100	0	200
Increase to park permit charges	24	0	29	0	53
Review Public Car Park provision borough wide	200	0	0	0	200
Increase off street parking charges	300	0	0	0	300
Electric Vehicle Charging	3	0	0	0	3
Increase in fees and charges	0	0	0	2	2
Mandatory HMO Licensing	115	0	0	0	115
Discretionary HMO Licensing	65	0	0	0	65
Increase in charges for pre-planning application and planning fees	25	0	0	0	25
Proposed Fee Income Reading Festival	25	0	0	0	25
Reforecast income Licensing income budget	25	0	0	0	25
Increase in fees and charges	16	0	0	0	16
Reduction in professional specialist, management, enforcement and administrative resources; an increase to pre-planning application fees by 10%.	120	0	0	0	120
Town Centre Street Trading - New Pitches	30	0	0	0	30
Charge for pre-application for planning	25	0	0	0	25
Reduce expenditure on homelessness B&B and temporary accommodation	0	0	0	200	200
Reducing use of nightly paid emergency accommodation including B&B	0	0	0	(200)	(200)
Housing Property Services - income generation to General Fund	0	0	60	0	60
Housing Building Maintenance Income	0	31	0	0	31

SAVINGS PROPOSAL	Current Year Savings (£000s)				
	RED	AMBER	GREEN	BLUE	TOTAL
Directorate of Economic Growth & Neighbourhood Services					
Homelessness Prevention Grant	0	0	212	0	212
Increase in fees and charges	0	0	3	0	3
Contribution from Public Health Grant	0	100	0	0	100
Additional Fees & Charges from Schools	0	110	0	0	110
Theatre Fees and Charges	50	0	0	0	50
Increase in fees and charges	26	0	0	0	26
Reduce costs in Library Services	0	0	0	49	49
Town Hall and Museum Additional income	100	0	0	0	100
Increase in Savings - Waste Operations	138	0	56	0	194
Food Waste and Smaller Bins	86	0	86	0	171
New kit and vehicles for commercial services development	0	0	21	0	21
Fundamental Service review of Highways	0	50	0	0	50
Increase in trading through Reading Commercial Services	0	50	0	0	50
Increase income on green waste due to additional uptake in years 1-3 and fee increase in years 2-3	0	0	103	0	103
Commercialisation Direct Services	133	108	20	0	261
Gross up budget for capital cost on recycling bins	19	0	0	0	19
Increase in fees and charges	0	0	4	0	4
Explore creation of coordinated enforcement operation across Regulatory & Transportation services	21	0	8	0	29
Review of Neighbourhood and Streetcare Services fees and charges and enforcement activity.	35	34	0	0	69
Additional income from advertising	25	0	0	0	25
Introduce a 24 hours a day, 7 days a week charge for all Town Centre Pay & Display (P&D)	25	0	0	0	25
Parks & Open Spaces Invest to Save	0	0	65	0	65
Review and increase all allotment rental charges and review plot sizes.	0	0	26	0	26
Savings arising from the closure of Darwin Close, Hamilton Centre and more efficient use of Bennet Road	150	80	0	0	230
Increase income From Commercial Property Acquisitions	0	469	0	0	469
Review of Rents on Garages and Shops	25	0	0	0	25
Gross up budget for capital cost on commercial property	2,340	0	0	0	2,340
Increase in fees and charges	0	0	20	0	20
Review and Restructure of Cleaning Services	0	125	0	0	125
Reductions on Training Budget	0	13	0	0	13
Digitisation Saving	69	0	0	0	69
Directorate of Economic Growth & Neighbourhood Services	5,059	1,220	863	77	7,219

Savings

SAVINGS PROPOSAL	Current Year Savings (£000s)				
Directorate of Resources	RED	AMBER	GREEN	BLUE	TOTAL
Customer Services savings (Call Centre/Hub)	0	0	24	0	24
New customer services model	0	66	66	0	132
HRA share of contribution to Narrowing the Gap	0	0	84	0	84
EU Settlement card service	27	0	0	0	27
Apprentice Levy savings	14	0	0	0	14
Exec Recruitment	0	0	56	0	56
Review of SLA with Schools	0	0	24	0	24
Flexible retirement	0	0	28	0	28
Savings from reprocurring insurance	0	0	50	0	50
Review consultancy budget and CIPFA subscription	0	0	35	0	35
Realignment of Revenues and Benefits Transformation Target	0	0	(90)	0	(90)
Fund two Financial Analyst posts from DUF for two years to support transformation work (Reversal of 2018-19 Saving)	162	0	115	0	277
Income generation from charging for services	0	0	2	0	2
Legal Services Efficiencies & Income	0	0	12	0	12
Savings within Democratic Services including greater use of IT in response to climate change	0	0	15	0	15
Convert Locum solicitors into Permanent Solicitors	0	0	33	0	33
Additional savings will be made across the ICT service including reducing spend on applications	0	0	20	0	20
Re-procurement of IT Contract	0	0	(215)	0	(215)
Savings arising from software applications review	23	0	37	0	60
Digitisation Saving	0	54	0	0	54
Directorate of Resources	226	120	296	0	642

SAVINGS PROPOSAL	Current Year Savings (£000s)				
Chief Executive	RED	AMBER	GREEN	BLUE	TOTAL
Income from event sponsorship and selling advertising within event publications/e-publications/email bulletins	0	0	5	0	5
Chief Executive	0	0	5	0	5

SAVINGS PROPOSAL	Current Year Savings (£000s)				
Corporate	RED	AMBER	GREEN	BLUE	TOTAL
Compulsory closure of Civic Offices for non-essential services	0	50	0	0	50
Reduction of cheque payments	100	0	0	0	100
Management and Staffing Review	100	0	0	0	100
Corporate	200	50	0	0	250

SAVINGS PROPOSAL	Current Year Savings (£000s)				
Brighter Futures For Children	RED	AMBER	GREEN	BLUE	TOTAL
BFFC Savings	0	0	0	4,128	4,128
Brighter Futures For Children	0	0	0	4,128	4,128

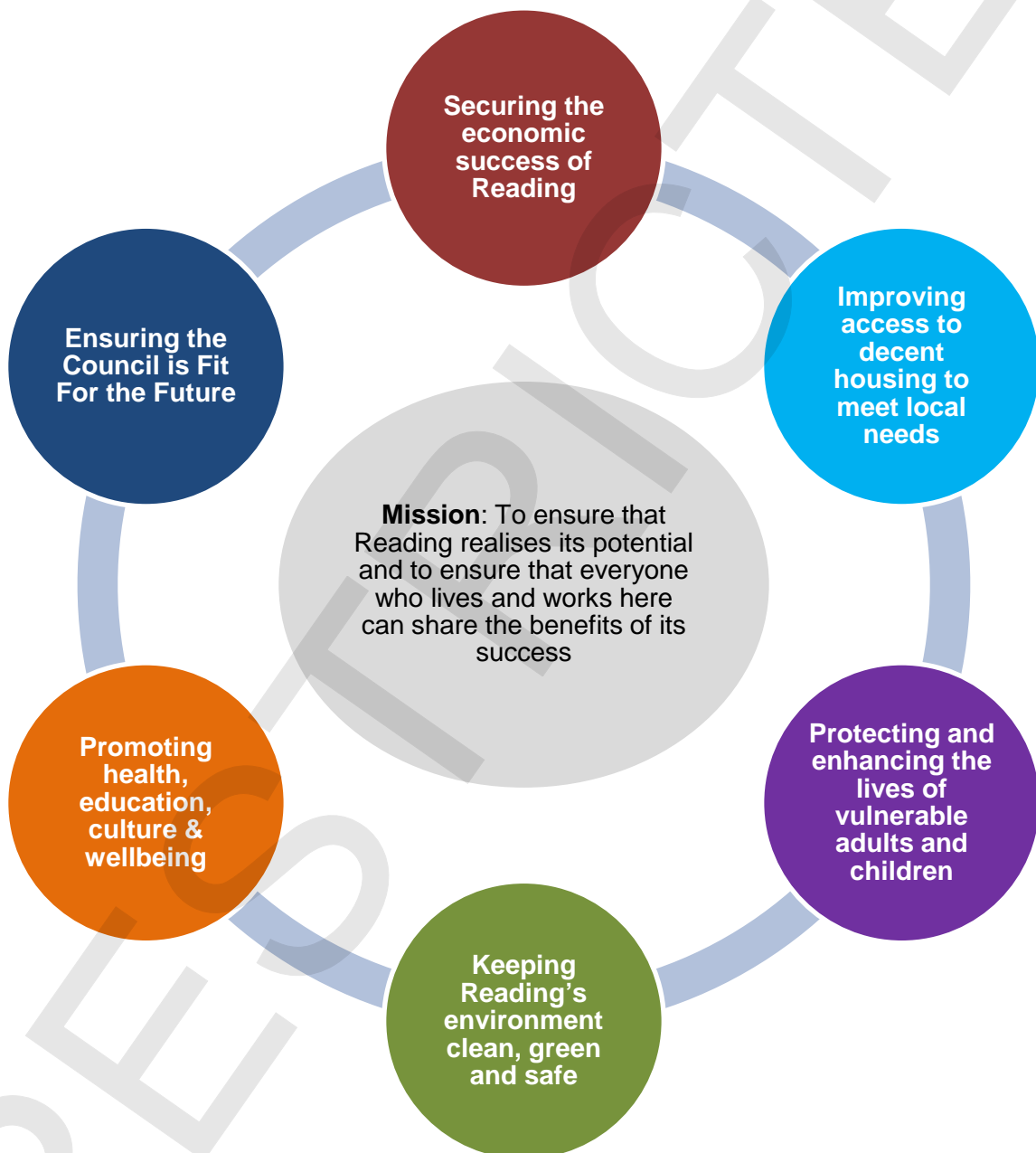
	RED	AMBER	GREEN	BLUE	TOTAL
TOTAL of Savings with Red rated elements within 2020-2021	6,305	2,261	1,550	5,228	15,344

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Shaping Readings Future – Our Corporate Plan 2018-21

Performance Report

Period: Q3 20/21



EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This report sets out how the Council has performed at the end of Q2 2020/21 to deliver the mission and priorities for Reading Borough Council as set out in the Corporate Plan for 2018-21 – annual refresh Spring 2019. Our priorities are:



InPhase Performance Management Software

This is the second quarterly report using the council's performance management software system (InPhase) as the source for recording and monitoring progress against our performance objectives. The content in this report is taken from the system.

The report focuses on progress against the Council's priorities and the 25¹ headline performance measures, reported monthly or quarterly that directorates identified to best demonstrate progress in achieving the outcomes.

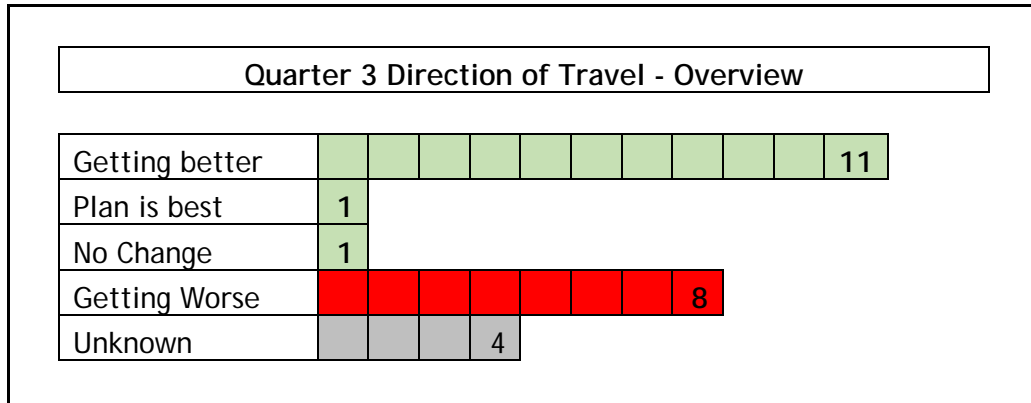
Through service plans the Council carries out wider work to measure performance and quality. This report is intended to provide an overview of the contribution that the Council makes across all its activities to improving Reading as a place to live, work and visit.

¹ In total 37 are reported annually, or more frequently, 2 measures are based on survey results scheduled for alternate years

Performance Overview

Direction of travel

The chart below displays the shifts in performance for the measures, monitored monthly or quarterly, published in the Corporate Plan



RAG Status

The RAG status for priority measures is also included. This is determined by the variance between the actual and target figure.

The actual trend lines displayed on the charts reflect the current RAG status of the measures.



Performance Report

Securing the economic success of Reading

Corporate Priority

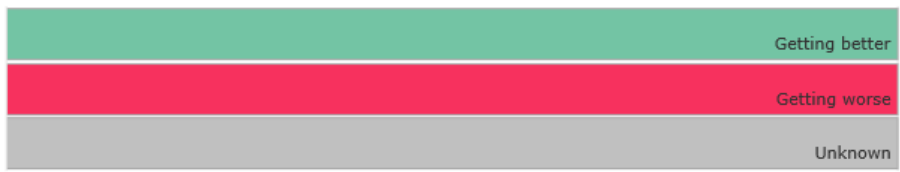
Securing the economic success of Reading ✓

Performance Headlines

Planning Pattern

Annual Quarterly

Direction of Travel



Superfast Broadband coverage has improved this quarter
 Young people who are NEET has increased (got worse) this period
 Data for people who are economically active has not been updated since June



Count of Red Performance Measures



Count of Amber Performance Measures






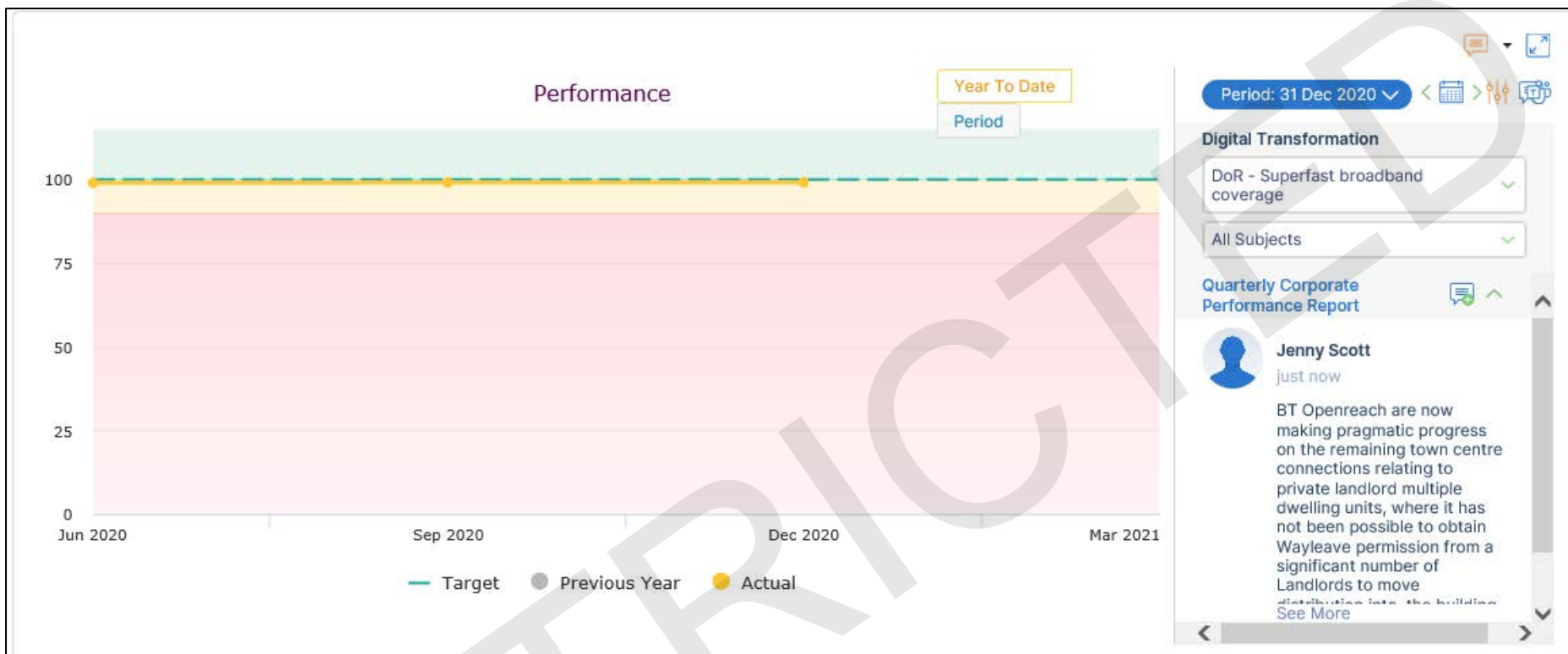
Count of Green Performance Measures

Red: NEET
 Amber: Gross Value added per worker
 Green: Growth in Business rates tax base

Annual

Quarterly

Corporate Priority	Measure of Success	December 2020						
		Type of Measurement	Current Year Actual	Current Year Target	DoT	Baseline 2 Years Ago	Baseline 1 Year Ago	Corporate Performance Report
Securing the economic success of Reading	BFFC - Young people in NEET	National	2.90	1.80				The service is adapting to working in a Covid 19 situation. Virtual careers guidance sessions are being delivered via phone with follow up support via email/phone. A dedicated vacancy service is now live for young people in Reading, all vacancies are shared with colleagues/partners. We have a variety of opportunities (apprenticeships, traineeships, reengagement courses and jobs) available to young people. There is now a section on Bffc website: where young people can access our post-16 team via the website and also view an online jobs board. There is always an increase in NEET in Q3 following the end of the school year but we remain below previous years figures
	DEGNS - People who are economically active 18-64	National	84.0%	81.1%		79.8%	81.2%	
	DoR - Superfast broadband coverage	National	99.10%	100.00%				BT Openreach are now making pragmatic progress on the remaining town centre connections relating to private landlord multiple dwelling units, where it has not been possible to obtain Wayleave permission from a significant number of Landlords to move distribution into the building. BT have engaged a specialist Wayleave company to chase down landlords, however is this final try is unsuccessful then these remaining properties will be descoped from the Project, and BT will terminate the connection at the outside of the property and await normal demand led activity from Tenants to complete connectivity sometime in the future. The project would then move forward to closure from a Reading perspective



RESTRICTED



Performance Report

Ensuring access to decent housing to meet local needs

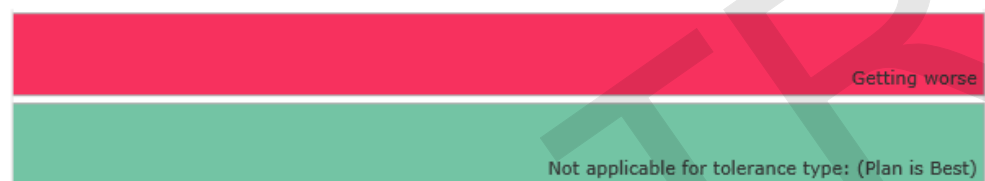
Corporate Priority
Ensuring access to decent housing to meet local needs ✓

Performance Headlines

Planning Pattern

Annual Monthly Quarterly

Direction of Travel



0 Preventing & relieving homelessness has dipped slightly this period 1

Families in B&B is unchanged,

Licensed HMO's is not included in the above figures as the planning pattern is quarterly - DOT has improved

Planning Pattern

Annual Monthly Quarterly

1

Count of Red Performance Measures

0

Count of Amber Performance Measures

1

Count of Green Performance Measures

Red: Additional affordable homes
Green: Families in B&B Accommodation

Corporate Priority	Measure of Success	December 2020						
		Type of Measurement	Current Year Actual	Current Year Target	DoT	Baseline 2 Years Ago	Baseline 1 Year Ago	Corporate Performance Report
Ensuring access to decent housing to meet local needs	DEGNS - Families in B&B accommodation	Local	0	0	N/A		0	
	DEGNS - Preventing & relieving homelessness	Local	52	37	🔴	56	59	

Planning Pattern

Annual
Monthly
Quarterly

Corporate Priority	Measure of Success	December 2020						
		Type of Measurement	Current Year Actual	Current Year Target	DoT	Baseline 2 Years Ago	Baseline 1 Year Ago	Corporate Performance Report
Ensuring access to decent housing to meet local needs	DEGNS - Licensed HMO's	Local	40%	35%	↑ ✓		54%	Continue to work with HMO Landlords to ensure new and renewal applications submitted





Performance Report

Protecting and enhancing the lives of vulnerable adults and children

Corporate Priority

Protecting and enhancing the lives of vulnerable adults and children ✓

Performance Headlines

Planning Pattern

Monthly Quarterly

Direction of Travel



1

Count of Red Performance Measures

0

Count of Amber Performance Measures

1

Count of Green Performance Measures

Red: Direct Payments
Green: Residential Admissions

3 measures - Direct Payments, Residential Admissions for 18-64's and older people 65+ have improved since the last period. However, Direct payments is not yet achieving the target set

Planning Pattern

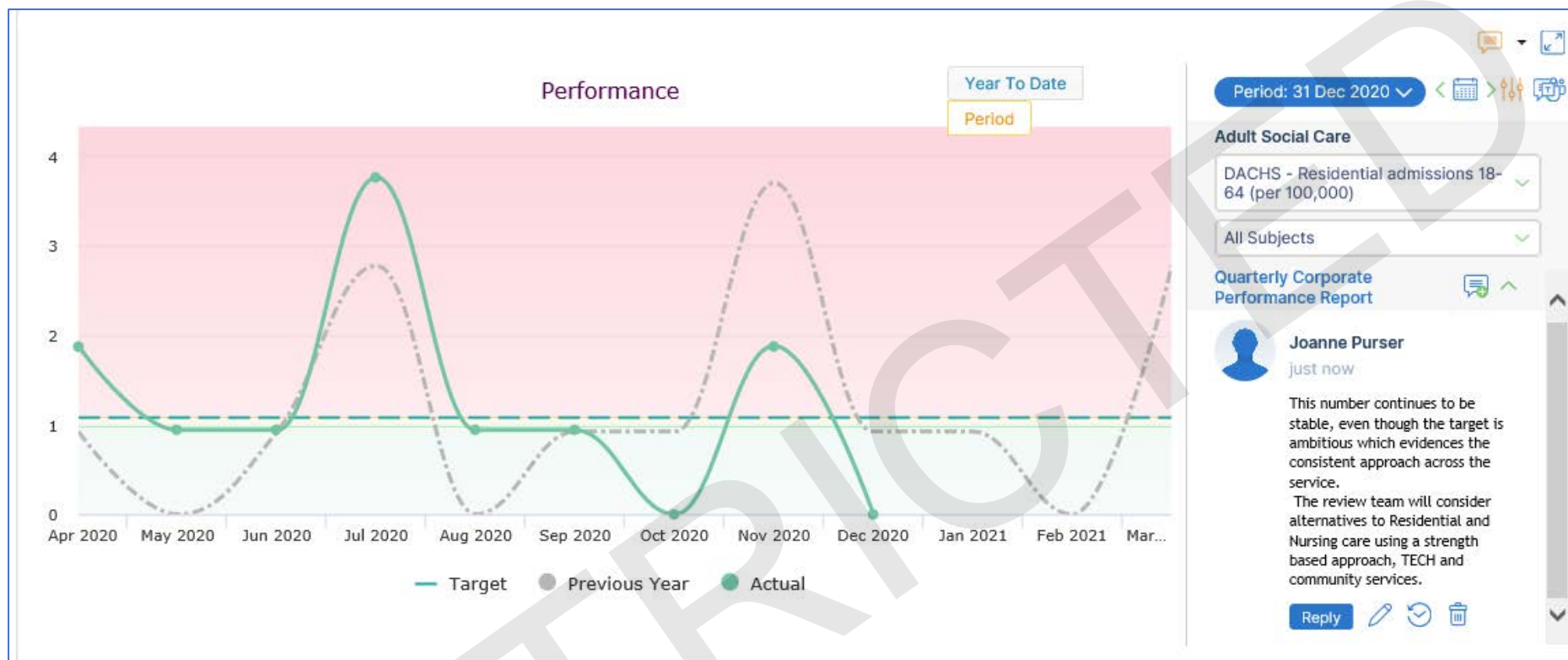
Monthly Quarterly

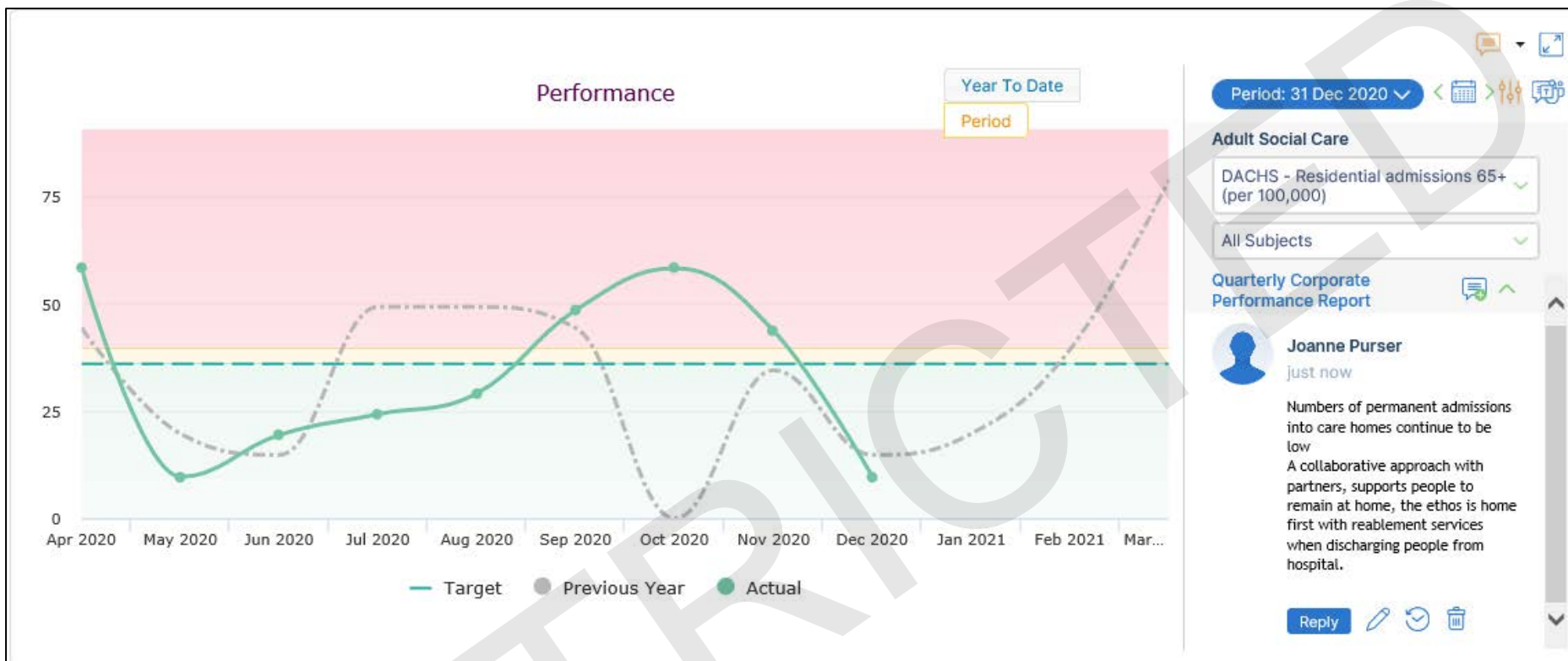
Corporate Priority	Measure of Success	December 2020						
		Type of Measurement	Current Year Actual	Current Year Target	DoT	Baseline 2 Years Ago	Baseline 1 Year Ago	Corporate Performance Report
	DACHS - Direct Payments	Financial	20.80	25.00	✓	16.93	18.83	Direct Payments continue to increase, although this is still below the target set. The dedicated worker has set targets for the rest of the financial year for each team to improve the number further. The worker will be working directly with the review team to support the transition to direct payments.

Corporate Priority	Measure of Success	December 2020						
		Type of Measurement	Current Year Actual	Current Year Target	DoT	Baseline 2 Years Ago	Baseline 1 Year Ago	Corporate Performance Report
Protecting and enhancing the lives of vulnerable adults and children	DACHS - Number of DToC Bed days (ASC)	Financial	0	105	?	306	140	Not currently collected due to COVID19 Pathway 1, 2 and 3 reported am and pm daily, system aim <20 on Ready to Go.
	DACHS - Residential admissions 18-64 (per 100,000)	Financial	0	1	✓	0	1	This number continues to be stable, even though the target is ambitious which evidences the consistent approach across the service. The review team will consider alternatives to Residential and Nursing care using a strength based approach, TECH and community services.
	DACHS - Residential admissions 65+ (per 100,000)	Financial	10	36	✓	25	15	Numbers of permanent admissions into care homes continue to be low A collaborative approach with partners, supports people to remain at home, the ethos is home first with reablement services when discharging people from hospital.

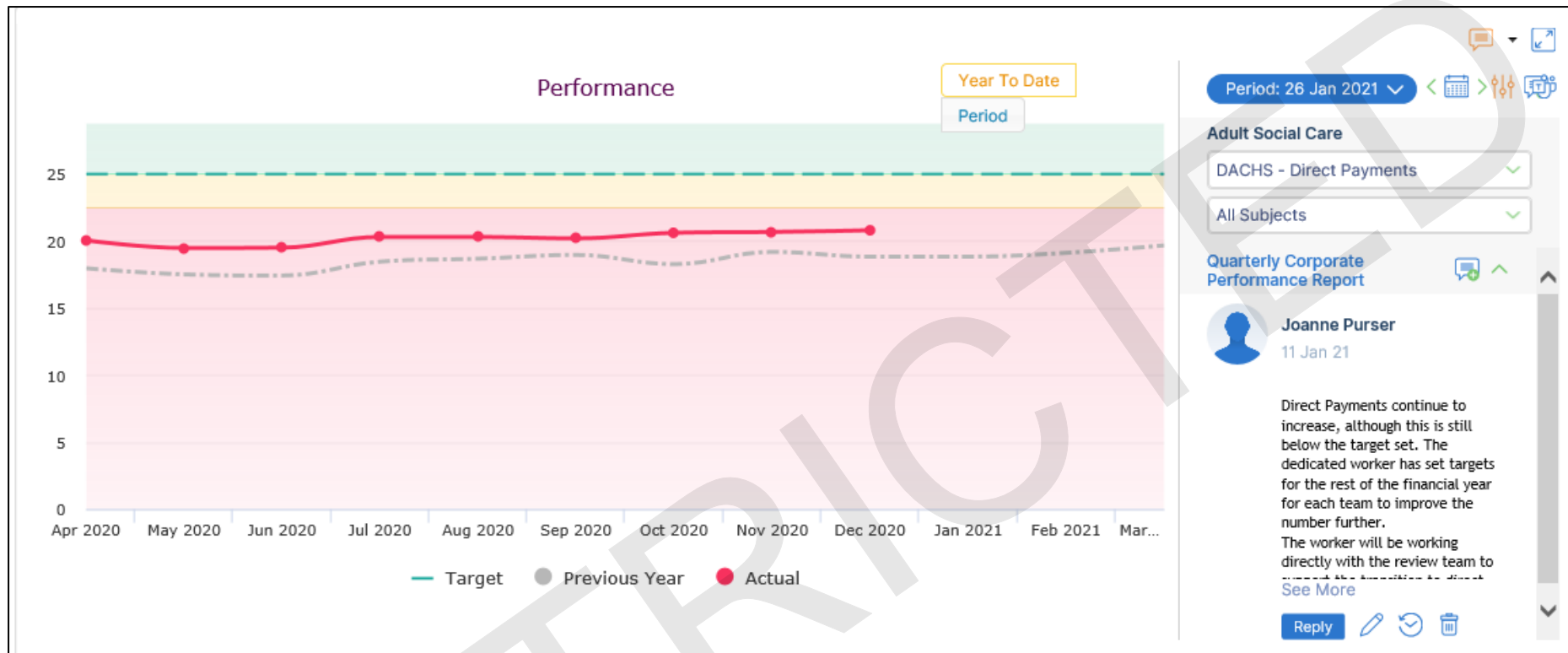
Please note:

- Due to the COVID19 Pandemic, national collection of DToC data is still suspended as of March 2020





RESERVED





Performance Report

Protecting and enhancing the lives of vulnerable adults and children

Corporate Priority

Protecting and enhancing the lives of vulnerable adults and children ✓

Performance Headlines

Planning Pattern

Monthly Quarterly

Direction of Travel



1

Count of Red Performance Measures

1

Count of Amber Performance Measures

0

Count of Green Performance Measures

Red: Children Looked after
 Amber: Timeliness of early help admissions
 Green: Residential admissions adults 18-64

Children Looked After & children with 3+ placements in last 12 months have improved this period
 Placements for children within 20 miles & timeliness of early help assessments have dipped this month

Planning Pattern

Monthly Quarterly

Corporate Priority	Measure of Success	December 2020						
		Type of Measurement	Current Year Actual	Current Year Target	DoT	Baseline 2 Years Ago	Baseline 1 Year Ago	Corporate Performance Report
Protecting and enhancing the lives of vulnerable adults and children	BFFC - Children looked after	National	272.00	250.00	✓		288.00	A steady improvement in providing more permanent outcomes for our looked after children has seen a reduction in this number. There are 18 Unaccompanied Asylum Seeker Children (UASC) children included in this figure
	BFFC - Children with 3+ placements in past 12 months	Local	10.00%	10.00%	✓		11.50%	'Achieving Best Outcome Panels' provide a forum to review children's placements / care packages and secure their permanence, which has had a positive impact on this performance indicator.
	BFFC - Placements for children within 20 miles	Local	67.00%	75.00%	✗		70.00%	New children are being placed outside of the 20 mile radius due to lack of capacity. There are no residential places in Reading and no mother and baby units. There has also been an increase in the number of notifications from Ofsted on placements that can't be used which increases demand for those placements that remain. Most of our neighbours have seen an increase in the number of CLA which puts more pressure on placements.
	BFFC - Timeliness of Early Help assessments	Local	94.00%	95.00%	✗		99.00%	A consistent focus on timeliness has resulted in a high % of Early Help Assessments being completed within timescale. Families, other professionals or workers self-isolating has had a slight impact on the timeliness this month



Performance Report

Cleaner, Greener, Safer

Corporate Priority

Cleaner, Greener, Safer ✓

Performance Headlines

Planning Pattern

Annual Quarterly

Direction of Travel



1

Count of Red Performance Measures

0

Count of Amber Performance Measures

0

Count of Green Performance Measures

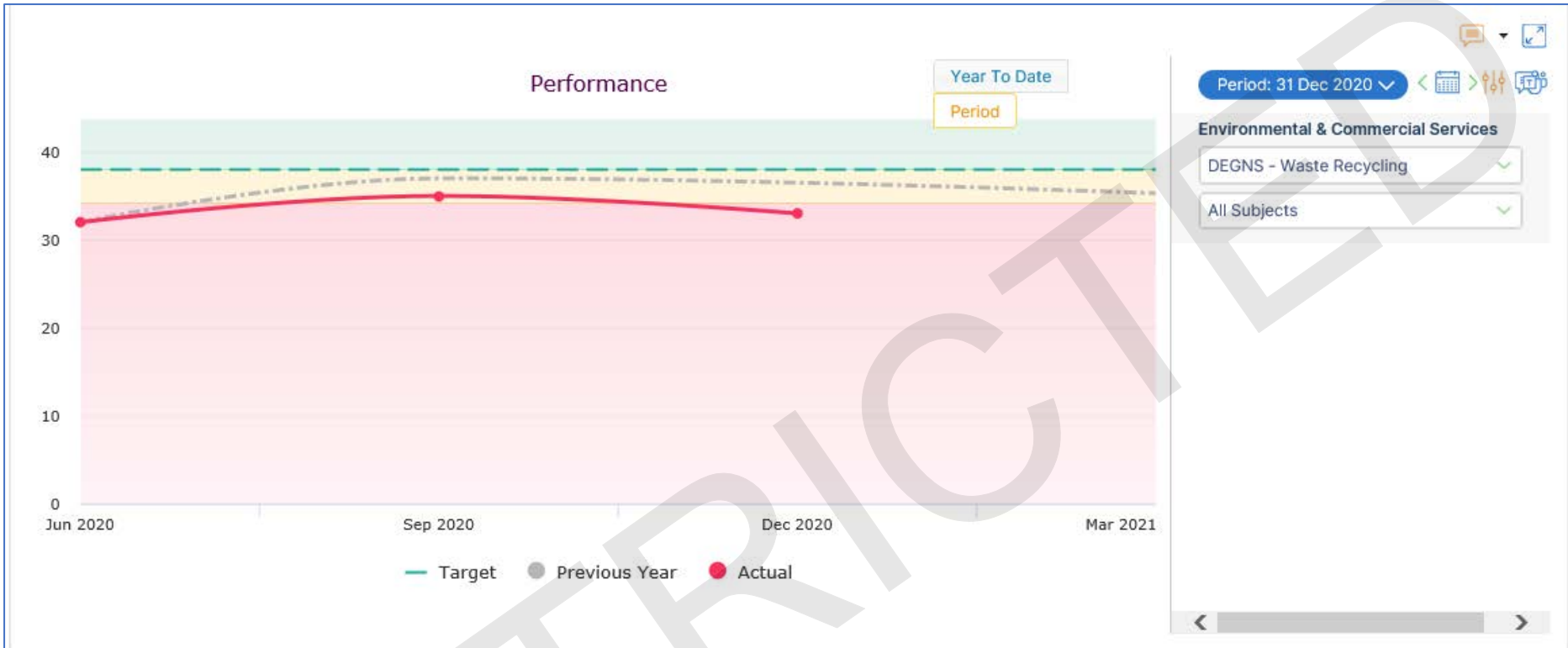
Red: Waste recycling

Waste recycling has dipped this period
Recorded crime figure for Q3 to follow

Planning Pattern

Annual Quarterly

Corporate Priority	Measure of Success	December 2020						Corporate Performance Report
		Type of Measurement	Current Year Actual	Current Year Target	DoT	Baseline 2 Years Ago	Baseline 1 Year Ago	
Cleaner, Greener, Safer	DEGNS - Recorded crime	National	8.36	7.24	?		8.36	
	DEGNS - Waste Recycling	National	33%	38%	✖	31%	37%	





Performance Report

Promoting health, education, culture & wellbeing

Corporate Priority

Promoting health, education, culture & wellbeing ✓

Performance Headlines

Planning Pattern

Annual Quarterly

Direction of Travel



1

Count of Red Performance Measures

1

Count of Amber Performance Measures

1

Count of Green Performance Measures

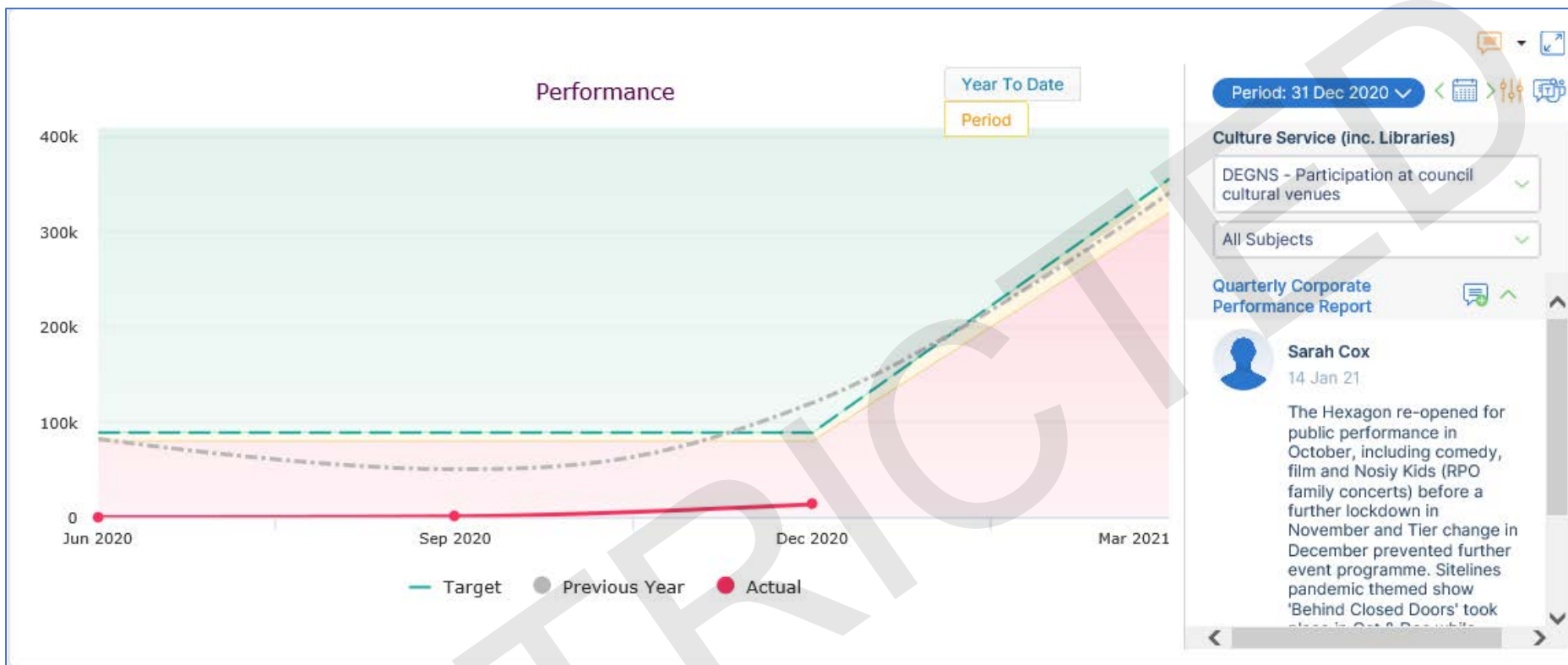
Participation at Council cultural venues has increased this period despite the lockdown
 Secondary school fixed term exclusions dipped compared to Q2
 Schools rated good or outstanding is unchanged (95%)(not included in DOT)

Red: Smoking Prevalence - - current smoke-adults routine & manual occupations
 Amber: Overweight adults
 Green: Exclusions (compared to target)

Planning Pattern

Annual Qu

Corporate Priority	Measure of Success	December 2020						Corporate Performance Report
		Type of Measurement	Current Year Actual	Current Year Target	DoT	Baseline 2 Years Ago	Baseline 1 Year Ago	
Promoting health, education, culture & wellbeing	BFFC - Secondary school fixed term exclusions	National	410.00	670.00	🔴			The impact of removing compulsory education during Covid-19 has resulted in a significant reduction for the period. Although an increase on Q2. Cumulative indicator
	DEGNS - Participation at council cultural venues	Local	13,679	88,750	🟢		120,100	The Hexagon re-opened for public performance in October, including comedy, film and Nosiy Kids (RPO family concerts) before a further lockdown in November and Tier change in December prevented further event programme. Sitelines pandemic themed show 'Behind Closed Doors' took place in Oct & Dec while restrictions allowed. The Museum was open for pre-booked visits where restrictions allowed.





Performance Report

Fit for the Future

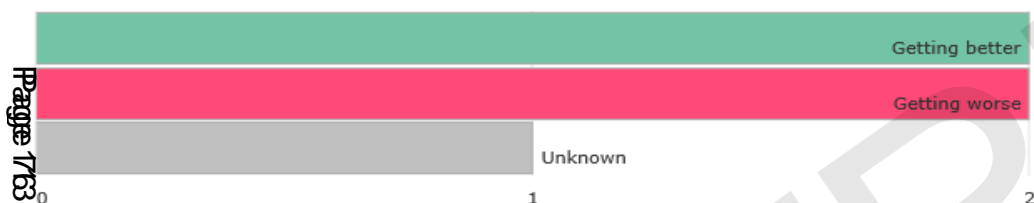
Corporate Priority
Fit for the Future

Performance Headlines

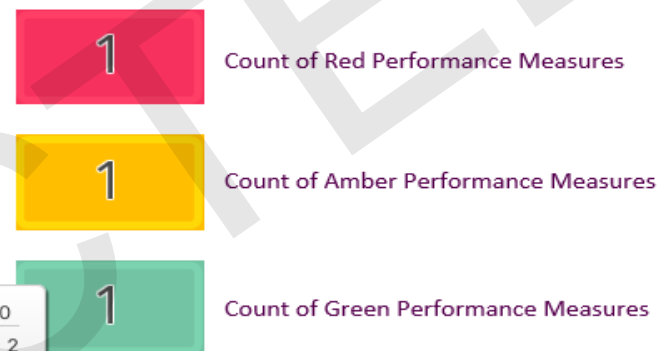
Planning Pattern

Annual Monthly Quarterly

Direction of Travel



Actual, 31/12/2020
Getting worse 2



Amber: Business Rates
Green: Customer Satisfaction

Council Tax & Business Rates collection improved compared to previous month Agency spend increased and Customer satisfaction dipped slightly compared to previous month Take up of online visits getting better (not included in numbers above as monitored quarterly)

Planning Pattern

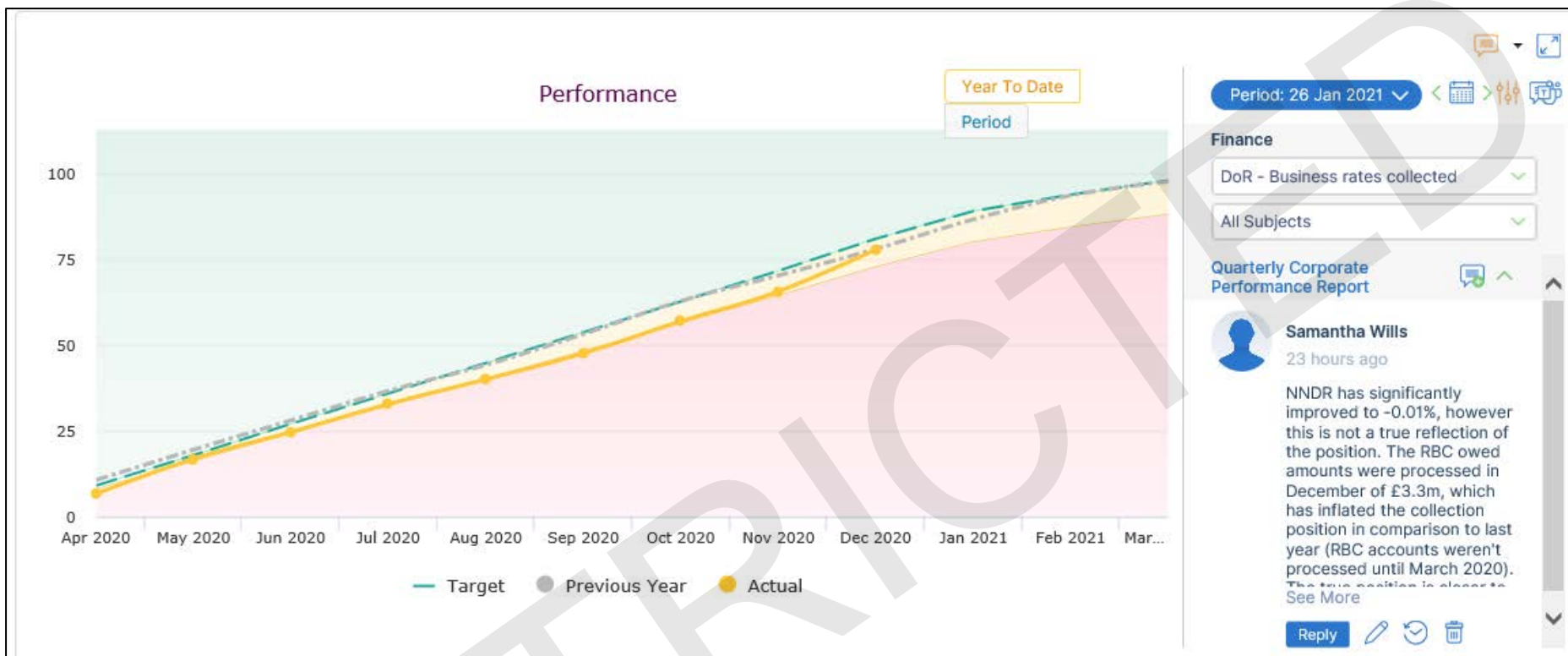
Annual Monthly Quarterly

Corporate Priority	Measure of Success	December 2020						
		Type of Measurement	Current Year Actual	Current Year Target	DoT	Baseline 2 Years Ago	Baseline 1 Year Ago	Corporate Performance Report
Fit for the Future	ALL - Delivery of medium term financial	Local	146,906	150,920	?	140,423	129,688	Collection is 0.77% behind position last year and 1.92% behind in month target set to achieve 97.50%. We started the financial year with an increased debit from last year of 4.26% at £111.6m, and have seen the overall debit reduce this month to the same starting value of £111.6m (to bear in mind the £812k CTS hardship which makes the debit change appear lower than it actually is, plus increased CTS claimants). We anticipated a reduced collection as a result of Covid-19 and the removal of further recovery. Bench marking with neighboring boroughs still demonstrates a lesser reduction that they are experiencing, we are the lowest at 0.77%, with the highest at 4.57%. We are continuing to proactively contact our customers to maintain payments. We have produced 3 summons batch jobs to date, with the first virtual liability order hearing on 20th Jan.
	DoR - Business rates collected	National	78%	81%	↕	79%	78%	

Corporate Priority	Measure of Success	December 2020						Corporate Performance Report
		Type of Measurement	Current Year Actual	Current Year Target	DoT	Baseline 2 Years Ago	Baseline 1 Year Ago	
	DoR - Council tax collected	National	82	84	↓	83	83	Collection is 0.77% behind position last year and 1.92% behind in month target set to achieve 97.50%. We started the financial year with an increased debit from last year of 4.26% at £111.6m, and have seen the overall debit reduce this month to the same starting value of £111.6m (to bear in mind the £812k CTS hardship which makes the debit change appear lower than it actually is, plus increased CTS claimants). We anticipated a reduced collection as a result of Covid-19 and the removal of further recovery. Benchmarking with neighboring boroughs still demonstrates a lesser reduction that they are experiencing, we are the lowest at 0.77%, with the highest at 4.57%. We are continuing to proactively contact our customers to maintain payments. We have produced 3 summons batch jobs to date, with the first virtual liability order hearing on 20th Jan.
	DoR - Customer satisfaction with front of house	Local	92%	86%	↓	81%	95%	

Planning Pattern

Corporate Priority	Measure of Success	December 2020						Corporate Performance Report
		Type of Measurement	Current Year Actual	Current Year Target	DoT	Baseline 2 Years Ago	Baseline 1 Year Ago	
Fit for the Future	DoR - Take up of online services	Local	115,189	88,468	↓		91,266	



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Type	Grant	Announced	Purpose	Workstream Lead	Ringfenced	Duration	Allocation £	Underspend Recouped?
Support for Businesses	Small Business Grant Fund/Retail, Hospitality and Leisure Grant Fund	March 2020	In response to the Coronavirus, COVID-19, the government announced there would be support for small businesses, and businesses in the retail, hospitality and leisure sectors.	Sam Wills	Yes	2020/21 (closed)	28,395,000	Yes
Support for Businesses	Local Authority Discretionary Fund	March 2020	This grant scheme widens access to support to businesses who are struggling to survive due to the Corona virus shutdown but are unable to access other grant funding.	Sam Wills	Yes	2020/21	1,419,750	Yes
Support for Businesses	Local Restrictions Support Grant	November 2020	A single grant to cover the four-week period of Lockdown 2 to be paid to each eligible business.	Sam Wills	Yes	Nov-20	3,235,600	Yes
Support for Businesses	Additional Restrictions Grant	November 2020	One-off lump sum payment of £20 per head when LCAL 3 or widespread national restrictions are imposed. The funding is to support closed business that do not directly pay business rates as well as businesses that whilst not closed are impacted by the closures. Authorities will not receive additional funding under this grant scheme regardless of the number of times they re-enter national or LCAL 3 restrictions during the period up to 31st March 2022	Sam Wills	Yes	2020/21 & 2021/22	3,291,714	Yes
Support for Businesses	Christmas Support Payment for wet-led pubs	December 2020	Grant of £1000 for wet led pubs Xmas Payment	Sam Wills	Yes	One-off	64,000	Yes
Support for Individuals	Council Tax Hardship Fund	March 2020	To provide council tax relief, alongside existing local council tax support schemes.	Sam Wills	Yes	One-off	952,799	Yes
Support for Individuals	Local Emergency Assistance Grants for Food and Essential Supplies	July 2020	The Local Authority Emergency Assistance Grant for Food and Essential Supplies is for local authorities in England to use to support people who are struggling to afford food and other essentials due to COVID-19.	Kate Graefe/Zelda Wolfe	No	2020/21	172,137	TBC
Support for Individuals	Test & Trace	June 2020	To provide support to local authorities in England towards expenditure lawfully incurred or to be incurred in relation to the mitigation against and management of local outbreaks of COVID-19.	David Munday	Yes	2020/21	901,002	No
Support for Individuals	Clinically Extremely Vulnerable	November 2020	To deliver the activities and outcomes outlined in the Shielding Framework.	Isabel Edgar Briancon	No	Nov-20	68,000	No
Support for Individuals	Covid Winter Grant Scheme	November 2020	The Winter Grant Scheme will enable LAs to provide support to families with children, other vulnerable households and individuals from early December 2020 and covers the period until the end of March 2021.	Sam Wills/Deborah Glassbrook	Yes	2020/21	464,498	Yes
Support for Local Authorities	Test & Trace Support Grant	June 2020	A single grant of £500 to cover the Isolation period of to be paid to each eligible resident	Sam Wills	Yes	2020/21 (Oct-Jan)	72,000	Yes
Support for Local Authorities	Test & Trace Support Discretionary Grant	June 2020	A single discretionary grant of £500 to cover the Isolation period of to be paid to each eligible resident	Sam Wills	Yes	2020/21 (Oct-Jan)	84,000	No
Support for Local Authorities	Local Authority Enforcement & Compliance	October 2020	To provide support to district and unitary authorities including metropolitan borough and London borough councils in England towards expenditure lawfully incurred or to be incurred by them in relation to COVID-19 related enforcement and compliance activity.	James Crosbie	No	One-off	86,879	No

Type	Grant	Announced	Purpose	Workstream Lead	Ringfenced	Duration	Allocation £	Underspend Recouped?	
Support for Local Authorities	Infection Control Grant Round 1	May 2020	To support adult social care providers, including those with whom the local authority does not have a contract, to reduce the rate of COVID-19 transmission in and between care homes and support wider workforce resilience.	Melissa Wise	Yes	2020/21	1,168,952	Yes	
Support for Local Authorities	Infection Control Grant Round 2	October 2020	To support adult social care providers, including those with whom the local authority does not have a contract, to reduce the rate of COVID-19 transmission in and between care homes and support wider workforce resilience.	Melissa Wise	Yes	2020/21	1,324,417	Yes	
Support for Local Authorities	Contain Outbreak Management Fund	October 2020	To support LA's to put additional public health and outbreak response measures in place due to the County going into national restrictions.	David Munday	No	2020/21	1,294,240	No	
Support for Local Authorities	Next Steps Accommodation Programme	June 2020	The funding can cover a range of interventions, from moves into the private rented sector, to extending or procuring interim accommodation such as hotels or student accommodation and supporting individuals to reconnect with friends or family	Bryony Hall	Yes	2020/21	761,241	No	
Support for Local Authorities	Cold Weather Fund	October 2020	To support councils to help to keep rough sleepers safe this winter	Bryony Hall	Yes	2020/21	90,000	No	
Support for Local Authorities	The Protect Programme	November 2020	This funding is for the sole purpose of delivering Protect Program funded services for people sleeping rough.	Bryony Hall	Yes	2020/21	90,480	No	
Support for Local Authorities	Re-opening High Streets Safely	May 2020	To support the safe reopening of high streets and other commercial areas. The money will allow local authorities in England to put in place additional measures to establish a safe trading environment for businesses and customers, particularly in high streets	Chris Maddocks	Yes	2020/21	144,780	Yes	
Support for Local Authorities	Active Travel Fund - Tranche 1	May 2020	To create safe space for cycling and walking	Chris Maddocks	Yes	2020/21	221,250	Yes	
Support for Local Authorities	Active Travel Fund - Tranche 2	November 2020	To create safe space for cycling and walking	Chris Maddocks	Yes	2021/22	1,179,000	Yes	
Support for Local Authorities	Travel Demand Management	August 2020	To provide support to manage travel demand when schools returned from September 2020 onwards	Chris Maddocks	Yes	2020/21	175,000	Yes	
Support for Local Authorities	Home to School Transport	August 2020	To add additional home to school transport to enable full return to education from September 2020 onwards	Chris Maddocks	Yes	Sep 2020 onwards	124,140	Yes	
Support for Local Authorities	Covid Bus Services Support	August 2020	To maintain contract bus services at pre-COVID levels	Chris Maddocks	Yes	April 2020 onwards	390,232	Yes	
Specific Grant Funding							Total	46,171,111	

Type	Grant	Announced	Purpose	Workstream Lead	Ringfenced	Duration	Allocation £	Underspend Recouped?	
Support for Local Authorities	Coronavirus Emergency Funding (4 Tranches)	March 2020- October 2020	General unringfenced support funding to Local Authorities	N/A	No	2020/21	13,269,406	No	
Support for Local Authorities	Sales, Fees & charges Income Compensation Scheme	July 2020	To reimburse councils for eligible lost income from sales, fees, and charges	N/A	No	2020/21	3,185,963	No	
Support for Local Authorities	COVID Business Rates Reliefs (billing only) (£m)	April 2020	Non-domestic rates relief issued as a section 31 grant in response to Covid-19	N/A	No	2020/21	53,591,251	No	
General Support Grant Funding							Total	70,046,620	

READING BOROUGH COUNCIL

REPORT BY EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR OF RESOURCES

TO:	POLICY COMMITTEE (ACTING AS SOLE MEMBER FOR BRIGHTER FUTURES FOR CHILDREN)		
DATE:	8 MARCH 2020		
TITLE:	BRIGHTER FUTURES FOR CHILDREN LIMITED - GOVERNANCE & RESERVED MATTERS		
LEAD COUNCILLORS:	CLLR JASON BROCK CLLR LIZ TERRY CLLR ASHLEY PEARCE	PORTFOLIOS:	CORPORATE GOVERNANCE CHILDREN'S SERVICES EDUCATION
SERVICE:	N/A	WARDS:	BOROUGHWIDE
LEAD OFFICER:	KATE GRAEFE	TEL:	0118 937 4132
JOB TITLE:	ASSISTANT DIRECTOR OF PROCUREMENT AND CONTRACTS	E-MAIL:	kate.graefe@reading.gov.uk

1. PURPOSE OF REPORT AND EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

- 1.1 To report to the Policy Committee in its capacity as the sole member of Brighter Futures for Children Ltd.
- 1.2 To make decisions as sole member regarding the ongoing Company Executive Leadership Team and Board.

2. RECOMMENDED ACTION

2.1 For Policy Committee

- (a) to endorse the continuation of the amended role of the Executive Chair;
- (b) to extend the appointment of the the interim Executive Director of Finance and Resources as a Company Director until 31 December 2021;
- (c) to extend the waiver of the requirement in the Articles for the interim Executive Director of Finance and Resources to be an employee of the Company until 31 December 2021;
- (d) To approve the reappointment of Tony Byrne, Nicola Gilham and Paul Snell as Non-Executive Directors of Brighter Futures for Children for a second term of office (three years) from 15 November 2021 until 14 November 2024;
- (e) To endorse the recruitment of a further Non-Executive Director to provide additional breadth of skills and support succession planning for the Board.

3. BACKGROUND

- 3.1 In October 2018 the Council approved the formation of a separate Company for the delivery of Children's Services in Reading; Brighter Futures for Children Limited (BFfC). The Company subsequently began delivery of services in December 2018.

- 3.2 BFFC is a company limited by guarantee without share capital. Its sole member is Reading Borough Council and the Council has several rights under the Articles of Association (the Company constitution).
- 3.3 Following the departure of the Managing Director on 7 September 2020, the BFFC Board requested time to take stock of the Company's management requirements and to formulate a management structure for the longer term with interim management provisions agreed by Policy Committee in its role as sole member on 28 September 2020. (At Company inception and until the departure of the Managing Director, the Executive Leadership Team structure was comprised of the MD, the Executive Director for Children's Services and the Executive Director for Finance and Resources.)
- 3.4 The Company has now considered its need for a Managing Director and the appropriate skills mix for the future Executive Leadership Team. The Company has determined that it doesn't wish to operate with a MD role in future and that the current leadership arrangements have provided the leadership that the Company needs. The Company therefore wishes to extend the current interim arrangements a) for the Chair on an ongoing basis and b) for the Interim Executive Director of Finance and Resources from its current end of 31 March 2021 to 31 December 2021. Until 31 December 2020, the Executive Leadership Team will comprise the Chair, the EDCS and the Interim Executive Director of Finance and Resources. The Company has also conducted a skills assessment of the Board and concluded that the skills of the current Non-Executive Directors align with the Company requirements. The need for an additional Non-Executive Director has also been identified, to both provide additional breadth of skills to the Board as well as support future continuity and succession planning.
- 3.5 Members are being asked to support the Company's request that stability and succession planning is secured through the following actions:
- a. to endorse the continuation of the amended role for the Chair
 - b. to extend the appointment of the interim Executive Director of Finance and Resources as a Company Director until 31 December 2021
 - c. to extend the waiver of the requirement in the Articles for the interim Executive Director of Finance and Resources to be an employee of the Company until 31 December 2021
 - d. to approve the reappointment of Tony Byrne, Nicola Gilham and Paul Snell as Non-Executive Directors of Brighter Futures for Children for a second term of office (three years) from 15 November 2021 to 14 November 2021.
 - e. to endorse the recruitment of a further Non-Executive Director with significant expertise and experience at a senior level in Education and/or with commissioning, commercial and business skills.
- 3.6 The Company is now no longer in intervention. However, the Chair has consulted with the DfE about these extended interim arrangements who remain supportive.

4. PROPOSALS

Composition of the Board & appointment of a Director

- 4.3 The Managing Director of the Company ceased employment with effect from 7 September 2020. He resigned from the Board on the same day. This means that the Board is now comprised of the following Directors:
- Executive Director for Children's Services (DCS) (an Executive Director)
 - The Chair
 - The Council nominated Director (a non-executive Director)
 - Three other independent non-executive Directors

- 4.4 The minimum requirements for the Board in Article 9.2 are specified as follows:
- The Chair
 - At least one Executive Director in addition to the EDCS
 - At least one non-executive Director
 - The Council nominated Director
- 4.5 These minimum requirements were built into the Articles to ensure a balanced Board. Whilst the Managing Director counted as an Executive Director, his departure now means that the Board is not in accordance with the minimum requirements.
- 4.6 Article 9.3(b) specifies that whilst there are fewer Directors than specified by Article 9.2 then the only business that the Board can transact is the appointment or replacement of Directors.
- 4.7 At the Board meeting on 24 September the BfFC Board resolved to appoint, subject to the approval of the Council, an additional (Executive) Director namely the Interim Executive Director of Finance and Resources, Richard Harbord. Richard Harbord's appointment was further approved by the Council at Policy Committee on 28 September 2020.
- 4.8 The appointment of an additional Executive Director is a Reserved Matter, and the Council's consent is required.
- 4.9 It is proposed that the Council consents to the extension of the appointment of the additional Executive Director until 31 December 2021. This will give Mr Harbord the authority he needs to be able to fulfil the duties of the Executive Director position. It will also ensure that the Board is able to transact the full range of decisions required to progress the business of the Company.

Waiver of the Articles

- 4.10 Article 9.4 specifies that Executive Directors (other than the EDCS) must be employees of the Company. This was specified for the stability of the Company. However, in his interim position, Mr Harbord is not an employee of the Company but is employed on a contract for services. Given that his appointment to the Board is a temporary measure designed to bring stability to the Company in the interim before the longer term position can be delivered, then it is necessary for the Council to consider if it will extend the grant of a waiver to the Articles originally agreed on 28 September 2020 and allow the interim appointment of Mr Harbord until 31 December 2021 as outlined. Mr Harbord has indicated that he is willing to serve in this capacity.

Options Proposed

- 4.11 In its capacity as the sole member of the Company, Policy Committee is asked to approve all these arrangements:
- To endorse the additional duties of the Chair and to communicate this to the DfE
 - To appoint an additional Executive Director for a time limited assignment
 - To grant a waiver from the Articles for the Executive Director to be appointed on a contract for services
 - To reappoint the three Non-executive Directors for a second term of office

5. CONTRIBUTION TO STRATEGIC AIMS

- 5.1 In Spring 2019 the Council refreshed its Corporate Plan priorities:

1. Securing the economic success of Reading and provision of job opportunities

2. Ensuring access to decent housing to meet local needs
 3. To protect and enhance the lives of vulnerable adults and children
 4. Keeping Reading's environment clean, green and safe
 5. Ensuring that there are good education, leisure and cultural opportunities for people in Reading
 6. Ensuring the Council is fit for the future
- 5.2 This proposal aligns with the priority to ensure there is a “comprehensive transformation plan delivered by our Children’s Company - Brighter Futures for Children”. Without an effective functioning Board, limited progress will be made towards the Corporate Plan priority.

6. ENVIRONMENTAL AND CLIMATE IMPLICATIONS

- 6.1 The Council declared a Climate Emergency at its meeting on 26 February 2019 (Minute 48 refers).
- 6.2 There are no environmental or climate change implications arising from this report.

7. COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT AND INFORMATION

- 7.1 Not applicable

8. EQUALITY IMPACT ASSESSMENT

- 8.1 Under the Equality Act 2010, Section 149, a public authority must, in the exercise of its functions, have due regard to the need to—
- eliminate discrimination, harassment, victimisation and any other conduct that is prohibited by or under this Act;
 - advance equality of opportunity between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it;
 - foster good relations between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it.
- 8.2 An Equality Impact Assessment is not relevant to the requested decisions.

9. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

- 9.1 Covered in the main body of the report.

10. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- 10.1 The costs for the Chair are currently met by the DfE. Now that intervention has been lifted, RBC will fund BFfC for the costs of the Chair, the day rate being that as openly advertised. This does not change the contract sum to be paid to BFfC for FY2021/22, as already provisioned in the Council MTFP and BFfC Business Plan.
- 10.2 The costs of the Interim Executive Director for Finance and Resources will be met from the Company Budget. The Interim Executive Director will not receive any additional remuneration as a result of his Board appointment. The agreed day rate for the Interim Executive has been confirmed as appropriate for the level of role and responsibility by both BFfC and RBC HR.

11. BACKGROUND PAPERS

- 11.1 There are none.

READING BOROUGH COUNCIL

REPORT BY EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR OF RESOURCES

TO:	POLICY COMMITTEE (ACTING AS SOLE MEMBER FOR BRIGHTER FUTURES FOR CHILDREN)		
DATE:	8 MARCH 2021		
TITLE:	BRIGHTER FUTURES FOR CHILDREN 2021/2022 BUSINESS PLAN		
LEAD COUNCILLORS:	CLLR JASON BROCK, CLLR LIZ TERRY, CLLR ASHLEY PEARCE,	PORTFOLIO:	LEADER OF THE COUNCIL, LEAD COUNCILLOR FOR CHILDREN, LEAD COUNCILLOR FOR EDUCATION
SERVICE:	PROCUREMENT & CONTRACTS	WARDS:	ALL
LEAD OFFICER:	KATE GRAEFE	TEL:	0118 937 4132/ 74132
JOB TITLE:	ASSISTANT DIRECTOR FOR PROCUREMENT & CONTRACTS	E-MAIL:	kate.graefe@reading.gov.uk

1. PURPOSE OF REPORT AND EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

- 1.1 Brighter Futures for Children (BFfC) is a wholly owned company of Reading Borough Council. The company's Articles of Association set out its obligations in terms of reporting to the Council as Sole Member as well as the matters which are reserved to the Sole Member.
- 1.2 The Business Plan appended at Appendix 1 has been submitted by the Company in response to its obligation to agree an annual Business Plan and contract sum, a matter reserved to the Sole Member.
- 1.3 This covering report sets out the key points arising from the Company's Business Plan.

2. RECOMMENDED ACTION

It is recommended that Policy Committee, in its capacity as sole member for BFfC:

- 2.1 Agrees the Company's Business Plan and contract sum for 2021/22 as set out in Appendix 1 and 4.5 of this report
- 2.2 Notes and agrees the provision for transformation funding as set out in 4.1 and 10.2 of this report

Appendix 1: BFfC Business Plan 2021/22

3. BACKGROUND AND WORK TO DATE

- 3.1 The Council has 100% ownership of BFfC, which is run by a senior management team reporting to the Company board of directors. In turn, the Board reports to the Council (Policy Committee) as its sole member.
- 3.2 Policy Committee acting as sole member/ shareholder for BFfC receives:

- An annual report from BfC on performance (contract and financial);
 - An annual report from BfC on the Company's Business Plan;
- 3.3 The agreement of the BfC Business Plan is a reserved matter, requiring the approval of Policy Committee in its capacity as sole member. Policy Committee approved the BfC Business Plan for 2010-22 on the 9th March 2020.

4. BfC BUSINESS PLAN

- 4.1 The BfC Business Plan continues to build on the improvement journey progress to date, such improvement being demonstrated through both a revised Ofsted rating across all areas improving from Inadequate to Requires Improvement to be Good in September 2019 and services now coming out of intervention in February 2021. The Business Plan incorporates a revised Transformation Programme, which still contains five workstreams, within which there is an updated and refocused list of 14 projects. The revised list of the Transformation Programme projects can be found at section 6.4 (page 13) of the Business Plan. To support this, provision has been made within the Council MTFS for £1.5m transformation funding.
- 4.2 A key part of improving services for children and families includes investment being made for provision of additional SEND places, with £4m provisioned in the capital programme for FY2021/22 and which will further support Company savings delivery through fewer placements being made outside the borough.
- 4.3 Workforce planning remains a key part of the Company service improvement journey. There remains a commitment to better understand the underlying issues and a shared priority to reduce usage of agency social workers.
- 4.4 The Business Plan comes at a time when the Company as well as the Council are still operating in 'response' to the current pandemic, with the Children's Commissioner, Anne Longfield, speaking about COVID-19 'hiding' abuse and the potential for further increase in demand for services. The Company have and continue to mitigate risk of such uncovered demand through increased contacts for the most vulnerable contacts.
- 4.5 In agreeing the FY2021/22 Business Plan, Policy Committee (acting as sole member), is especially asked to note: the Council has made provision for a contract sum of £47,436,300, a reduction of £985k from the FY2020/21 figure. This includes £6.76m for leases and services provided by RBC via Support Service Level Agreements.

5. CONTRIBUTION TO STRATEGIC AIMS

- 5.1 All elements within this report are focused on the Corporate Plan priorities of: Ensuring the Council is fit for the future and Protecting and enhancing the lives of vulnerable adults and children.
- 5.2 Performance in delivery of these aims is monitored via the Service Delivery contract between RBC and BfC and associated KPIs. The contract KPIs are to remain as previously agreed for FY2021/22

6. ENVIRONMENTAL IMPLICATIONS

- 6.1 No environmental implications arising from this report. As stated within the BfC Business Plan, BfC commit to supporting Reading Borough Council's Corporate Plan and to mirror the Council's commitment to achieving a carbon neutral borough by 2030. BfC will also review our transport, energy and other aspects of their carbon footprint, seeking to reduce this alongside the council and will also continue to work

with schools in how they, in turn, support delivery against the overall carbon neutral objective.

7. COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT AND INFORMATION

- 7.1 No community engagement has been carried out or is required in the creation of or as a result of this report.

8. EQUALITY IMPACT ASSESSMENT

- 8.1 In addition to the Human Rights Act 1998 the Council is required to comply with the Equalities Act 2010. Section 149 of the Equalities Act 2010 requires the Council to have due regard to the need to:

- eliminate discrimination, harassment, victimisation and any other conduct
- that is prohibited by or under this Act;
- advance equality of opportunity between persons who share a relevant
- protected characteristic and persons who do not share it;
- foster good relations between persons who share a relevant protected
- characteristic and persons who do not share it.

- 8.2 An Equality Impact Assessment has not been undertaken in the preparation of this report.

9. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

- 9.1 The agreement to the Business Plan for BFfC is a reserved matter under the Articles of Association for the Company. This requires agreement to the plan via Policy Committee acting as sole member for the Company.

10. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- 10.1 The proposed Contract Sum for BFfC for FY2021/22 as stated in this report has been provisioned for within the MTFS, to be agreed at Council on the 23rd February 2021. This figure includes proposals for £4.2m savings.

- 10.2 The Company's FY2020/21 Forecasted Outturn at Period 9 totals a pressure of £0.239m based on the continued successful outcome of the recovery plan and opportunities. Further work is underway to reduce the deficit to breakeven by the 31st March 2021.

- 10.3 The Council has made provision for transformation funding within its MTFS for FY2021/22 of £1.5m. Within this provision, the business cases for £1m of the funding has been agreed (for projects relating to Children in Need, placements and SEN transport). The ability to call on the remaining £500k provision will be subject to agreement of supplied business cases.

11. BACKGROUND PAPERS

- 11.1 None

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Annual Business Plan

Priorities and Finance
2021-22

SUMMARY

This document outlines the business priorities and financial plan for BfC for 2021-22. It complements the overarching BfC Corporate Strategy as well as the children's services priorities in RBC's corporate plan.

OWNER

Di Smith,
Board Chair

VERSION

1.0

DATE

February 2021

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Brighter Futures for Children
Civic Offices, Bridge Street,
Reading RG1 2LU

Registered company in England & Wales:
11293709

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1. Welcome

As Chair of the Board, I am delighted to introduce this year’s business plan which outlines how Brighter Futures for Children will deliver further improvements to children’s services in Reading in 2021/22.

The company is now two years old and having established firm foundations it is time to shift up a gear to deliver our ambition for children, young people and families. We have a number of significant achievements under our belt and a clear understanding of the priorities which must be addressed in the next year.

It is important that our plan recognises and responds to local and national challenges within children’s services and beyond. The ongoing coronavirus pandemic has forced us to think quickly and do things differently. We are grateful for the resilience and adaptability of our staff who have shown outstanding commitment over the past 12 months. Our staff are our most valuable resource and so this plan outlines our commitment to the development of a stable, motivated and agile workforce.

The financial climate for children’s services across the country, and in Reading, is challenging so it is imperative that we operate within our budget, deliver savings and manage demand for our services in order to achieve longer term financial stability. Through our Transformation Programme we plan to address the key drivers of demand, deliver improvement and secure value for money. Improving the availability of local provision for children in our care is just one of the projects central to this work.

In developing the business plan, we have adopted a ‘one company’ approach and this will be essential to effective delivery of the outcomes. Our single organisational focus is on services to children and families and we are committed to ensuring that every part of the company works together in a coordinated and integrated way to maximise our collective endeavour.

Our governance arrangements are more robust and our performance management framework will ensure that senior leaders are more accountable. We expect everyone in the company to know how they are driving forward changes and improvements that lead to better outcomes for children, young people and their families in Reading.

All of this is ‘as one’ with Reading Borough Council’s own corporate plan. RBC has entrusted us not just to deliver children’s services in Reading but to improve outcomes. This document is our 2021/22 map of how we plan to do so.



Di Smith
Chair of the Board

2. Introduction by Reading Borough Council

The challenge of maintaining business as usual, at a time when things are anything but, is one now familiar to us all. Some priorities may have changed, but there are some areas on which we will not compromise. The care and education we provide to children and young people in Reading sits firmly in that category.

While no area of work has been untouched by the pandemic, it is also important to shout about achievements during these difficult times. We are acutely aware of both the short term and long term impact on the wellbeing and mental health of some of the most vulnerable young people and families in our society, for example. Our children's social care team continue to absorb the extra pressures. Whilst the ripples are likely to be felt for years to come, it remains our responsibility to minimise the impact.

The NHS and our adult social care staff have been rightly applauded for their tremendous response, but teachers and teaching staff have also been at the frontline throughout. Classrooms have remained open for children of vital key workers and teachers' summer holidays were spent preparing for the daunting task of all pupils returning to the classroom. Those huge challenges now continue. On behalf of Reading Borough Council, thank you.

Budgets everywhere have of course been hit. As part of the family of services delivered on behalf of the Council, colleagues at Brighter Futures for Children will need to make adjustments, and these have been set out in this latest business plan.

At a time of uncertainty, it can sometimes be necessary to focus on the short term. Getting the basics right is essential, particularly where the care and education of young people is concerned. It is also important to keep at least half an eye on the end game. For everyone at the Council and at BFFC, that remains building on the upward trajectory, which was recognised by Ofsted last year, improvements which would not have been possible without the tremendous ongoing support of our partners at Brighter Futures, health, police and schools. We need to focus our efforts on continuing to develop the vital care, education and support services for children and young people in Reading, so that every child can reach their full potential.

The world may have changed for the time being, but our responsibility to children and young people in Reading has not.



Peter Sloman
Chief Executive
Reading Borough
Council



Cllr Jason Brock
Leader of the Council
Reading Borough
Council



Cllr Liz Terry
Lead Councillor for
Children
Reading Borough
Council



Cllr Ashley Pearce
Lead Councillor for
Education
Reading Borough
Council

3. Context

COVID-19 has, as it has across the world, interrupted our planned activity but it hasn't deterred us from our aim of getting children's services to 'Good' in Reading.

This plan outlines our realigned ambitions and priorities for Year Three, which take account of work we begun during the pandemic but will expand upon – at pace – over the coming year.

We have addressed changes to our delivery model that includes less funding but the same strategic ambition to improve the quality and delivery of children's services in Reading.

The wellbeing and welfare of all Reading children, young people and their families must come first. We must deal with the surge in families' acute distress, a decline in young people's mental health and, after a prolonged period of home schooling, some parents' growing inability to manage their children's challenging behaviour.

We will take a strong stance and continue to proactively respond. The Children's Commissioner Anne Longfield has spoken about COVID-19 'hiding' abuse and we know that demand for our services will increase as a result.

Our staff have – and will continue to – deliver additional support for those children and young people who fall outside the DfE definition of vulnerable, where non-attendance and lack of professional contact is cause for concern. We're doing more virtual and doorstep visits, including children not previously known to us. We have our eyes open.

Data shows that young people's mental health [has worsened substantially](#) during the pandemic. The Opinions and Lifestyle Survey (OPN) that has been monitoring the [social impact of COVID-19](#) has found that young people are more likely than other age groups to report that lockdown has made their mental health worse.

Given the backdrop of the pandemic, we have strengthened our partnerships with schools, academies and the independent sector in Reading. Each state-funded school has an allocated 'go to' person to deal with queries and support. Weekly headteacher dial up meeting and briefings are now the norm, in which we share key messages and in which we give praise and celebrate success.

Our web presence has increased and we have pledged to do more this year. We have created a young people's zone with information on mental and physical wellbeing support and we've done the same for parents and carers. We have put learning and fun activities online, as well as links to the latest government and Public Health England guidance in a 'one stop' information point. We had more than 7,000 visitors in one week. We will continue to provide this support.

Our Early Help teams have quickly adapted to new virtual ways of working. Direct work is focused on new families or those experiencing crisis.

Our youth/detached workers have been on the streets of Reading. They've covered 240 kms, amassing 900 contacts with young people, 300 of whom were regular contacts. They're continuing with this work.

And we've maintained cover in police stations and covered additional 'appropriate adult' work in evenings and weekends. Support has been deployed for young people and their families impacted by significant delays in court hearings.

We know how much we've done but also how much we have to do in 2021/22.

We know we must improve the quality of our delivery while our resources are depleted and our owner – Reading Borough Council – has faced a substantial loss in income. We know we will have to take our own share of impending cuts and to be prepared for that.

Crucial to this is a common understanding by everyone at BfC of the journey ahead and the importance of working together on our revised strategic objectives and priorities, with clear, joint vision and deliverable outcomes.

Work on our different service area plans on a page (see **Appendix 1**) will not be carried out in isolation. The delivery of the right outcomes cut across many areas of the company and we must work together to achieve that. Bringing our children looked after into foster care placements within 20 miles of Reading involves so many teams, all working together on their 'strands' - the Independent Fostering Agency, transformation, commissioning and children's social care...and many more working together as one.

In Year Three we will have clarity over our end-to-end processes and new action plans in place to drive change forward for better outcomes for children and young people.

We have our Architecture for Professional Practice, which is trauma informed and restorative. It's an approach which will run, like a golden thread, through our company and our partners, so we all work collaboratively on children and young people's behalf.

The Senior Leadership Team has the additional skills and expertise needed for a company structure and for the new ways in which we intend to roll out sustainable improvements.

Our Executive Director of Finance & Resources is leading work to stick to our contract sum but to explore additional funding streams and revenue alongside our strategic plans for improvement. Our Executive Director of Children's Services is realigning our focus on frontline practice with a focus on demand management and innovative work in early help, as well as overseeing our strategic approach to working with schools and improving attainment in education, training and employment opportunities. All are crucial to young people's futures, particularly given the current circumstances.

And the Board will continue to offer expertise, challenge and scrutiny of the company and the achievement of objectives it has set for itself.

We are actively working on new and innovative ways to build our reputation and encourage more people to join us and stay with us.

In this plan we have set out our priorities and what we plan to do, alongside our revised financial position, in terms of time-limited grants and allocated funds and how we intend to implement budgetary controls to spend less (but more wisely) to succeed in what we have set out to do.

And, in our plans on a page, we have outlined our approach towards our primary objective, which is to improve services to children, young people and their families in Reading.

4. Our Mission, Vision and Values

Our Vision (direction)

Our overall vision and key purpose is to deliver the best possible opportunities for the children of Reading.

Our Mission (focus)

To unlock all the resources in the borough of Reading to help every child have a happy, healthy and successful life.

Our Values (behaviours)

We continue to promote our company values and embed them in everything we do.



Our commitment

We commit to supporting Reading Borough Council's Corporate Plan and to mirror the council's commitment to achieving a carbon neutral borough by 2030. We will also review our transport, energy and other aspects of our carbon footprint, seeking to reduce this alongside the council. We will also continue to work with schools in how they, in turn, support delivery against the overall carbon neutral objective.

5. Year Three Priorities

Our priorities are based on our local operating context.

In 2020/21, we amended our priorities due to the coronavirus pandemic. We have decided to carry most these into 2021/22 (Year Three), but to consolidate our strategic approach by changing some priorities into enablers and moving some of our key transformation programme projects into business as usual.

This annual business plan should be viewed in line with the BFFC Corporate Strategy, which outlines our long-term strategic approach to improved delivery of children's services in Reading over the next three years. The plan also clearly demonstrates how we align with the overall strategic approach of Reading Borough Council's priorities for children's services, as outline in its corporate plan.

Our list of priorities is followed by an explanation of why we are concentrating on each of these for 2021/22.

- **Priority 1: Deliver transformation of services in all areas of the company to ensure continuous improvement and better outcomes for our children and young people**
- **Priority 2: Make optimal use of resources, deliver best value and scope opportunities for external funding and income generation to maximise our impact for children and young people**
- **Priority 3: Complete end-to-end process mapping and develop and embed a demand management approach for all services**
- **Priority 4: Implement and embed the Early Help approach securing active commitment of community partners**
- **Priority 5: Support education providers to give our children and young people the best start and to promote excellent teaching and learning, especially for those with SEND.**
- **Priority 6: Focus on building a stable workforce of permanent staff**

Priority 1: Deliver transformation of services in all areas of the company to ensure continuous improvement and better outcomes for our children and young people

We have revised and consolidated our Transformation Programme projects. In 2020/21, we closed projects we'd completed, we moved pilot project work with beneficial outcomes into business as usual and agreed projects to carry forward into Year Three.

We have moved away from the traditional project management tools to a more agile method which follows a clear process, where the starting point is why we're doing something (the outcome for children and young people) and then work on the way we do it. Any new project will start in a 'discovery' phase, which will identify what quality and time improvements, as well as savings, are possible.

If viable, it then leads to a business case, where we identify what we'll improve for children and young people, how we'll do it, how much it will cost and what the savings will be before we start work. The project then moves into OKR – Objective Key Results planning, which focuses us on why something needs doing and then getting things done, rather than producing lots of documentation and plans that need constant change.

This approach rapidly highlights the challenges and lets us concentrate on getting things done through confident assessment and also allows alignment with our key corporate priorities.

For example, using analytics to improve referral workflow. We know that many referrals can be rapidly accelerated to the next step without assessor review. We will review this process and investigate automating this so that we respond to referrals more quickly.

The faster deployment of work on key priorities will help us to move to 'excellent' more quickly and focus on the things that matter.

So, in a nutshell, we know what we'll improve, how we'll do it, how much it will cost and what the savings will be before we start work. In addition, all Transformation Programme work in 2021/22 will be closely aligned to our IT strategy and digitalisation, so we futureproof the improvements we introduce.

Priority 2: Make optimal use of resources, deliver best value and scope opportunities for external funding and income generation to maximise our impact for children and young people

Our key priority for 2021/22 is to deliver on budget and, in doing so, deliver services that deliver the best possible outcomes for children and young people in Reading.

An important part of not only improving services but making sure new ways of working are sustainable long term is the ability to innovate. Innovation often means research, exploring different options and piloting new ideas.

It means diversifying, finding ways to package and offer the best of our working practices to the open market, finding companies who might sponsor projects or partner with us, finding ways of reducing debt and controlling our costs. Only then can we introduce the 'new' business as usual and replace the previous 'old' ways of working.

While our Transformation Programme is the key place for this work, we cannot rely on single sources of funding. We have pledged this year to explore two aspects of funding and resources. One is to scope out and find opportunities to bid for monies for specific project work that can identify new ways in which we can work and, in doing so, improve outcomes for children, young people and their families. The other is to explore traded services opportunities, which can help us become self-funding on some areas of our work and can bring in additional income in others, to help fund the work we do.

Priority 3: Complete end-to-end process mapping and develop and embed a demand management approach for all services

No roadmap for future success or any individual service area strategy will succeed if we don't know align every service area strategy to our overarching strategic plan.

But without clear understanding of what our current starting point is and without qualitative data to back up revised approaches and identify new, more effective ways of working, we can't improve.

As one of our employees so clearly put it at one of the two recent all-staff roadshows we've had to discuss our priorities: 'Mapping will identify what's good and what's not'.

We started the process in 2019 and we continue to build on it. We are mapping all of our 'as is' processes and finding innovative and alternative delivery methods. We're identifying what adds value and what doesn't; we're understanding and developing alternative pathways; and, most importantly, we're doing it with BfC staff and those we help – not to them.

We realise that our processes are important as enabler but it's the outcome that matters. An example of this is our work within our placement solutions team, where we have re-looked at placements to make sure a child or young person has the right level of support and is in the right place. This has led to better outcomes for children and reduced cost to the organisation. That is why we are continuing this work into 2021-22.

We will continue with this work until we get it right, the outcome of which will be that we'll spend less time on them and more time on delivery of better services.

Priority 4: Implement and embed the Early Help approach securing active commitment of community partners

Tackling issues which result in children crossing the threshold into statutory social care remains our priority. Building community capacity will prevent cases from escalating. Offering the right help and support at the right time much earlier in the process is fundamental, as is working closely with partners in a multi-agency approach.

Deprivation, domestic abuse, substance misuse and adult mental health all create demand pressures on us but only a partnership consensus around local practice and how we each respond to 'need' will further help us develop creative and impactful responses at the earliest possible point in a child's life. Embedding our trauma informed and restorative approach within BfC and training our partners too will unify our approach.

Early help services are, to us, crucial in the long-term aim to reduce the number of children crossing the social care threshold.

We will continue to be an active participant in the ONE Reading Children & Young People's Partnership and to work collaboratively to reduce the number of referrals into our Children's Single Point of Access.

Through our early help Child in Need pilot project, we are delivering targeted family support and intervention at a higher level of need, working differently and innovatively with children who meet the statutory threshold. We have launched weekly partnership and youth diversion hubs and early indications are that these are helping reduce re-referrals by co-ordinating a partnership response to children and families who need help.

Our approach is showing positive results and will remain a key focus for Year Three.

Priority 5: Support education providers to give our children and young people the best start and to promote excellent teaching and learning, especially for those with SEND.

The pandemic has shone a particular light on the needs of disadvantaged and vulnerable groups and their access to learning.

It has been a disruptive year and evaluating the effectiveness of schools' performance will be almost impossible this year. Cancelled exams, schools closing, opening and closing again will mean we will have little viable school performance data to show how well children and young people have been able to learn. Schools have, understandably, been focused on dealing with the crisis.

We have refocused on the outcomes for children and young people whose schooling has been disrupted by the pandemic. Reading should be one of the top places in the country for educational achievement at all levels. Indeed, 94% of maintained schools are rated 'good' or 'outstanding'. However, we can only be the best if certain groups, especially the vulnerable and disadvantaged, achieve above national averages.

Our focus for 2021/22 is to help schools and pupils through the crisis and to work with them to offer opportunity and provision of support in areas where schooling has been missed. There is talk of summer schools and other initiatives to help support children and young people to catch up on missed schoolwork and we must work creatively with schools to help them achieve. Our focus must be focus on the quality of teaching and outcomes for children and young people.

Alongside this, we are aware that results from the newly published [Mental Health of Children and Young People survey](#) for England indicate that one in six young people aged 11–16 years were identified as having a probable mental disorder during the 2020 national lockdown period (July 2020).

Support for mental health, through our education psychology team, must be a priority area for development and we must strengthen our support in the months ahead. We must ensure that our efforts are inclusive of all children and young people in Reading.

We have continued to build on our partnership with Reading Families Forum, ensuring that we respond to their concerns through the development of our 'you said, we did' approach.

In addition, for children and young people with Education and Health Care Plans, our new approach to quality assurance will ensure we monitor plans so that they capture the voice of the child.

We will continue to work collaboratively with Reading Borough Council on its £4m capital investment plans for the provision of more Reading school places.

The SEND strategy, which is a cornerstone of our approach, will be refreshed and co-produced with our key stakeholders and we will work with RBC to also increase provision in SEND school places so that more children and young people with SEND can attend schools closer to home.

To respond to the demand for school places, we have 2 new schools opening. From September 2023, the River Academy – an eight form of entry secondary school - will open. In addition, the Oak Academy will open from September 2022, catering for children and young people with ASC and SEMH.

Our school improvement team continues to work in partnership with schools to develop our therapeutic thinking approach leading to a reduction in fixed term exclusions in our schools.

Priority 6: Focus on building a stable workforce of permanent staff

Working with children, young people and their families is one of the most important and rewarding jobs - the right person can make the biggest difference to their lives.

However, we also know that demand for the best staff outstrips supply. Therefore, we need to set a standard to attract and retain high calibre social care professionals to our front-line Social Work teams supporting our most vulnerable children and young people.

Our aim is to have a fully resourced, permanent, and highly qualified and competent Social Care workforce. At a time when there is a national shortfall in qualified and experienced Social workers, we will put in place a strategy to make BFFC the employer of choice in this region.

The strategy will have a number of key priorities for BFFC:

- 1) to recruit sufficient permanent high-quality staff with suitable qualifications and experience

2): to retain existing employees by supporting them to carry out their roles effectively, and by ensuring that our total offer for new and existing employees is competitive within the marketplace

3): to create and sustain manageable Social Worker caseloads

4): to facilitate career development through student placements, progression to Advanced Practitioner and Manager

5): to make Brighter Futures a place where everyone is able to contribute and be their best regardless of their backgrounds.

Underneath each priority will be a number of key actions and targets. These targets will be realistic but also challenging. We know that on Key Performance indicators such as turnover, sickness absence and ratios of off payroll workers to establishment we are not performing well. Our targets will in all cases aim to put us in the average for our region with an ultimate aim to being best in class.

Facilitating/enabling objectives:

To achieve our priorities and futureproof our work, we must, in tandem, also achieve the following:

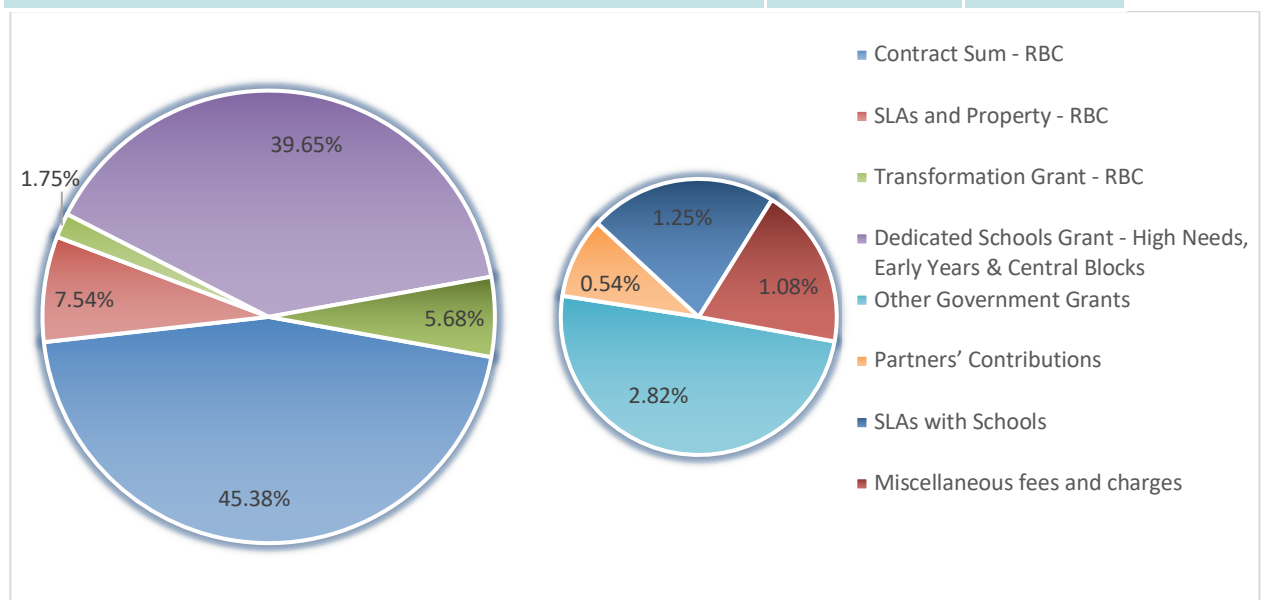
- Develop agile ways of working including increased use of digitalisation
- Engage actively in contract monitoring with Reading Borough Council to seek best possible value for money and quality of service.

These enablers form part of our service area strategies and action plans, as summarised on our 'plans on a page' (see **Appendix 1**). Progress on these is regularly discussed at Senior Leadership Team meetings, reported to Executive Committee meetings, Board committees and to the Board itself.

6. Our Financial Plan

6.1 Sources of Funding 2021/22

Sources of Funding	2021/22 £m	%
Contract Sum - RBC	40.68	45.38%
SLAs and Property - RBC	6.76	7.54%
Transformation - RBC	1.57	1.75%
Dedicated Schools Grant - High Needs, Early Years & Central Blocks	35.55	39.65%
Other Government Grants (includes DFE Transformation)	2.53	2.82%
Partners' Contributions	0.48	0.54%
SLAs with Schools	1.12	1.25%
Miscellaneous fees and charges	0.97	1.08%
TOTAL	89.65	100.00%



6.2 Reading Borough Council

The funding from RBC is for the statutory and non-statutory services for children's services, covering children's social care, early help, adoption and fostering and preventative services and education services. This funding includes the SLAs costs to be recharged to us.

Reading Borough Council – Contract sum and SLAs	54.66%
Government Grants including Dedicated Schools Grant	42.47%
Other income sources – schools SLAs, partners contributions	2.87%

6.3 Government Grants

The Government Grants are administered by Brighter Futures for Children on behalf of RBC, and include the following key grants:

- Dedicated Schools Grant – including Schools (administered by RBC), High Needs, Early Years & Central Blocks (all administered by BFFC).
- Pupil Premium Grant – allocated by the Virtual Head for CLA to Reading’s schools
- Youth Justice Grant – source of funding for the Youth Offending Service.

6.4 Transformation Programme Funding

Additional funding to be secured for the Transformation Programme is essential to deliver a three-year savings programme of £11.2m by March 2022.

It is important for Brighter Futures for Children to transform and deliver value for money and the successful delivery of the savings programme is core to managing current and future levels of demand as well as the relevant inflationary pressures.

Investment in early intervention and prevention, coupled with effective demand management strategies - including development of local placement provision - will enable us to remain within the contract sum. Improving practice will also deliver efficiencies.

The Transformation Programme was set up to deliver sustainable savings and improvement. To date, it is on target. Our bid to RBC for £1.57m funding for 2021/22 was successful and the work it will fund will deliver our savings plan.

For 2021/22 we have decided to continue with the revised priorities we submitted in the last quarter of 2020/21 and a reduced number of transformation programme projects. These projects are a combination of opportunities carried forward from 2020-21 and others that have been newly identified. To ensure that what we change and embed is sustainable for long term improvement.

These projects are a combination of savings outcomes and systems improvement:

WORKSTREAM	PROJECTS
A: Improving Practice Standards	1. Court Proceedings 2. Family Group Conferencing
B: Developing Workforce Excellence	
C: Building Community Capacity	3. ONE Reading Children & Young People’s Partnership 4. Children in Need cases
D. Stronger Stability for Children	5. Re-imagining Foster Care 6. Placement Solutions Team
E: Consolidating Corporate Resilience	7. Direct Payments 8. Enhanced Short Breaks Service 9. Modernising ICPCs 10. End to End Process Mapping 11. End to End Demand Management 12. Contact Centre Review 13. SEND Transport Review 14. Using Analytics to Improve Referral Workflow

6.5 Other Income Sources

Other income sources include SLAs with schools for education services, partnership contributions, health funding, selling of placements to other local authorities, fees and charges and other miscellaneous income.

During 2021/22, we will be looking at additional bids to secure funding for emergency accommodation to support Reading children to stay in local provision, as well as increasing the number of Reading-based foster carers, to reduce our out-of-area placements and associated costs.

6.6 Medium-Term Financial Strategy

Net Operational Budget	2021/22	2022/23	2023/24
	<u>£m</u>	<u>£m</u>	<u>£m</u>
Base Budget	48.42	47.44	46.94
Pay inflation and increments	0.73	0.73	0.74
Contract inflation	0.42	0.49	0.50
Other Pressures	1.97	0	0
Savings	-4.10	-1.72	-1.74
Budget - contract sum excluding SLAs	47.44	46.94	46.44

The contract sum for 2021/22 was agreed at the contract negotiations as £47.44m and included the following adjustments:

- Pay inflation and increments £0.73m
- Contract inflation £0.42m
- Pressures £1.97m
- Savings = £-4.10m

The RBC Core Contract Sum budget figures for the next three years are:

2021/22 - £40.68m

2022/23 - £40.18m

and for 2023/24, £39.68m as shown in the Funding Streams table below:

Funding Streams	21/22	22/23	23/24	TOTAL
	<u>£m</u>	<u>£m</u>	<u>£m</u>	<u>£m</u>
RBC Core Contract Sum	40.68	40.18	39.68	120.54
SLAs pass through including Property	6.76	6.76	6.76	20.27
RBC Transformation Funding	1.57	0	0	1.57
TOTAL	49.01	46.94	46.44	142.38

The Medium-Term Financial Strategy (MTFS) for BFfC is shown in the expenditure budget table below and covers the three-year financial period of 2021/22 to 2023/24. The table shows high level funding requirements for the organisation including our Transformation Programme funding bid to RBC for £1.57m in 2021/22.

Expenditure	2021/22	2022/23	2023/24
	£m	£m	£m
Employee Costs	26.15	25.46	25.66
Running Costs	56.75	55.36	54.66
SLAs	4.50	4.50	4.50
Property - Rents	1.14	1.14	1.14
Property - Facilities Management	1.12	1.12	1.12
Gross Expenditure	89.65	87.58	87.08
<u>Income</u>			
Grant Income	38.08	38.08	38.08
Other Income	2.57	2.57	2.57
Transformation from RBC	1.57	0	0
Total Income	42.21	40.64	40.64
Net Expenditure	47.44	46.94	46.44

The average number of CLA reflected in the overall budget for the next three years is:

	Children Looked After (CLA) numbers
2021/22	270
2022/23	260*
2023/24	250*

**figures include Unaccompanied Asylum Seeking children and 'Others', which means children with special educational and/or disabilities, who are also CLA. All figures are subject to benchmarking exercise*

6.7 Next Steps

Brighter Futures for Children's MTFS does not currently include the impact of increasing commerciality for the company as the pace of our delivery of new and amended traded services were stalled due to the COVID-19 pandemic and its effect on schools.

The two key areas we plan to market and develop funding opportunities for in 2021/22 are (1) increasing the education services (including school improvement and educational psychology services, but not exclusively these) and (2) financial services to schools and academies.

As there is a clear demand for high quality services, BFfC has an opportunity to market its services in Reading and more widely across Berkshire and beyond. This has the potential to become an excellent funding source creating additional income to re-invest in existing and new services. This is now a priority for Year Three (2021/22).

Plan on a Page. The WHO, WHAT, WHERE, WHY AND WHEN for the TRANSFORMATION PROGRAMME 2020-21



WHAT we'll do and WHY

To identify and implement transformational improvements across BfFC.

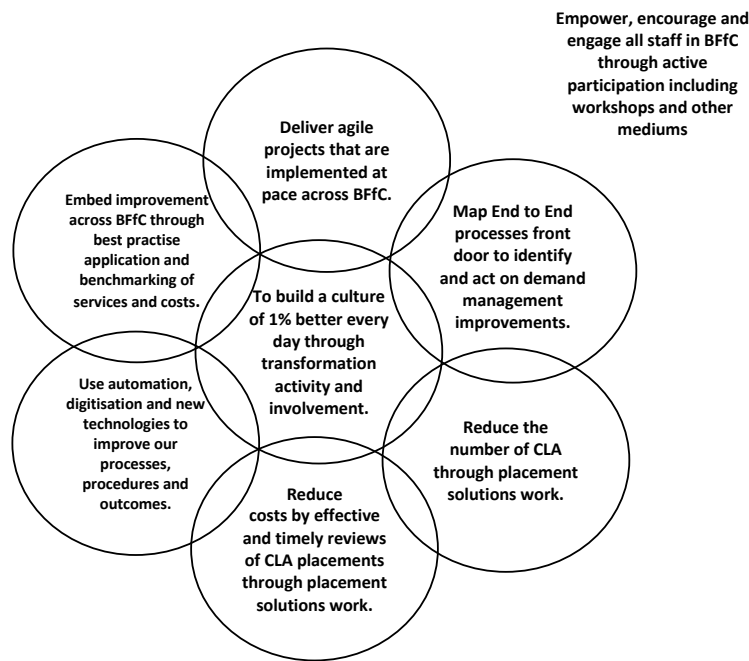
Developing on our previous workstreams of:

- Improving practice standards
- Developing workforce excellence
- Building community capacity and partnership working
- Instigating stronger stability for children
- Consolidating corporate resilience

We will deliver savings in the range of £2.21m-£3.32m that are built up through the use of agile project delivery using discoveries to identify large and small improvements across the organisation.

Building on our successes in 2020-21, learning will also be transferred into day to day operations to enable a culture of continuous improvement and responsibility.

HOW we'll do it AND BY WHEN

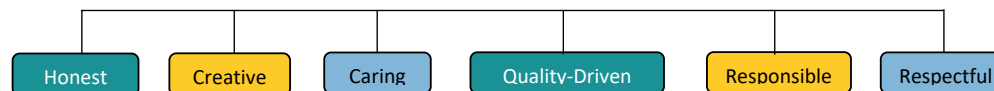


HOW we'll make a difference

EVIDENCE:

- Approved business cases by the Board to 'discovery' findings.
- Payment of transformation funding RBC based on 'discovery' business cases.
- Reduced Placement Costs through the work of the Placement Solutions Team.
- Reduced Children Looked After (CLA) through the work of the Placement Solutions Team.
- Application of technology and digitisation across BfFC reducing costs or improving service quality.
- Improving demand management with our services.
- Ensuring the transfer of knowledge and learning from the Transformation Team into day to day operations.

All of our work is underpinned by our values:



Plan on a Page. The WHO, WHAT, WHERE, WHY AND WHEN for CHILDREN'S SOCIAL CARE 2021-22



WHAT we'll do and WHY

Our priorities will be to address:

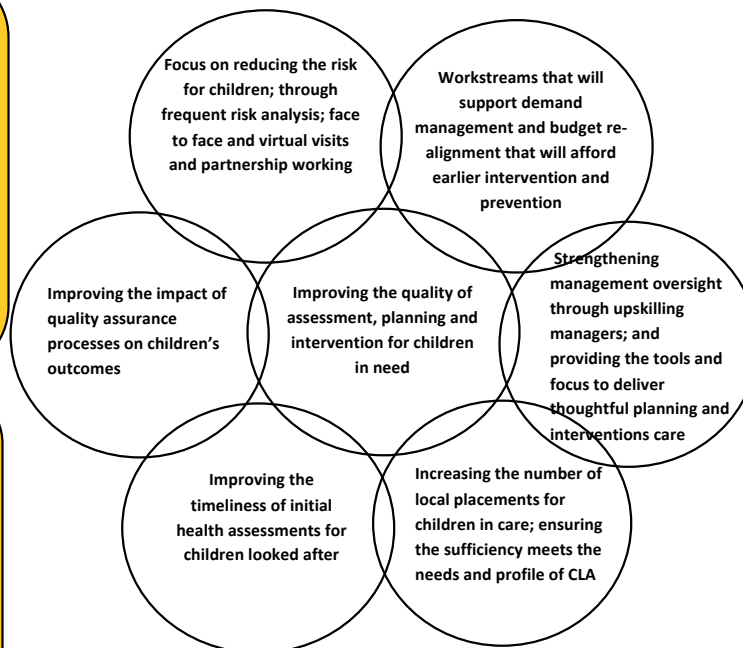
- Our demand management for statutory services – with a rebalance to early intervention and prevention
- The quality of practice; specifically, Children in Need
- Safeguarding all children; through face to face and virtual visits and partnership working
- Strengthening management oversight and direction
- Skilling up and stabilising the workforce

We need to improve to:

- Ensure the right children receive the right service at the right level and the right time
- Help families be as resilient as they can be so children can safely and happily remain at or return home
- Reduce levels of risk and escalation into care proceedings or children becoming looked after

HOW we'll do it AND BY WHEN

All measured target deadlines are by March 2022

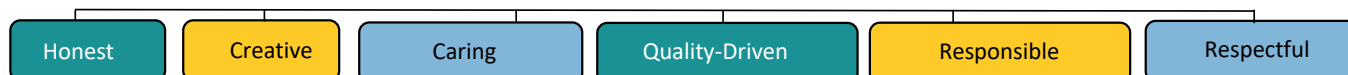


HOW we'll know if we've made a difference

EVIDENCE:

- Improvement on results in KPIs 1-9
- Reduction in the number of children crossing the threshold into statutory children's social care
- Reduction in the number of children subject to child protection plans and/or becoming looked after
- More children will have permanent care arrangements more quickly
- We'll have a more stable, skilled and resilient workforce which delivers proactive, thoughtful and quality social work practice
- More local placements for our children looked after, especially through our Independent Fostering Agency.

All of our work is underpinned by our values:



Plan on a Page: The WHO, WHAT, WHERE, WHY AND WHEN for:

EARLY HELP & PREVENTION 2021-22

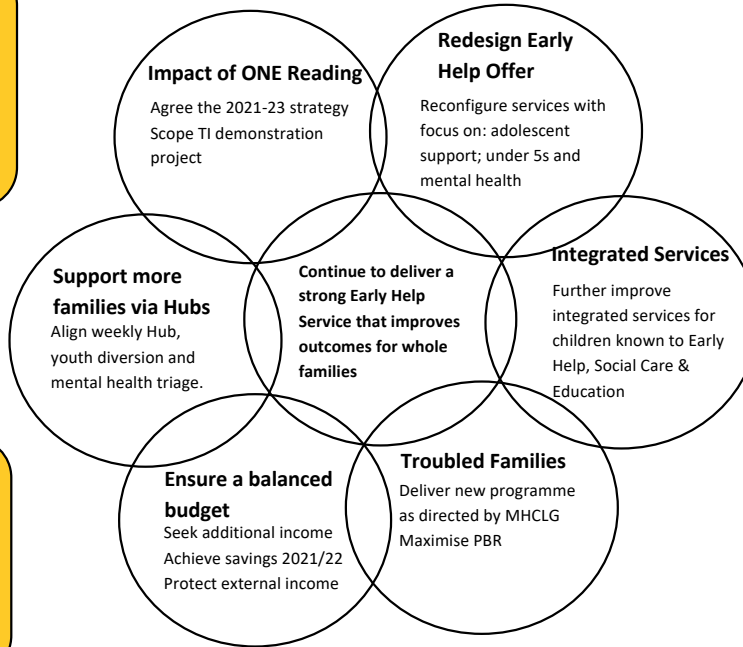
WHAT we'll do and WHY

- Objectives (WHAT):**
- Provide a blended service within budget
 - Continued focus on trauma informed, integrated services
 - Resume targeted group work when feasible
 - Coordinate the agreed 2021/23 Early Intervention & Prevention Strategy
 - Deliver the Troubled Families programme

- Outcomes (WHY):**
- More children & families are supported at Tier 1 – 2B
 - Reduce the demand on Children's Social Care
 - Families receive interventions that improve outcomes

- Priorities (WHAT):**
- Effective blended offer delivered through lockdown restrictions
 - Mainstream CIN project with CSC
 - Streamline ONE Reading CYP partnership
 - Extend number of families supported through the Hub arrangements

HOW we'll do it AND BY WHEN



HOW we'll know if we've made a difference

- EVIDENCE:**
Streamlined arrangements support the Early Intervention Strategy 2021/23.
- Families well supported by in-house service:
- Effective offer in place
 - Timeliness of EHAs
 - Re-referrals to EH or CSC
 - Increase in families supported via Hubs
 - Reduce contacts at CSPoA
- % of PBR claims to MHCLG

All of our work is underpinned by our values:

- Honest
- Creative
- Caring
- Quality-Driven
- Responsible
- Respectful

Plan on a Page. The WHO, WHAT, WHERE, WHY AND WHEN for EDUCATION 2021-22



WHAT we'll do and WHY

Raise standards by:

- Supporting our schools to be good or outstanding
- Complete review of Early Years provision and impact in partnership with Early Help
- Develop traded services offer

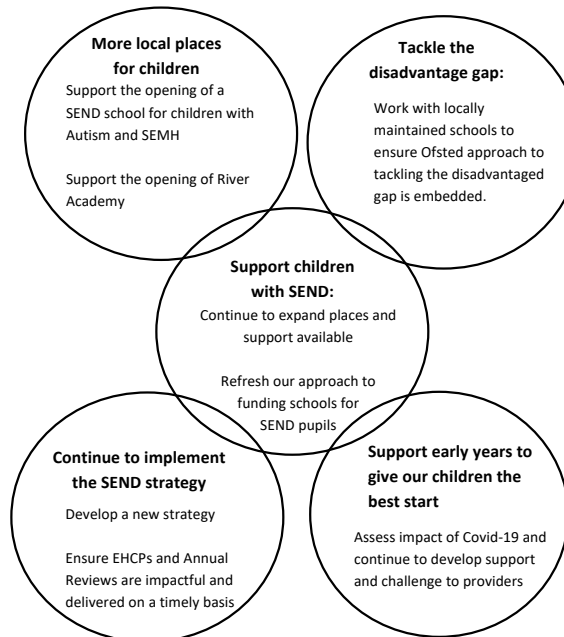
Improve outcomes for CYP with SEND and for CLA

- Continue to expand local provision through the delivery of a SEND school focused on ASC and SEMH
- Continue to support our Virtual School to build on the excellent progress to date

Ensure we meet the educational needs of our children and young people:

- Work with Reading Borough Council to ensure sufficiency and suitability of school places.

HOW we'll do it AND BY WHEN



HOW we'll know if we've made a difference

EVIDENCE:

- Ofsted rating of schools
- Sufficient quality Early Years provision
- Sufficient secondary places
- More local provision for CYP with ASC and SEMH

GLOSSARY OF TERMS:

ASC: Autism Spectrum Condition
 CLA: Children Looked After
 CYP: Children & Young People
 EHCP: Education, Health & Care Plan
 SEND: Special Educational Needs and/or Disabilities
 SEMH: Social, Emotional and/or Mental Health

All of our work is underpinned by our values:



Plan on a Page: The WHO, WHAT, WHERE, WHY AND WHEN for:

FINANCE 2021-22



WHAT we'll do and WHY

Objectives (WHAT):

- Set a 3 year Medium Term Financial Strategy
- Provide robust budget monitoring
- Ensure closure of accounts
- Improve financial processes
- Training of budget managers
- Develop a Schools Support Service
- Treasury Management Strategy

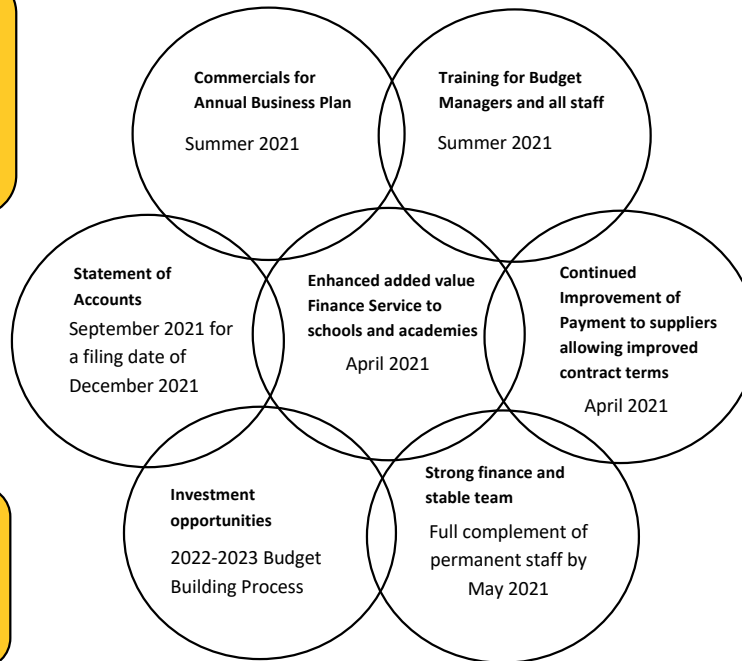
Outcomes (WHY):

- Financial stability for BFFC
- Enable Board to make informed commercial decisions and allow innovation
- Audited accounts
- Improved payment of suppliers enabling discounts
- Improve efficiencies and effectiveness
- Provide an added value Finance to schools
- Investment income to invest in new service innovation

Priorities (WHAT):

- Financial Stability
- Excellent Finance Team
- Develop Traded Service for Finance
- Increase investment opportunities allowing for innovation

HOW we'll do it AND BY WHEN



HOW we'll know if we've made a difference

EVIDENCE:

- Annual Business Plan
- Audited Statement of accounts
- Traded Service with schools
- Traded Services for finance
- Reduction in creditors
- All budget managers trained in financial control
- Value resulting from investments

All of our work is underpinned by our values:



Plan on a Page: The WHO, WHAT, WHERE, WHY AND WHEN for: COMMISSIONING, CONTRACTS AND PROCUREMENT 2021/22

WHAT we'll do and WHY

Objectives (WHAT):

- To establish an effective and responsive commissioning function with clear internal commissioning governance across the company
- To establish an intelligence and outcome led approach to commissioning and procurement function
- Robust supplier, contract and performance management approach is in place

Outcomes (WHY):

- Children and young people have high quality local placements that are regularly monitored
- Greater market management with a range of providers offering choice and delivering best quality and value for money

Priorities (WHAT):

- Robust internal commissioning and procurement processes
- Implementation of procurement activities
- Supplier relationship management
- Greater service user input

HOW we'll do it AND BY WHEN

Understanding need

We will work with partners to build a clearer understanding of children and young people's current and future needs in line with sufficiency strategy

Process Improvement

Embedding of internal processes and procedures to reduce impact on frontline delivery by Mar 2021

Embedding a culture of co-production

We will actively engage with CYP across the CPP to ensure the voices of Reading children are heard and acted upon by Aug 2021

More local quality placements for CLA

Engage with current and new providers regularly by establishing virtual local provider forums by Mar 2021

Greater collaboration with stakeholders

Opportunities to influence change by developing new service models and achieve efficiencies and purchasing power by Mar 2021

HOW we'll know if we've made a difference

EVIDENCE:

- Clear and transparent published procurement and contract management processes with compliance across the company
- Involvement of children, young people, their families and other key stakeholders in key commissioning activities
- 10% reduction in the number of out of area placements
- Secure £1m savings care package reviews
- Reduction in spot purchasing
- Great use of BFFC IFA
- A fully functional Commissioning Team with all permanent posts filled

All of our work is underpinned by our values:

Honest

Creative

Caring

Quality-Driven

Responsible

Respectful

Plan on a Page. The WHO, WHAT, WHERE, WHY AND WHEN for COMMUNICATIONS & MARKETING 2021-22



WHAT we'll do and WHY

Raise awareness and reputation of BFC by:

- Improving website presence and quality of external information
- Quality, targeted recruitment materials and messaging
- Implementing comms & marketing and social media strategies' external action plans

Improve practice by

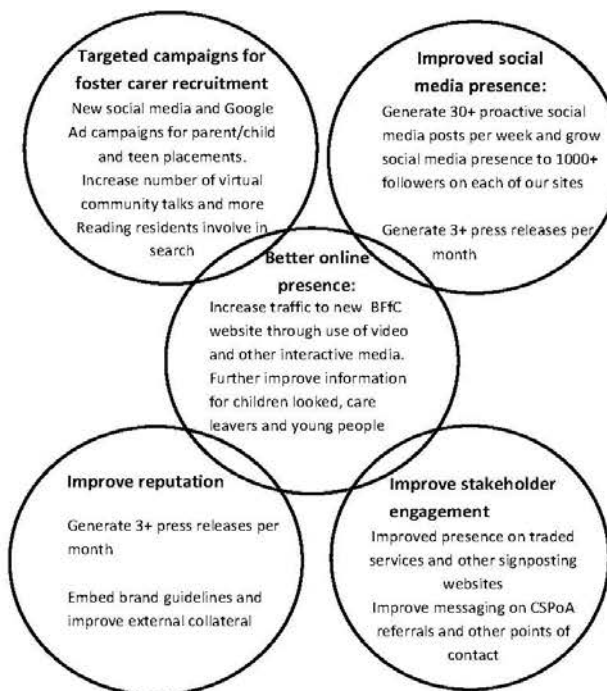
- Supporting Transformation projects
- Implementing the SEND communications strategy action plan
- Further improving the staff intranet's knowledge hub and 'lessons learned'

Ensure all activity dovetails with business priorities:

- Align all productivity to the business priorities and develop in-house processes for improving earlier staff engagement

HOW we'll do it AND BY WHEN

All measured target deadlines are by March 2022



HOW we'll know if we've made a difference

EVIDENCE:

- Analytics data for website and intranet; Increase in followers and engagement on social media sites
- Number of targeted foster carer enquiry leads generated
- Improved staff engagement with processes via intranet
- Increased engagement with information for Children Looked After and Care Leavers
- Increase in young people who respond to our targeted messaging

All of our work is underpinned by our values:



Plan on a Page. The WHO, WHAT, WHERE, WHY AND WHEN for:

HUMAN RESOURCES 2021-22

WHAT we'll do and WHY

Objectives (WHAT):

- Support the company having an agile workforce
- Strategies to improve employee wellbeing
- Instil a positive work culture to improve ways of working aligned to our values
- Keep staff for longer

Outcomes (WHY):

- Need to reduce agency staff and improve stability for children & young people
- Need to prevent key staff leaving
- Improve our Ofsted rating

Priorities (WHAT):

- Strategies to attract and retain permanent staff and reduce reliance on agency workers
- Instil our values and develop behaviours
- Develop new ways of working to support agile working

HOW we'll do it AND BY WHEN



HOW we'll know if we've made a difference

EVIDENCE: By 2022

- Reduce agency spend and numbers to bring us in line with national average
- Reduce company turnover to 14%
- Embed new company behaviours
- Implement new key HR policies
- New leadership development programme via use of Apprenticeship Levy
- New Equality and Diversity strategy for delivery
- Deliver minimum of 6 virtual roadshow by end of 2021

All of our work is underpinned by our values:



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By virtue of paragraph(s) 3 of Part 1 of Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972.

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