



Initial Business Plan

2019 - 2021

SUMMARY

This document outlines Brighter Futures for Children's three-year business plan. It will be updated with business and project action plans in due course.

OWNERS

Deborah Jenkins MBE DL,
Board Chair
Antony Kildare,
Managing Director

VERSION

1.1

DATE

March 2019

TO BE REVIEWED

March 2020

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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. Foreword

Every child and young person in the borough of Reading deserves the chance to flourish, thrive and have a bright future.

We believe that, by launching Brighter Futures for Children, we are creating better opportunities to improve services offered to children, young people and care leavers. Our ambition is to engage the whole community in making Reading a happy and fulfilling place in which to grow up and live.

We have a duty to protect and cherish the most vulnerable and troubled children and young people in our society. We also have a responsibility to work smarter with partners to create an environment which supports all children and families in Reading.

We know that, in recent years, services have not been as good as they could be. Brighter Futures will give strong leadership and a clear focus on improving services and building the foundations for better ways of working.

We cannot operate in isolation. A stable and ambitious workforce, enthusiastic partner agencies and engaging children and young people will be the ingredients of our success. We hope to regain and improve trust and confidence in what we offer.

It will not be an easy path. There is much to do with limited resources, but we have the enthusiasm, drive and determination to succeed. The greater freedoms of the new company model will give us the chance to work in different and creative ways to improve children's lives now and in the future.

Reading is becoming increasingly wealthy and successful. Businesses are choosing to move here and it's now one of the UK's top 10 places to earn a living*. We want our children and young people to be an integral part of Reading's future workforce and community and to lead happy, fulfilled lives here.

We are steadfast in our commitment to make Brighter Futures for Children a success. As a new company and part of 'Team Reading', we're excited by the enthusiasm of our staff, colleagues and the partners who want to work with us.

We hope that you will join us and support us as we set out on our journey towards a brighter future for Reading's children.



Deborah Jenkins MBE DL
Board Chair
Brighter Futures for Children



Antony Kildare
Managing Director
Brighter Futures for Children

*2018 survey by TotallyMoney.com

2. Welcome

We are delighted to introduce this initial Business Plan from the newly-formed Brighter Futures for Children.

We are impressed with the dedication and commitment shown by the Board of Directors and the newly-formed leadership team to turn children's services around.

Brighter Futures for Children only came into being on December 3, 2018. In the very short space of time since then, they have both worked out the financial detail and outlined their delivery plans for the transformational work they aim to deliver for children and their families in Reading.

We warmly welcome Brighter Futures for Children as the newest member of Team Reading and we congratulate them for such a positive start to this new business venture.

We endeavour to work in co-operation and collaboration with Brighter Futures for Children to make this new business model a success and look forward to the detailed business plan in due course.



Peter Sloman
Chief Executive
Reading Borough
Council



Cllr Jo Lovelock
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. Executive Summary

This document outlines the three-year business plan for Brighter Futures for Children. It sets out our business model, our key focus for each of the three years, our nine key priorities for Year One and outlines the way in which we will deliver improved children's and educational services.

Our ambition is to achieve a 'Good' Ofsted rating for children's services, fostering and adoption services. We intend to help schools and nurseries improve their Ofsted ratings throughout Reading by offering enhanced services for all children, especially those with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities.

We know, as a new company, that we face challenges. We need to improve on current practice, build a stable, skilled and committed workforce and manage limited resources to deliver best value in a time of rising demand and great complexity. We intend to provide and develop ways of working which will keep all children safe.

We believe that we are most likely to succeed if our staff and the children and young people we work with are involved and engaged in everything we do. We will make sure that their voices are heard and that they influence how we design and run the business.

We also fully intend to involve the community to achieve better outcomes for children and young people. We have outlined ways in which we will develop smarter partnership working with partner agencies as well as ways in which we want to involve both the residents of Reading and the business community in helping us to reach our goals.

To achieve this, we have set out our mission, vision and values, our governance structure and our business model and funding arrangements. We have been mindful of the need to cross-check our transformation and improvement plans and projects appropriately with capital receipts guidelines, so that monies are appropriately targeted, allocated and monitored against outcomes.

We have clearly identified the sequence of our approach. To succeed we must first identify and analyse the root causes of past problems. Alongside each team, we are mapping current processes and working practice and looking for ways to improve. We are clear that our approach is not to offer a 'sticking plaster' solution.

We intend to streamline and improve processes so that we can move forward, with staff less burdened and more able to work effectively and closely with our families, children and young people. This change won't happen overnight, but our intention is that our detailed work now will deliver long-term sustainability and better outcomes.

We are also mindful of the statutory duties which impact our company, the reporting we have committed to provide and to ensure our work dovetails with RBC's policy framework and fits into its corporate plan. We understand our contract service specifications and the need to deliver what we've promised to do.

We have outlined our 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.

We have also given an initial indication of our intention to generate income for the business by trading services and, by Year Three, we hope to grow the company by providing services to other authorities and independent children's services providers, modelled on the improvements achieved in Reading.



4. Our Vision and Values

Our overall objective is to deliver the best possible opportunities for the children of Reading.

Our Vision

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

Our Values

We have set our company values and, from now, are embedding them across the company. Each team has a 'values champion' and, in addition, everyone, from Board members down, through each level of management, to frontline and support staff, have given their commitments to each other and to the people we serve.

We have held 'Getting to Good, Aspiring to Outstanding' workshops with frontline practitioners and managers in children's social care. In these, staff have formulated their commitments to the children, young people and families they work with, set against the six priorities for our Improvement Plan (see page 25). Some of the suggestions can be seen at **Appendix A**. These agreed commitments alongside our values, will thread through all our action plans, projects and day-to-day work.

Our values are to be:

Honest	We will always be transparent and open
Creative	We will always look for creative approaches and solutions, not be bound by convention
Caring	Every decision we make and action we take will be in the best interest of the child
Respectful	We will value diversity
Quality Driven	We will work to high standards of efficiency, effectiveness and professionalism
Responsible	We will always be a good partner, mindful of our duty to use resources wisely and well

5. Our Services

Brighter Futures for Children has the statutory responsibility, on behalf of Reading Borough Council, for:

Children's social care

Social care services provide support to children in need of help and protection. Our services include statutory assessment and care planning for children at risk of significant harm, provision for looked after children and those leaving care, as well as fostering and adoption services.

Education, Special Education Needs and Disabilities

Our services include school improvement support and traded services to schools, special educational needs and/disabilities, home to school transport and children missing education.

The statutory responsibilities for pupil place planning, admissions, children missing education, and elective home education are also managed by Brighter Futures for Children.

We support schools and parents on exclusions and provide guidance for schools and alternative providers on improvement and safeguarding.

Our services also include support in relation to educational psychology, therapies and emotional health and wellbeing support.

Early Help

Early help services provide targeted support to children, young people and families at the earliest point of identified need.

The aims of early help are to support families to support themselves, to prevent problems escalating and to reduce the number of children and young people needing statutory interventions.

The umbrella of early help also covers Early Years, including nurseries and children's centres, the Youth Offending Service, young people's drug and alcohol support, support for young parents, support for young people not in employment, education or training and information and advice and guidance for young people with special educational needs.



6. Governance

Brighter Futures for Children is a company limited by guarantee and not-for-profit, wholly owned by Reading Borough Council (RBC) but run by an independent Board of Directors. It was created on December 3, 2018.

The Board of Directors

The Board Chair and our Non-Executive Directors bring professional skills and expertise from different sectors. A representative of RBC sits on the board and there are also places for up to four Executive Directors, with three currently in post.

The Board is responsible for setting the strategy for Brighter Futures for Children, driving high performance and quality in everything the company does, ensuring that the contract objectives are met and promoting the interests of children and young people throughout Reading.

Board Committees

The Board has three committees to monitor progress in detail and report back to the full Board:

Audit and Risk, which monitors the finances, resources and risk register

Quality and Improvement, which monitors both quality and performance across all strands of the organisation

Fostering, which ensures the company can fulfil its obligations as an Independent Fostering Agency (IFA)

The Executive Committee (ExCo) and Senior Management Team (SMT)

The Executive Committee (ExCo) meets every Monday to oversee the corporate and strategic direction of the company. It is led by the Managing Director, who works closely with the Director of Children's Services (DCS) and the Director of Finance and Resources. ExCo is then joined by the Senior Management Team (SMT), including all Heads of Service, to discuss and report on the performance of the day-to-day operations of the company.

Stakeholder Meetings

Brighter Futures for Children holds regular contractual meetings with RBC, as well as providing performance data for the Children's Services Improvement Board, Local Safeguarding Children's Board and other multi-agency meetings.

The majority of our staff have been transferred into Brighter Futures for Children from their roles in RBC and we are working closely with RBC to ensure that support services are provided in the most effective way, through service level agreements, if they do not need to be wholly within the organisation.

The Council has agreed a seven-year contract with Brighter Futures for Children, which will be managed through regular commissioning arrangements. Within the contract there are provisions to ensure that the Council is able to discharge its responsibility as a Corporate Parent and that Brighter Futures for Children can manage the demands of the services with enough flexibility and independence. As the services are under intervention, the Department for Education (DfE) has a role in the oversight of the company.

Brighter Futures for Children will provide regular briefings for Members, in particular the Lead Member for Children and support for the Corporate Parenting Board.

Our leadership structure can be seen on the next page (page 9).



Brighter Futures for Children - Our Board and current Leadership Team

MEET THE BRIGHTER FUTURES FOR CHILDREN BOARD OF DIRECTORS



NICOLA GILHAM
Non-Executive Independent Director

Nicola is highly skilled in the areas of social enterprise and HR and has worked as a CEO. One of her current NED positions is for leading social enterprise Turning Point.



PAUL SNELL CBE
Non-Executive Independent Director

Paul has extensive experience at the forefront of innovative work in child protection. Previously he was the Chief Inspector for the Commission for Social Care Inspection and was an Ofsted board member.



ELENI IOANNIDES
Director of Children's Services

Eleni brings extensive experience to the role of Director of Children's Services having held the same role at Children's Services in Bury. She has managed several interim posts across a number of authorities.



DEBORAH JENKINS MBE DL
Board Chair

Deborah has held senior leadership positions in organisations ranging from small-scale third sector projects to major healthcare providers. She has been a NED and Chair for the NHS for 24 years.



ANTONY KILDARE
Executive Director & Managing Director

Antony has extensive experience and skills as a Chief Executive. He has worked in economic development, business investment, enterprise innovation and complex infrastructure programmes consulting in the fields of health and education



DAVID LOCKE
Executive Director & Director of Finance & Resources

David is a Chartered Accountant and has worked initially in both the private and public sectors. He has almost 20 years' experience as a Finance and Operations Director in the education and charity sectors.



SEONA DOUGLAS
Non-Executive Director

Seona is Director of Adult Care and Health Services at Reading Borough Council. She represents RBC on the board. Seona worked at Oxfordshire County Council, as Deputy Director of Adult Social Care.



ANTONY BYRNE
Non-Executive Independent Director

Antony has substantial experience working in senior executive roles in education, healthcare and defence. One of his NED positions is with the School Food Trust.

MEET THE CURRENT LEADERSHIP TEAM

ANTONY KILDARE
Managing Director

Antony is Managing Director of Brighter Futures for Children and is responsible to the Board for the overall effective performance of the company, its leadership, direction and staff.

DAVID LOCKE
Director of Finance & Resources

As Finance & Resources Director, David has strategic and operational accountability for our financial portfolio and leads on financial strategy, IT systems, planning and reporting.

ELENI IOANNIDES
Director of Children's Services

Eleni has the statutory role of Director of Children's Services, responsible for performance of our early help, children looked after, care leavers, fostering and adoption services.

LISA ARTHEY
Deputy Director of Social Care

Lisa brings an impressive skillset and experience to her role. She is responsible for all statutory functions relating to children's social care.

VICKY RHODES
Head of Early Help & Partnerships

Vicky has considerable skills and experience in her area of responsibility, which includes non-statutory and early help services, including the Youth Offending Service.

MARK FOWLER
Head of Education & SEN

Mark brings extensive experience in leading education in the UK and abroad. His background includes helping create the national curriculum and GCSEs and leading the highest achieving council. He is responsible for driving up education standards.

CARL EDWARDS
Head of Transformation

Carl is responsible for delivering the transformation programme for Brighter Futures for Children. He has led similar programmes for several children's services and across a number of other private and public sector organisations.

ATHENA DAVIES
Head of Human Resources

Athena brings a vast experience of working within local authorities having previously held Head of HR roles for several adult social care services. She will be ensuring our approach is optimised to attracting, recruiting and retaining high quality staff.

PAULA GLEDHILL
Head of Finance

Paula has substantial experience and skill in managing children's services budgets. She is responsible for the day to day management of the finance team.

FIONA TARRANT
Head of Communications & Marketing

Fiona has led on communications and marketing for a variety of public and private sector organisations. A former award-winning journalist, she also brings considerable experience of children's services and education to the role.

TBA
Head of Commissioning & Procurement

Responsible for overseeing our non staffing expenditure with external suppliers, agencies and direct payments, whilst maximising value for money.

7. Context

7.1 National Context

According to the Office for National Statistics (ONS) the rate of children in need has remained relatively steady since 2010, but rates of children with child protection plans and those taken into care (looked after) have both risen throughout that time.

Over the same period, local authority budgets have reduced significantly and a national funding gap of £2 billion has been predicted by 2020 should current trends continue.

The Institute of Fiscal Studies (IFS) 2018 report for the Children's Commissioner '*Public Spending on Children 2000-2020*', states that almost half of the national budget is spent on the 73,000 children who are looked after, while the remaining half is spent on the other 11.7 million children.

Although overall spending on children and families has been maintained at similar levels overall, almost 72% of budgets are now spent on interventions for families with complex needs, as spending on prevention and youth services had been reduced by more than 60%.

Benefit spending on families has reduced by 11% since 2010 and is planned to reduce further. National research by the Joseph Rowntree Foundation in 2018 showed that 66% of children in poverty live in working households, so unemployment is no longer a good indicator of child poverty.

Child poverty in the UK has been rising since 2011/12. The Joseph Rowntree Foundation '*UK Poverty Report 2018*' states there are currently 4.1 million children living in poverty, a rise of 500,000 in the last five years.

The report found that four million workers are living in poverty – a rise of more than half a million over five years; and that in-work poverty has been rising even faster than employment, driven almost entirely by increasing poverty among working parents.

The 4.1 million children living in poverty equates to 30 per cent of children, or 9 in a classroom of 30. Although spend on 4-16 education has been maintained, resources in post-16 and further education will be at 1990 levels by 2020 if current trends continue.

7.2 Local context

Reading Borough Council is ambitious and has shown a willingness to innovate in order to drive improvement. Brighter Futures for Children is a good example of this.

Children's social care services in Reading have been graded 'Inadequate' by Ofsted since August 2016. Problems with retaining a stable workforce, inconsistencies in practice and increasingly complex cases were reflected in the rating.

Concerted efforts were made by the Council, with the support of a DfE Commissioner, to put an improvement plan in place. Some improvements were evidenced through a range of performance indicators and audit, including Ofsted monitoring visits and Action for Children (AfC) support. However, the service remained fragile.

The Council took the decision that the Brighter Futures for Children model, as a wholly-owned but independent, not-for-profit company concentrating on services for children would offer the best opportunity to bring new focus to the issues faced by children and young people in the borough.

Brighter Futures for Children was registered as a limited company in April 2018. Deborah Jenkins MBE DL was subsequently appointed as Chair and then Antony Kildare as Managing Director, ahead of the 'go live' date in December 2018. A new board of independent non-executive directors has



been recruited and is in post, bringing an added depth of knowledge and experience as well as commitment.

Changes in leadership have generated some instability and anxiety among staff and the unrelenting nature of the work needed to achieve improvement has taken its toll on some, but there is a real determination and focus to make Brighter Futures for Children a success.

As part of our improvement journey, we work with an independently chaired Children's Services Improvement Board (CSIB), which is a multi-agency body providing support and challenge to help us improve our services to the children of Reading. A list of Ofsted recommendations included in our Improvement Plan is shown in **Appendix 3**. Our Improvement Plan priorities are shown in **Section 12**.

Since the full inspection in 2016, there have been eight Ofsted monitoring visits, including one since the Company went live. Most have reported evidence of improvement, although consistency is lacking. The Company begins life with a clear trajectory for improvement, which is under close scrutiny by both Reading Borough Council and the Department for Education.

Our role is to steepen the improvement trajectory, deepen the quality of our practice and accelerate the improvement journey.

The Company is wholly-owned by the Council. Our work is commissioned by the Council and our success will be the Council's success. However, our status means we are operationally independent of the Council. We will create our own policy and procedures; we have our own finance, HR, commissioning and business support services.

We are accountable for the outcomes we deliver, but how we organise, shape and resource our services to deliver these outcomes is a matter for the Company through our Board and our staff.



8. Our Business Model

We are ambitious for the future, but very much aware that our first priority must be to develop and embed consistently good and safe practice in children’s care. That will give us a base on which to develop innovative and excellent services through wider partnerships.

From the outset, we will explore opportunities for learning and sharing with neighbours and with other Alternative Delivery Models (ADMs) for children’s services.

Looking ahead, we hope to grow the company by providing services to other authorities or providers of children’s services, but that will depend on our ability to prove that we are truly excellent at home first.

As a very new organisation, our business plan is complex as there is much to be done. It takes the shape of an overarching business plan, under which the Transformation Programme (see **Section 12.1**), the Improvement Plan (see **Section 12.2**), the Education and SEND Strategy (see **Section 13**) and their workstreams will target specific areas of work essential to our success.

We have established a Risk Register for performance in all areas of the company, our Scheme of Delegation for our financial and decision-making authorisations, a Quality Assurance Framework in place for children’s social care, which is overseen by the Quality Improvement committee and a Company-wide Business Continuity Plan is in place to ensure business carries on if, due to circumstances beyond our control, our workplaces are affected.

Despite the short timeframe since we went live, we have agreed our focus for each of the three years. In addition, we have identified nine key priorities for Year One (starting on April 1, 2019), which steer all of our action plans.

8.1 Our focus for the next three years

April 2019 – March 2020: Improvement & Development

Year One will be on meticulous improvement of practice, stabilisation and development of the workforce, and engaging with children, families, staff and partners to ensure that they are part of our journey towards excellence.

April 2020 – March 2021: Growing/Embedding Quality Practice

Year Two will be on embedding quality of service, growing partnerships to develop innovation, engaging the wider community in our work and exploring the potential for growth.

April 2021 – March 2022: Sustainability

Year Three will be on developing sustainability of quality, coaching and developing a wider workforce, inter-agency working, sourcing additional external resources and developing traded services.

We will develop a clear reporting line for updates from all associated action plans that are being developed in the areas of transformation and improvement, supported by finance, HR, communications & marketing. This will help us to report to our key stakeholders – Reading Borough Council and the Department for Education, as well as our staff and partners, on our achievements.

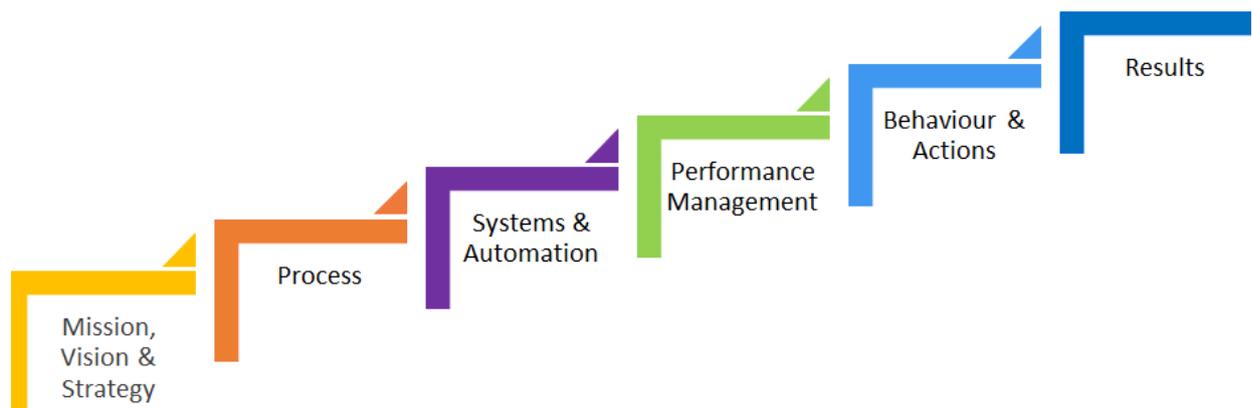
8.2 Our 9 Priorities for Year One

Despite a challenging operating environment, Brighter Futures for Children remains determined to succeed. Our priorities are based on our local operating context.

To deliver these, we have analysed and assessed current working practices. This has taken time but is essential to ensure how we operate is fit for purpose and producing the right outcomes for children, young people and their families.

Our approach is to document our streamlined end-to-end process architecture, from the top down. By mapping and streamlining our processes, we will have the essential framework to define results and ensure a high-performing, high-value company.

The diagram below shows the steps we are taking to transform ourselves from 'Inadequate' to 'Good':



While developing these steps, we will focus on the following priorities in Year One to maximise our budget and deliver improvement in services for children and young people in Reading:

1. Developing a stable and happy workforce which is well supported and well-led

As the organisation builds, the need for a skilled, experienced and motivated workforce will be essential to our improvement journey. We need to build our capacity and create stability across our 500-strong workforce.

We are developing a Workforce and Recruitment and Retention Strategy which will address gaps in skills, knowledge and capacity and to create an environment which affords space to our employees to innovate and transform the services they deliver.

2. Achieving the current Improvement and Learning Plan to address inconsistencies in social work practice

We want to offer services of the highest quality. Achieving the highest standards and improvement in services for the most vulnerable children and young people in Reading remains firmly at the top of our agenda. We have already started on this journey and will address any inconsistencies in social work practice through the delivery of our learning and improvement plan.



3. Establishing a strong network of stakeholders and partners across Reading and beyond to support our work

We believe that developing and operating in constructive partnerships is essential to achieving the best outcomes for our children and young people. There are already really good relationships with partners in Reading and we will capitalise on this and harness the expertise of all our partners.

We will work in an integrated way with RBC and our partner organisations to ensure that services are delivered by a suitably qualified and experienced workforce and deliver optimum value for money.

4. Building on strong foundations, create an imaginative preventative strategy to help children and families

We are committed to offering help before situations worsen, enabling families to resolve their problems. We believe that this is the route to resilient and sustainable communities. In Reading, not enough of our families receive help early enough and, as a result, more receive statutory services, either through a child protection plan or by becoming looked after, than is necessary. Working with our partners, we want to alter this balance and so expanding our Early Help offer must be one of our priorities. We have already begun this work with the establishment of a multi-partner approach we call One Reading.

5. Supporting our education providers to give the best possible start to our children and young people

We will support schools in relation to curriculum development and school leadership as well as providing support and challenge for school improvement and effectiveness.

We will ensure effective services are delivered for children with disabilities and their families and support for children with additional needs. Our services include support in relation to educational psychology, therapies and emotional health and wellbeing support.

We are committed to helping all children in our care to thrive at school. We will develop and improve support offered through our Virtual School to children looked after to ensure their needs are met and they are given the chance to meet and exceed all Key Stage milestones.

6. Driving a robust change programme which will deliver excellent and efficient services within a tight budget

The financial climate for services requires that more is achieved with less. This necessitates innovation and efficiency. Efficiency can mean spending less, or exercising better budgetary control, but it can also mean using resources better to achieve better value or re-engineering processes to become more effective. The urgent budget pressures we face make clear that efficiency must be a priority that is meaningful for all of our staff and managers.

7. Listening to and engaging with the people we are here to serve

Our children and young people will always remain at the centre of everything we do and their needs will continue to inform our service delivery and commissioning arrangements. We will work with our young people to develop a model of participation and to embed this in our culture. We will also



work with our partners to ensure that our children and young people have a voice and a real impact on decisions that affect them and the services they receive.

8. Deliver the children's services for Reading within agreed fixed fee, being £135m for 2019/2020 (£41m core funding)

As already detailed, we are streamlining and mapping processes to help us deliver a quality service within a reduced budget. We are working towards strong budgeting and financial management and an organisational culture of working within set budgets and recognising financial restrictions. We are monitoring financial reports on a regular basis and also financial controls. We will ensure financial procedures and policies are in place and have already set up a process for regular review of company activities by the audit committee. We have started work to investigate improved processes for purchasing, document management and contract management and will work towards a cultural change, delivering training where needed, of using processes which take less time and, therefore, cost less.

9. To deliver a commercial Independent Fostering Agency (IFA) leading to increased children being cared for within the 20-mile radius

Our 'Re-imagining Fostering' project is one of the top priorities within our Transformation Programme. Although Year One does not start until April 1, 2019, work is already well under way to establish the processes and pathways to connect with the people of Reading to increase the number of in-house foster carers able to offer better opportunities to children and young people in need of foster care.

The Fostering Team transferred to Brighter Futures for Children from Reading Borough Council on March 1, 2019. To increase capacity of internal foster car provision BFFC will develop a fostering strategy to support a comprehensive recruitment campaign and implement a model based on best practice and research that supports carers and children.

Recruitment of carers will be targeted to replace high cost placements from IFAs providing 30 placements in 2019-20, 40 in 2020-21 and 30 in 2021-22.

8.3 Communications & Marketing

Good communication is everyone's job but effectively communicating with staff, partner agencies, our service users, the media and the wider community needs strategic direction and detailed action plans.

We are developing a strategy of internal, inter-agency (stakeholder) and external communications, as well as associated marketing activity plans. We recognise the need to improve Brighter Future for Children's digital capabilities, as well as visibility and reputation. Actively marketing our brand and our offer to potential foster carers and adopters in our residential and business communities will help increase the number of local carers and, as a result, will prevent children from having to live far away from Reading while their home-life situation is stabilised.

We are building a strong communications and marketing team to develop this strategy - tied into business priorities - with a key objective of improving engagement with children and young people to help shape the services we offer and ensure their wishes and ideas are incorporated into everything we do.

9. Three-year financial plan

The decision to move education and children’s services into Brighter Futures for Children means we must manage limited resources but deliver best value in a time of rising demand and great complexity.

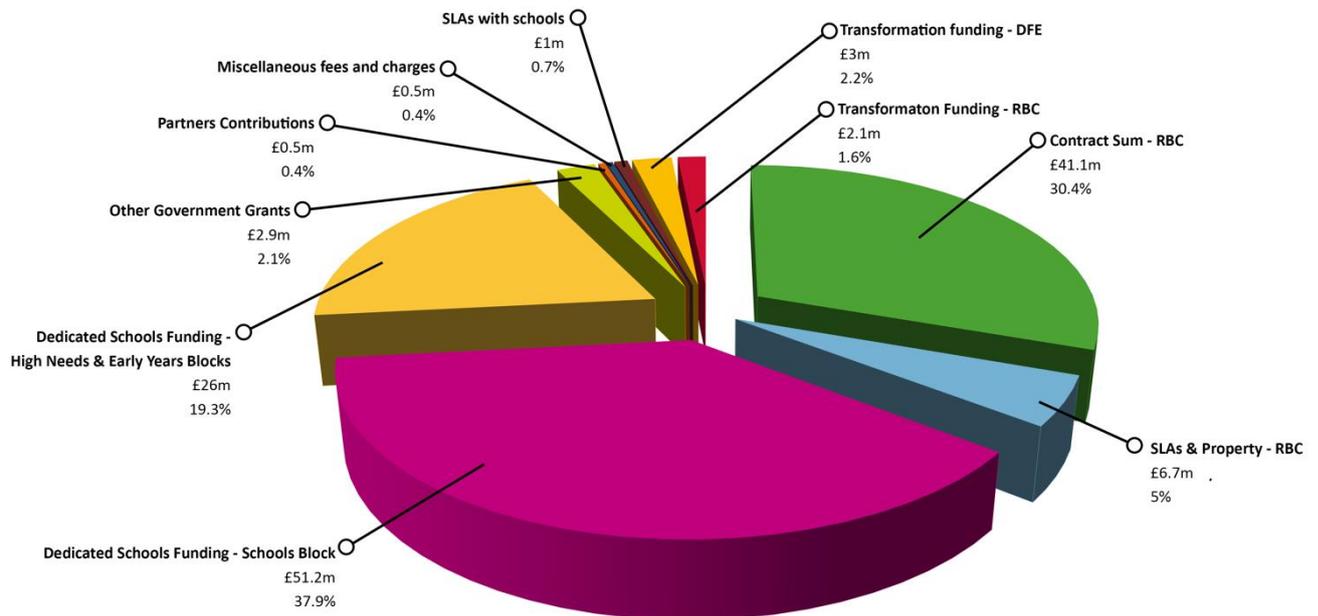
We have a seven-year contract to deliver children’s services for RBC and have agreed a fixed fee for the financial years 2019/20, 2020/21 and 2021/22 (see page 18 for Medium Term Financial Strategy and Core Contract Sum figures).

9.1 Sources of Funding

The chart below highlights the funding sources for Brighter Futures for Children for the financial period 2019/20. The funding can be summarised into four key funding streams, as follows:

Reading Borough Council – Contract sum and SLAs	35.4%
Government Grants including Dedicated Schools Grant	59.3%
Transformation Funding – including both RBC & DfE	3.8%
Other income sources – schools SLAs, partners contributions	1.5%

Sources of Funding



Sources of Funding	£m	%
Contract Sum - RBC	41.1	30.4%
SLAs and Property - RBC	6.7	5.0%
Dedicated Schools Grant - Schools Block	51.2	37.9%
Dedicated Schools Grant - High Needs, Early Years & Central Blocks	26.0	19.3%
Other Government Grants	2.9	2.1%
Partners' Contributions	0.5	0.4%
Miscellaneous fees and charges	0.5	0.4%
SLAs with Schools	1.0	0.7%
Transformation Funding - DFE	3.0	2.2%
Transformation Funding - RBC	2.1	1.6%
TOTAL	135.0	100%

9.1.1 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 and preventative services and education services. The funding also includes the corporate services of accountancy, human resources, workforce development and communications & marketing which transferred across to Brighter Futures for Children in December 2018. This funding includes the SLAs and property costs to be recharged to us.

9.1.2 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, High Needs, Early Years & Central Blocks
- Pupil Premium Grant – allocated by the Virtual Head for CLA to Reading's schools
- SEN Grant – funding of the transfer over to EHCPs from the previous statements and to transform SEN services for young people
- Troubled Families Grant – to provide preventative services working with families, including the payments by results element of the grant
- Youth Justice Grant – source of funding for the Youth Offending Service

9.1.3 Transformation Programme Funding

Transformation Programme Funding and related savings are discussed in detail in **Sections 9.2.2 and 12.**

9.1.4 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.

9.2 Medium-Term Financial Strategy

The Medium-Term Financial Strategy (MTFS) for Brighter Futures for Children is presented in the expenditure budget table below and covers the three-year financial period of 2019/20 to 2021/22. The table below shows high level funding requirements for the organisation including Transformation Programme funding from RBC and DfE:

Expenditure Budget	19/20	20/21	21/22
	£'000	£'000	£'000
Children's Social Care Services	30,189	30,000	29,101
Early Help and Preventative Services	3,845	3,150	2,669
Education Services	6,651	5,893	6,051
Corporate Resources – BfC	5,594	3,934	3,358
Support Services RBC SLAs	4,497	4,497	4,497
Property – Rent	1,143	1,143	1,143
Property - Facilities Management	1,029	1,029	1,029
TOTAL	52,948	49,646	47,848

The funding source for the main operational budget is summarised in the Funding Streams table below for the three years:

Funding Streams	19/20	20/21	21/22	TOTAL
	£'000	£'000	£'000	
RBC Core Contract Sum	41,109	40,631	41,179	122,919
SLAs pass through including Property	6,669	6,669	6,669	20,007
DfE Transformation Funding	3,046	2,346	0	5,392
RBC Transformation Funding	2,124	0	0	2,124
TOTAL	52,948	49,646	47,848	150,442

The RBC Core Contract Sum budget figures of £41.109m, £40.631m and £41.179m, as shown in the Funding Streams table, were presented to the DfE when bidding for the Transformation Programme, along with RBC Transformation funding (£2.1m), which helped Brighter Futures for Children to successfully secure an additional sum of £5.4m.

The first two years were included in the Budget Working Groups and presented in the “lockdown sessions” in October 2018 with members of Brighter Futures for Children and RBC. An estimate has been prepared for the budget requirement for 2021/22.



Appendix 2 provides an overview of gross budget and income for the three financial years. This also details the expenditure budget split into employee costs, running costs, schools, and SLAs, at the overall company level.

Appendix 4 shows the map and location of those properties that are within the scope of transfer to Brighter Futures for Children and scheduled for completion by May 2019.

9.2.1 Key Factors and Budget Assumptions

The Net Operating Budget table below provides details of the key factors included in the budget calculations for the next three years, covering pay increments and pay inflation, contract inflation, pressures, savings and service restructures. Inflation has been separated to reflect pay award and pay inflation (1%) and the contract inflation (5% for external placements) elements. Inflation within the operational budget will be funded by the savings programme below, apart from Year Three where some funding is required to meet the inflationary costs.

Net Operational Budget	2019/20	2020/21	2021/22
	£'000	£'000	£'000
Base Budget	40,455	41,110	40,631
Pay inflation and increments	674	852	963
Contract inflation	236	385	438
Other Pressures	4,533	2,412	3,209
Savings	-2,873	-4,128	-4,062
Invest to save	-274	0	0
Fees and Charges	0	0	0
Service Restructures - management action	-2,160	0	0
	40,591	40,631	41,179
Transfer of Corporate Services budgets for staff TUPE	519	0	0
Budget - contract sum excluding SLAs	41,110	40,631	41,179

The key pressures included in the table above are high CLA costs and numbers, change in legislation for leaving care and continued use of agency staffing. The benchmarking undertaken for the company set up has shown Reading to be an outlier for the number of Children Looked After (CLA) and the high cost placements. The MTFs assumes any further growth in numbers will be managed by the Transformation Programme.

Inflation has been separated to reflect pay award and pay inflation (1%) and the contract inflation (5% for external placements) elements. Inflation within the operational budget will be funded by the savings programme (see 9.2.2), apart from the third year where some funding is required to meet the inflationary costs.

The 2018/19 in year budget pressures have been reflected in the MTFs. There has been an improvement in the use of cost drivers to identify key elements of expenditure and how they might be influenced. Modelling trends, the volume of cases and the cost per case have been used to determine the budget.

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



2019/20	264
2020/21	256
2021/22	245

The figures reflect the CLA profile continuing through to care leavers. The change in legislation which supports all care leavers up to the age of 25 has also impacted on the budget requirements of the next three years. This anticipated increased demand is to be managed within the contract sum allocation by the savings and Transformation Programme. The aim is to reduce costs by developing local independent living provision.

The use of agency social workers has caused significant budget pressures over the last three financial years and is below 40% of the overall social work workforce. The aim is to reduce this further down to 20% or less by March 2020. The Transformation Programme will invest in the social care workforce which will help with the recruitment and retention of social workers and reduce the use of agency workers.

In setting a balanced budget for 2019/20, a further reduction of £2.2m in annual running costs is required from service reviews. This will be a challenge to deliver in the first year of operation but is required to enable us to remain within the contract sum.

9.2.2 Savings

The funding secured for the Transformation Programme is essential to deliver a three-year saving programme. The Transformation Programme is provided in greater detail later in this document (**Section 12**). In summary, £9.1m of funding from both RBC (£3.7m) and DfE (£5.4m) has been secured to deliver an ambitious and challenging savings programme of £11.4m over the three-year period.

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. The investment in Early Intervention and Prevention and with effective demand management by increasing local provision and transforming the care system will enable us to remain within the contract sum. Improving practice will also deliver efficiencies.

9.2.3 Next Steps

Brighter Futures for Children's MTFS does not currently include the impact of increasing commerciality for the company. The direction of travel over the next 12 months is to develop excellent Traded Services which can be offered to schools and academies.

The two key areas to market and increase funding opportunities are increasing the Education Services, (including school improvement and educational psychology services, but not exclusively these) and financial services to schools and academies.

Brighter Futures has an opportunity to market and exploit these openings as there is clear demand for high quality services from within Reading and further Berkshire regions. This will become an excellent funding source creating additional income to re-invest in existing and new services.

9.2.4 Financing the Transformation Programme's projects

Brighter Futures for Children is about to engage on its exciting and challenging Transformation Programme (see **Section 12**). The table below summarises the Transformation Programme funding requests we submitted to the DfE and RBC with the business case. The information below it provides full details of the funding requests to both DfE and RBC. Transformation Programme funding accounts for 3.8% of the overall funding for 2019/20.

	18/19	19/20	20/21	Total
	£m	£m	£m	£m
RBC	1.6	2.1	0	3.7
DfE	0	3.0	2.3	5.3
	1.6	5.1	2.3	9.0

The Transformation Programme funding is required to help Brighter Futures for Children meet its improvement targets and the challenging savings programme over the next three years (as presented above).

In order for the Transformation Programme to succeed, Brighter Futures for Children has used the £1.2m additional Delivery Fund for 2018/19 to kick start programmes that will be funded by DfE from 2019/20 and 2020/21.

This is to ensure the programmes will be fully functional from April 1, 2019 and that savings targets are achieved and delivered in the required timescale.

In addition to this, developing the commercialisation strand will result in new income generating opportunities, such as selling of Finance and Education Services to schools and academies in Berkshire and beyond.

Within this workstream, we have identified £300k in 2019/20 to remain unallocated until April 2019. This was to allow further diagnostics to be undertaken up to March 31, 2019, which will influence the business planning process, as additional opportunities and projects to further improve outcomes and achieve cost savings are identified.

Brighter Futures for Children has a three-year savings programme dependent on this Transformation Programme. It has been developed assuming this and, if additional funding is not secured for the third year, there will be additional risk to the achievement of savings in 2021/22.

The ambition of Brighter Futures for Children is to achieve the savings and transform and improve the services for all children in Reading.

10. Organisational structure and staffing plan

10.1 National context

The provision of high-quality social work services relies upon a well-trained, supported and motivated workforce. At a national level there has been a heavy reliance on agency staff.

According to the National Audit office's January 2019 report, [Pressures on Children's Social Care](#), the number of full-time equivalent children's social workers increased by 7.5% between 2014 and 2017,

from 26,500 to 28,500. However, the children's social care workforce is also characterised by high vacancy and agency rates.

The report states that, on average, local authorities had a vacancy rate of 17% in 2017 – an increase from 14% in 2013. This increased to 27% in outer London and was even higher in certain outer London boroughs, which have a highly competitive labour market for social workers. Reading, with its proximity to London, falls within that competitive market area.

The report also highlights the difficulty of retaining social workers. Sixty-three per cent of social workers leave their local authority within five years - a figure which has been increasing since 2015. As a consequence of increased demand, increased activity and rising vacancy rates, local authorities have increased the use of agency social workers, who are more costly.

Agency worker use by local authorities increased nationally from 12% in 2013 to 16% in 2017. Across the country, overall expenditure on children's social workers increased by 15.1% between 2013-14 and 2016-17 in real terms, from £1.75 billion to £2 billion, at a time when numbers increased by only 7.5%.

The Local Government Association (LGA) has said that by 2020, there will be a £2bn funding gap in children's services spending as a result of rising demand for children's social care. It has to be recognised that this figure includes an increased cost in the recruitment of social workers and Brighter Futures for Children must work hard to improve both permanent recruitment and retention of its staff.

10.2 Local context

Ofsted findings have clearly highlighted the issues we face in terms of workforce skills and capabilities and of recruiting and retaining skilled staff. Developing a stable and motivated workforce, well-supported and well-led is the first of our nine priorities and is the key focus for Year One.

We are in the process of developing a Workforce and Recruitment and Retention Strategy, alongside operational development, in terms of learning and training priorities, to address gaps in skills, knowledge and capacity.

We recognise that staff are our most valuable resource. We have developed a new induction process and we are investing in staff through career development opportunities. We are also investing in mapping our processes to reduce the need for staff to duplicate data entry, as well as looking at new IT and digitalisation of our service, to improve our staff's ability to work in an agile and flexible way, which meets both the demands of their work and their work/life balance.

11. Strategic analysis (initial SWOT)

<p>STRENGTHS</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Committed and highly skilled Board of Directors We're part of 'Team Reading' Refreshed leadership Business plan and associated workstream plans in development Long, stable contract Workforce successfully transferred to Brighter Futures for Children Increasingly permanent and skilled workforce Transformational funding from RBC and DfE Good quality premises Early Years and Early Help are well regarded 	<p>WEAKNESSES</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ofsted rating for children's social care Educational standards below national average Don't always finish what's started (suffering from 'start-again' syndrome) Legacy of poor communication Not good at celebrating success Staff on multiple sites
<p>OPPORTUNITIES</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Agency social workers – decreasing numbers Stabilise and secure permanent senior leadership team Further develop use of IT and technology Digitilisation Flexibility Early intervention opportunities 	<p>THREATS</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Brexit and political context outside our control Inter-dependency and competition for limited sources of grants/funding Reading children's services poor historical reputation



12. Outline of our Transformation Programme and Improvement Plan

12.1 Transformation Programme

The Transformation Programme focuses on five workstreams, with a senior responsible officer being identified for each. Within each of the workstreams there are projects, which currently number 28. Financial details for this Programme are in **Section 9**. A full list of the 28 Transformation Projects can be found at **Appendix 5**.

Details of the workstreams are below:

Workstream A - Improving Practice Standards

The aim of this workstream is to improve the inadequate practice and high turnover of staffing which have been highlighted for improvement by both Ofsted and Achieving for Children (AfC). The investment in this workstream will lead to recruiting experienced specialists to model high quality practice, coach and mentor social workers and managers. This will result in a legacy of strong and stable workforce, improved and strong practice resulting in better outcomes for children.

Workstream B – Developing Workforce Excellence

The aim of this workstream is to reduce the number of agency social workers that are currently employed and to introduce a Practice Framework which becomes Brighter Future for Children's model of practice. The investment in this workstream will lead to a stable and skilled workforce following a Practice Framework which will result in consistent and good practice for all social workers.

Workstream C – Building Community Capacity

The aim of this workstream has two strands; the first is to address the lack of partnership in Reading to deliver the Preventative and Early Intervention Services. The second is the development of Early Intervention to address the number of Children Looked After (CLA) within Reading.

The first aim will result in a partnership approach ensuring all partners are engaged in the programme which will reduce the demand on children's services. The second aim will be the successful reduction in CLA numbers by embedding two new teams: Pre-birth Team and Family Reunification Team, and the additional Edge of Care team focused at the adolescent age group.

Significant savings can be achieved with the improvement to Preventative and Early Intervention Services, which ensure young people and their families are supported to enable them to improve outcomes outside of the looked after care system.

Workstream D – Stronger Stability for Children

The benchmarking exercise which was undertaken as part of the transfer of children's services to Brighter Futures highlighted Reading is an outlier both in terms of cost and number of CLA.

This statistic applies for both in terms of regional neighbours, statistical neighbours and national average. The aim is to address this and reduce costs and numbers by two key projects, introducing a Placements Solution Team and Re-imagining Foster Care. The success of this will be by achieving significant savings and cost reduction of CLA placements by ensuring children and young people are in safe and appropriate family settings primarily by a return to immediate or extended birth families or placed with a greater number of local Brighter Futures for Children's foster carers.

Workstream E – Consolidating Corporate Resilience

For Brighter Futures for Children to succeed long-term it is essential to develop an entrepreneurial culture and to have a properly resourced and experienced commercial team. The result of investing in this will enable us to have an improved and innovative commissioning and procurement function which will achieve value for money in the contracts it negotiates to realise cost savings.

12.2 Improvement Plan

Brighter Futures for Children is re-examining and updating the previous Improvement Plan to better address and reflect the new focus and pace of improvement for children's social care.

The new plan has six clear improvement priorities, as seen in this diagram:

IMPROVEMENT PLAN TARGETS FOR CHILDREN'S, EDUCATION AND EARLY HELP



Activities and action plans to improve practice have been divided into workstreams for each of the six priorities. Much of this work is inter-dependent on the work of the Transformation Programme projects and the HR strategies being developed but the intention is that day-to-day operational practices will improve continuously, as new processes are ready and implemented into frontline delivery as inputs, to deliver better outcomes.

12.2.1 The six priorities

1. Quality of practice:

Ensure the core elements of social work practice are of a good standard in line with the DfE knowledge and skills statement:

- Assessment
- Planning
- Direct work
- Review

2. Management oversight and direction

Social work and early help managers will lead their teams and services effectively, ensuring their staff are supported, trained and challenged to deliver good quality interventions that improve children's lives



They will provide regular, clear, developmental and assertive management direction and oversight, supervision to practitioners, with rigour and support in

- setting case direction
- ensuring a prompt response to risk and need
- monitoring and driving case progression, ensuring contingencies are applied when necessary
- providing opportunities for critical reflection
- providing advice and guidance on quality and professional development
- ensuring compliance with legislation, statutory guidance and corporate policy.

3. Early intervention and prevention

We will work in collaboration with others to deliver our early intervention strategy and develop and embed new partnership arrangements which increase use of early help assessment and whole family working arrangements.

We will provide mechanisms to deliver help before concerns escalate and improve early identification and intervention in cases of neglect.

In addition to the focused projects which form an integral part of our Transformation Programme objectives, we will also concentrate on embedding partnership working practices to get it right for families first time.

4. Workforce is skilled and stable

- **Culture:** Develop a company-wide culture that puts children at the centre of everything we do
- **Capacity:** improve the recruitment and retention of permanent social workers and managers
- **Capability:** ensure we recruit, develop and retain staff who are capable of delivering high quality help to children and families
- **Competence:** ensure our workforce is competent to deliver high quality services for children and families.

5. Sound finances and sustainability

We will ensure good quality services are delivered within sustainable and balanced budgets. We will maximise opportunities for cost-sharing and operate within the financial policies and procedures in place for the Company.

6. Voice of the child: All of the above priorities feed into this sixth - and most important - priority. We will ensure the views of children and young people clearly inform interventions and service developments. We will maintain a regular programme of meetings between senior leaders and the Children in Care Council, which is called *Our Choices, Our Voices*, and ensure the child's voice is the 'golden thread' throughout our practice and our work.

13. Education and SEND Services

Academic achievement is well below what Reading is capable of overall. Certain groups, especially the vulnerable and disadvantaged, achieve less well than their peers.

- Academic achievement at all stages over the last three years is around the national average.
- The pattern begins in the early years and becomes established. Whilst figures show some improvement at KS1, the improvement nationally has been slightly faster.

Outcomes at KS2 remain below average with scores in writing deteriorating. At KS4, results over the three year remain around average. Post 16 performance (A levels) is good

- The performance of vulnerable and disadvantaged is lower than the national average, in some cases, substantially lower – at all key stages
- NEETs (Not in Education, Employment or Training) are high at 9.7% (8.6% nat av)
- Exclusions are well above average but are currently showing some decline.

A clear direction has been recently set for education, demonstrated in two key three-year strategies which bring together a range of initiatives – the **Education Strategy** and the **SEND Strategy**. Both are working documents and are subject to continuous review and consultation.

While the SEND Strategy is known by many, few are familiar with the Education Strategy. The current need is to engage all around the new direction in collaboration and align activity accordingly and bring rigour to operations, so they deliver the strategy.

We will do this by:

- engaging all – especially our partners in the schools - around the new direction in collaboration and, in parallel, assess and realign activity accordingly;
- allowing the strategies (especially the education strategy) to develop iteratively in partnership with the wider education community;
- robustly assessing the resources available and harness or acquire additional resource and capability from all possible sources;
- bringing rigour to operations to ensure we engage in only those that deliver the strategy. They must also be of a standard to ensure we deliver the outcomes.

Specifically, this means we will be:

- working with schools and other partners, voicing the interests of the child and the views of parents whilst encouraging schools and partners to find and deliver solutions to challenges;
- fostering a consensus with all partners and using this to focus school2school support. (This may eventually gel into a coherent, shared vision for Reading.) This will, at the right time, mean creating together a mechanism responsible for challenging, supporting and developing a sufficient, coherent and ambitious education community;
- encouraging the support/formation of more teaching schools, NLEs, NLGs and the use of local leaders of education, whether formally recognised or not;
- encouraging schools to form structural arrangements that benefit learners, improve outcomes, deliver efficiencies and empower parents;
- working specifically with maintained schools: monitor and challenge performance and use the resources of the SLSLS to develop schools;
- ensuring that parent/carer's and pupil's stake in developments is central;
- increasing SEND stakeholders' responsibility and management of SEND services;
- ensuring robust financial control of services and seeking opportunities to provide traded services wherever the market allows;
- Creating a post 16 forum for providers.

14. Measuring progress and success

We have developed a series of Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) to ensure our key statutory duties are met and, where possible, exceeded. These can be seen at **Appendix 6**.



In addition, we are developing progress and success measurements against all of our projects and long-term strategies and associated action plans, which will be regularly scrutinised by the Brighter Futures for Children Board of Directors.

Once agreed, the plans will be monitored through the respective management arrangements. Achievement of objectives and targets will be reported to the Brighter Futures Board quarterly and lack of progress will be reported by exception quarterly.

Progress on service and team plans will be monitored monthly by the relevant management team.

Where an exception report is necessary, the responsible manager will at the same time present a remediation plan, outlining what actions are being taken to bring performance back into line with expectations.

The Brighter Futures for Children's Board of Directors will not rely exclusively on written reports, but will, in line with the Assurance Framework, seek a variety of evidence of progress. This may include visits to service teams, focus groups with staff, meetings with young people and parents, discussion with partners agencies and others.

But perhaps the most significant measure of our success will be a visible increase in the engagement of children and young people in shaping the services we provide to and for them and an increase in actions which result from their views being heard and listened to.

Appendices 1-6

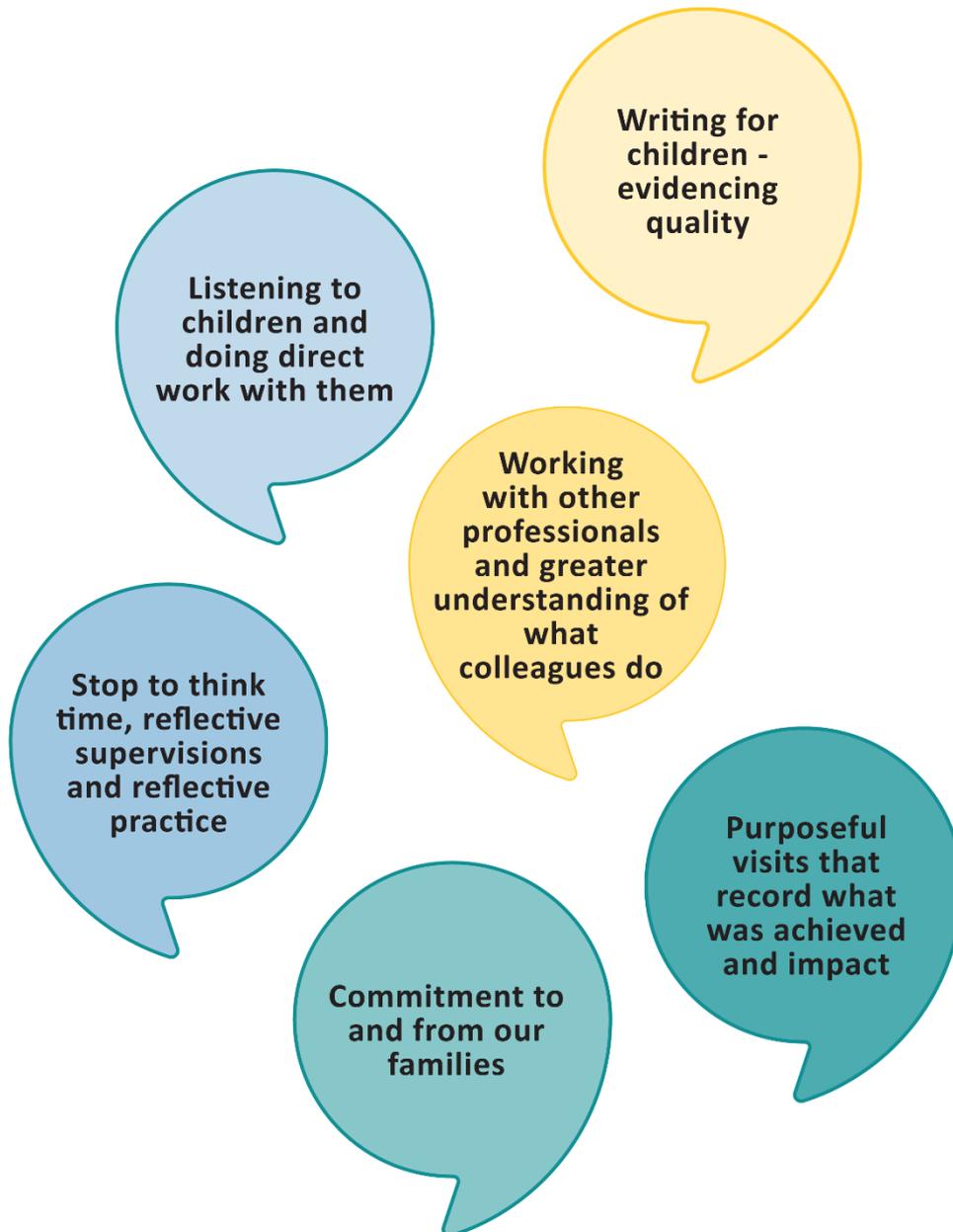
The appendices follow on pages 29-39.



Appendix 1: Sample of staff's commitments to children, young people and families as part of embedding our values

Commitments

A selection from practitioners and managers' workshops. Commitments have been sought from every tier of the Company, from the Board down.





Appendix 2: Financials

Expenditure	2019/20	2020/21	2021/22
	<u>£'000</u>	<u>£'000</u>	<u>£'000</u>
Employee Costs	27,151	26,453	25,255
Running Costs	50,078	47,473	46,873
Schools	51,155	51,155	51,155
SLAs	4,497	4,497	4,497
Property - Rents	1,143	1,143	1,143
Property - Facilities Management	1,029	1,029	1,029
Gross Expenditure	135,053	131,750	129,952
<u>Income</u>			
Income - including grants	-30,949	-30,949	-30,949
Schools - DSG funding	-51,155	-51,155	-51,155
Transformation Funding - DfE	-3,046	-2,346	0
Transformation Funding - RBC	-2,124	0	0
Total Income	-87,274	-84,450	-82,104
Net Expenditure	47,779	47,300	47,848

Appendix 3: Ofsted recommendations in our Improvement Plan

1. Local authority leaders should ensure that permanent and competent social workers provide skilled, responsive and safe services to children at risk of harm, and in need of help and protection. The focus on improving practice standards for children should be urgent, determined and relentless.
2. Ensure that the timely progression of child protection inquiries are informed by clearly recorded strategy meetings with well-evaluated outcomes and recommendations that are commensurate with levels of risk and need. Inquiries and assessments should be overseen by consistent, rigorous and timely management decisions.
3. Ensure that all children in need have clear plans to support and evaluate timely improvements in their well-being and safety. Social workers and their managers should continually evaluate and review levels of risk and need, taking prompt action when children's circumstances either fail to improve or deteriorate
4. Ensure that staff are provided with regular, high-quality supervision to support and challenge their practice.
5. Achieve a consistent understanding and application of thresholds to support more effective and timely case transfers across different levels of need.
6. Ensure that assessments consistently feature consideration of family histories and children's daily experiences, to understand and evaluate the risks and needs more accurately.
7. Provide effective management oversight to prevent delays in children being seen, and to ensure the timely progression of their assessments and plans.
8. Review all cases where children are exposed to domestic abuse and neglect, to ensure that their needs have been thoroughly assessed and that they are safeguarded, where appropriate. Particular attention should be given to children living with, or in proximity to, adults with histories of violence and abuse of other adults and children.
9. Ensure that all young people who go missing from home and care are offered prompt return home interviews, and that the information obtained is used to support their safety plans. Links and associations with other young people and adults of concern should be promptly identified, and preventative and disruption activities purposefully pursued.
10. Provide rigorous screening, assessment and careful multi-agency planning and follow-up at risk assessment conferences on sexual exploitation and 'missing children' for all children identified at risk of sexual exploitation.
11. Raise awareness of private fostering arrangements and ensure that children living in such arrangements are assessed and visited within the required statutory timescales.
12. Ensure that the need for permanence for all CLA is considered at their second review and regularly reviewed thereafter.
13. Comply with care-planning regulations and legislative requirements when children are looked after under voluntary arrangements or placed with family and friends.
14. Improve the sufficiency and availability of local placements for children who become looked after, reducing the trend for placing children in settings that are at a long distance from Reading.
15. Expand the membership and influence of the Children in Care Council so that it is able to communicate effectively with and represent the views of all children who are looked after.
16. Provide stronger support for care leavers in their transition to independent living through more effective support in engaging or re-engaging in education, employment and training.
17. Ensure that all care leavers have accurate, comprehensive and up-to-date information about their rights and entitlements.
18. Ensure that pathway plans are specific and detailed.



Appendix 4: Property

Location of Brighter Futures for Children sites. All transfer should be complete by May 2019



MAP NO.	SITE	USAGE	ADDRESS	POSTCODE
1	Pinecroft Children's Home	Children's home	1 Monksbarn	RG2 7RP
2	Cressingham Children's Home	Children's home	27 Cressingham Road	RG2 7RU
3	Civic Centre	Head office	Civic Offices, Bridge Street	RG1 2LU
4	Avenue Centre	Early Help / Education	Conwy Close	RG30 4BZ
5	Southcote (1)	Children's Centre / Nursery	85 Coronation Square	RG30 3QP
6	Southcote (2)	Youth & Community Centre	Coronation Square	RG30 3QP
7	Whitley Health Building	Children's Centre / Nursery	268 Northumberland Avenue	RG2 7PJ
8	Sun Street	Children's Centre	Sun Street	RG1 3JX
9	Ranikhet Children's Centre	Children's Centre	Spey Road	RG30 4ED
10	Katesgrove Children's Centre	Children's Centre	Waterloo Meadows	RG2 0BN
11	Youth Offending Services	Youth Offending	16 North Street	RG1 7DA
12	Caversham Children's Centre	Children's Centre	114 Amersham Road	RG4 5NA
13	South Reading Community Hub	Children's Centre	252 Northumberland Avenue	RG2 7QA



Appendix 5: Our Transformation Projects

WORKSTREAM	PROJECTS
A: Improving Practice Standards	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Safeguarding Transformation team 2. Practice Improvement Leadership
B: Developing Workforce Excellence	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 3. Achieve a stable workforce by recruiting permanent staff in children’s social care 4. Management Training Skills 5. Training and Development for Social Workers 6. Training for Safety Standards Model
C: Building Community Capacity	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 7. Pre-Birth Support Team 8. Family Reunification Team 9. Edge of Care Team (adolescents) 10. Revise Under 5s offer of Early Years and Children’s Centre provision 11. One Reading Partnership 12. Increased income for Education Welfare Officer and Youth Services
D. Stronger Stability for Children	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 13. Re-imagining Foster Care 14. Placement Solutions Team 15. Education and therapeutic support for young people moving within 20 miles of Reading
E: Consolidating Corporate Resilience	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 16. Strengthening commissioning function 17. Improved contract management 18. Design and implementation of supported lodgings for 16+ 19. Review direct payments 20. Renegotiation of SLAs 21. Review continued health contribution 22. Enhanced utilisation of capacity at our children’s homes 23. Additional children’s home for high needs young people (feasibility study) 24. Housing benefit claims for 18+ 25. SEND Commissioner 26. Business improvement, digitalisation and Traded Services 27. Transformation Programme team 28. Contingency for Restructure Funds

Appendix 6: Brighter Futures for Children KPIs

KPI Ref	Description	KPI category	Children's Social Services (Y/N)	Report period (freq.)	Date of first Measurement	Target	Tolerance for Contract Year 1 (19-20)	Comment
1	Timeliness of contact decision making (early help). Decision within 24 hours*	1	Y	Monthly	Apr 19	100%	>95%	
2	% of referrals with a decision made within 24 hours*	1	Y	Monthly	Apr 19	100%	>90%	
3	% of children who become subject of child protection plan for second or subsequent time within the last two (2) years	2	Y	Monthly	Apr 19	<10%	<10%	



KPI Ref	Description	KPI category	Children's Social Services (Y/N)	Report period (freq.)	Date of first Measurement	Target	Tolerance for Contract Year 1 (19-20)	Comment
4	% of referrals which are re-referrals within 12 months	2	Y	Monthly	Apr 19	<23%	<25%	
5	% CLA who have been looked after for 2+ years in the same placement	1	Y	Monthly	Apr 19	>85%	>60%	
6	% CLA who have experienced 3+ placements in last 12 months	2	Y	Monthly	Apr 19	<10%	<12%	

KPI Ref	Description	KPI category	Children's Social Services (Y/N)	Report period (freq.)	Date of first Measurement	Target	Tolerance for Contract Year 1 (19-20)	Comment
7	% of CLA placements more than 20 miles from Reading (i.e. from home address of child)	2	Y	Monthly	Apr 19	<15%	<30%	
8	% care leavers NEET (17-21 year old)	1	Y	Monthly	Apr 19	<20%	<35%	
9	Voice of the child (measured CLA aged over 4 who attend or contribute to their own reviews)	2	Y	Monthly	Apr 19	93%	<85%	We are working on the development of a participation strategy going forward, with a range of additional measurements of the voice of the child, which may include the Mind Of My Own (MOMO) app.



KPI Ref	Description	KPI category	Children's Social Services (Y/N)	Report period (freq.)	Date of first Measurement	Target	Tolerance for Contract Year 1 (19-20)	Comment
10	Social worker turnover (no of FTE leavers / average FTE employed)	Mgmt info	Y	Quarterly	Apr 19	15%	20%	Number of Social Worker leavers over number of employed Social Workers
11	Social work agency staffing rate (agency staff FTE as % of total)	Mgmt info	Y	Quarterly	Apr 19	16%	35%	Number of agency staff as a percentage of Social Work establishment
12	Percentage of days lost to sickness / number of Children and Families Social workers x 253	Mgmt info	Y	Quarterly	Apr 19	3%	3.5%	

KPI Ref	Description	KPI category	Children's Social Services (Y/N)	Report period (freq.)	Date of first Measurement	Target	Tolerance for Contract Year 1 (19-20)	Comment
13	% of families who achieve sustained improved outcomes (and secure a Payment By results (PBR)		Y	Termly (aligned with school attendance)	Apr 19 (% of 1170 eligible families)	80%	<70%	This is a Troubled Families indicator
14	Education. % Pupils provided with a school place on offer day (primary)	2	N	Annual	Apr 19	95%	<5%	
15	Education. % Pupils provided with a school place on offer day (secondary)	2	N	Annual	Apr 19	96%	<4%	
16	Education. % Education, health care plans completed within 20 weeks	1	N	Annual	Apr 19	72%	<10%	
17	Youth Offending Service: Re-offending rate	2	Y	Quarterly via YJB	July 19	Annual target of: 35.8% (PCC target) 40.5% (South East average)	>5%	We are committed to meeting the PCC and SE average annual targets and exceeding them, where possible.



NB: The % of file audits rated good or outstanding will be a Year 2 target. In Year 1 we will work on achieving a consistency of marking audits, as well as training and developing staff understanding of what 'Good' looks like. In the Year 2 target, we should be able show a demonstrable change in grading from audit to audit.