

SERVICE DIRECTOR EDUCATION REPORT

To: **Children and Young People's Committee**

Meeting Date: **15 September 2020**

From: **Jonathan Lewis - Service Director, Education
(Cambridgeshire and Peterborough)**

Electoral division(s): **All**

Forward Plan ref: **Not Applicable** *Key decision:* **No**

Purpose: **To provide an overview of the activity in the Education Directorate during the Covid-19 crisis and our approach moving forward. The report also contains some service updates around the future direction for our approach and members are asked to review officers views in these areas.**

Recommendation: **The Committee is asked to:**

- a) Note the issues outlined in this paper and comment as appropriate.**
- b) Confirm the reduced Published Admissions Number (PAN) for Burwell VC Primary School to 60, effective for entry to Reception from September 2021.**
- c) Consider whether there are any areas within the report where they require further updates in future Service Director reports.**

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1.0 BACKGROUND

- 1.1 The purpose of this report is to outline the latest position on Covid-19 and restarting education in Cambridgeshire. The report also outlines key service updates from across the Education Directorate so Members are fully briefed on the challenges we face moving forward in the autumn term.

2.0 Update on Covid-19 and Education

- 2.1 Since the 20th March 2020, schools and setting have remained formally closed. During the spring and summer term, they opened first to critical worker and vulnerable children before wider opening to children in early years, reception, year 1, year 6 and years 10 and 12. On the 1st September 2020, schools and settings formally re-opening in line with the Education Act 1996.
- 2.2 The latest highlight report for responding to the Covid-19 position can be found in Appendix 1.
- 2.3 The response to Covid-19 in Cambridgeshire has been magnificent. Schools, settings, academy trusts, the Local Authority, the Diocesan bodies and other parties have worked collaboratively to ensure our children and staff were safe and supported during this difficult time.
- 2.4 I would like to acknowledge the contribution of a few key players during the time –
- Andrew Read, Diocesan Director of Education, and his team from the Diocese of Ely in leading the Cambridgeshire Academy Trust CEO forum.
 - Tracy Bryden, Headteacher of Roundhouse Primary Academy and chair of Cambridgeshire Primary Headteachers association.
 - Mark Woods, CEO of Cambridge Meridian Academy Trust, who chaired the Cambridgeshire Secondary Headteacher Association.
 - Dr Kim Taylor OBE, Executive Headteacher of Spring Common Special School, who leads the Cambridgeshire Special School Headteachers group.
 - The support we have received from the local Regional School Commissioner team.

In these very challenging times, they have all played a role to support the health and wellbeing of staff and children in schools and the Local Authority is incredibly grateful for their hard work and dedication during this time. I would also like to acknowledge the role of all staff in the Education service who have worked so hard to ensure Cambridgeshire responds appropriately to this crisis.

3. Key Service Updates

Education Capital and Place Planning

3.1 *Acquisition of Playing Field Land from the Littleport Leisure Trust*

On 18 August 2020, the Capital Programme Board considered the business case for the acquisition of playing field land from the adjacent Littleport Leisure Trust (LLT) and its subsequent inclusion in the landholding of the Littleport Education Campus. It supported the acquisition of this land at an initial valuation of £150,000 to be funded from the budget available within the Education Capital Programme for site acquisition and development. The final acquisition figure will be subject to an independent valuation and associated legal costs.

- 3.2 The key reason for supporting the acquisition of this land is to future proof the site to allow for the further development of the Littleport Education Campus. At present, the campus consists of a 600 place secondary school, a 110 place area special school and a 48 place early years and childcare setting. Littleport is an area identified in the East Cambridgeshire Local Plan for significant housing growth. In response, the Littleport Education Campus has been identified as the location for a new 420 place (2FE) primary school together with a 300 place (2FE) expansion of the secondary school.
- 3.3 The Education Campus currently has, within the landholding leased to the Active Learning Trust (ALT), the academy sponsor of both the secondary and special schools, sufficient playing field land to meet the area guidelines established by the Department for Education (DfE) in Building Bulletin (BB) 103. Once education provision on site is expanded in the way described there would be a shortfall of approximately two hectares. This could be made good through using the opportunity now available to purchase the playing field from the LLT and future proof the site to allow for this further development of the Campus. The alternative options outlined below would both be more expensive:
- The acquisition of neighbouring farmland and its re-development for use as a playing field. This would also require planning permission for change of use.
 - Construct an artificial full sized non-turf pitch on the existing site; area counts as double in DfE area guidelines.
- 3.4 The Commercial and Investment Committee will take the final decision on whether or not to approve this proposal.
- 3.5 ***Cambridgeshire Determined Arrangements for Admission to School 2021/22***
- The consultation that took place between 18th November 2019 and 13th January 2020 proposed only one of Published Admission Number (PAN), a reduction from 80 to 60 of the PAN for Eastfield Infant School in St Ives. The school, which is maintained by the Authority, requested the change. No objections or comments were received to this proposal during the consultation period.
- 3.6 The only response received during the consultation period was in respect of Cambridgeshire's Fair Access arrangements. Coleridge Community College made comments in respect of the City having its own Fair Access panel. This arrangement has been in place for some time now, with several meetings taking place before the COVID-19 lockdown. Fair Access meetings are taking place virtually at present.
- 3.7 In line with the government's requirements, the admission arrangements for 2021/22 were the determined by 28 February 2020. The 'Determined' documents are available on the Council's website.
- 3.8 Subsequent to this, we became aware of the need to reduce the PAN for Burwell Village College Primary following analysis of forecast data.
- 3.9 Burwell Voluntary Controlled Primary School was extended to 630 places (3 forms of entry (FE)) in advance of a major new housing development of 350 homes planned in the village. The Published Admission Number (PAN) for the school was increased to 90 effective for entry into Reception from September 2017 to bring it into line with the new capacity. However, the housing development has not proceeded and is not expected to for a number of years. As a result, reception intakes at the school have remained around 60 as the primary-aged population has not increased as forecast. The information that we have on pre-school year groups living in the catchment suggest that the admissions for the foreseeable future will remain just below 60.

- 3.10 Currently the school is deemed by the Office for Standards in Education (Ofsted) to require improvement.
- 3.11 In recognition of this and the challenges created for schools in cases where their PANs do not provide a close match to anticipated need for places, on 21 June 2020 the Policy and Operations Manager for Admissions submitted a request to the Office of the Schools Adjudicator for an In-Year Variation to the school's PAN to reduce it to 60 effective for entry to Reception from September 2021.
- 3.12 On 13 August 2020, the Office of the Schools Adjudicator wrote to the Council to request confirmation that the CYP Committee has considered and given its approval to this change to the determined admission arrangements for 2021/22. The Committee is, therefore, recommended to support the school and the Council, as the admissions authority, with this requested change.

3.13 ***Post 16 Review for Cambridgeshire***

Under the 'Apprenticeships, Skills, Children and Learning Act 2009' the Local Authority, has a statutory duty:

- to secure sufficient suitable education and training opportunities to meet the reasonable needs of all young people in their area, defined as over compulsory school age but under 19, or aged 19 to 25 and subject to a learning disability assessment
 - to secure sufficient suitable education and training for young people subject to youth detention
 - to secure sufficient education and training for young people who wish to travel into their area to learn.
- 3.14 In other phases of education in recent years the role of the Council has moved away from being the provider to that of the commissioner of learner places. For post-16 provision the Council's role is less commissioner and more that of influencer, working with schools and colleges to encourage them to make suitable and sufficient provision available in order for the Council to be able to meet its statutory duties.
- 3.15 Our data analysis had shown that by 2025, the numbers of 16 and 17 year olds are forecast to increase across the County as follows:
- Cambridge, East Cambridgeshire and South Cambridgeshire: +2,024 (24%)
 - Huntingdonshire: +376 (9%)
 - Fenland: +189 (8%)
- 3.16 In 2019 the decision was taken to undertake a county-wide review of post-16 provision in response to this forecast growth working with providers to ensure we have appropriate provision. Work included:
- refining the forecast methodology
 - auditing existing physical capacity within the sector
 - meetings with Principals and CEOs

The range of tools used to forecast demand does not just include the Council's current population model which takes into account all relevant demographic trends and future housing development plans, but also student destinations after they finish Year 11 (aged 16).

- 3.17 The review has concluded that the combination of planned new provision (Alconbury Weald, Cambourne and Northstowe) and proposals put forward by the sector during the review, are sufficient to expand the supply of post 16 places to meet the forecast demand across the County and will also continue to provide some market flexibility. Additional provision is not required before 2025. It will be up to providers to decide when they bring on stream the additional places they have identified. The attached technical paper (Appendix 2) gives details specific to different districts of the County.
- 3.18 The response from the sector has been generally positive with proposals received from the full range of sector providers and from all parts of Cambridgeshire. The appended chart (Appendix 3) outlines the type, location and timing of additional capacity proposed by providers.
- 3.19 The Council will continue to plan provision on the basis of the policy position agreed by Members in September 2007, namely that secondary schools should be established to serve the 11-16 age range, unless the best option for securing additional post-16 capacity, in response to demographic growth, is identified as the provision of an 11-19 school.

Cambridge Mathematics School (CMS)

- 3.20 The Cambridge Mathematics School is a specialist sixth form offering a highly refined A Level offer of Maths and related sciences. The school is currently in the pre-opening stage of a successful free school application. It is being opened by The Learning Alliance (Previously CET and MET) in partnership with Cambridge University.
- 3.21 To ensure members are briefed on the proposed new sixth form, the Learning Alliance have asked the following is shared with members of the committee –

“The school is modelled on the hugely successful Kings Maths School <https://www.kingsmathsschool.com/> and Exeter Maths School <https://www.exetermathematicsschool.ac.uk/> both of whom have both progress and attainment scores that are amongst the highest in the country, including both the state and private sector. In fact, Kings Maths School had the highest average grade of any state school in 2019 (average grade A+).

Maths school specific aims are:

Providing a stretching education that is developed in collaboration with leading mathematics universities, with a greater focus on wider mathematical problem solving, so that young people are better able to manage the jump to degree-level mathematics;

- Bringing together top performing mathematics pupils into a small school environment fostering a close-knit, nurturing learning community; and*
- Providing learning and tackling disadvantage/under-representation through delivering significant outreach that could benefit the rest of the system and influence mathematics teaching both pre and post 16, to complement the work of Maths Hubs4 and universities’ widening participation commitments.*

When full the school will cater for 200 students (100 in each of year 12 and 13). All students will study Maths and Further Maths and they will choose from a small range of options such as predominantly Physics but may include Computer Science, Chemistry or Economics for their third option.

The government is keen to set up a network of Maths schools that cover the whole of the UK. Liverpool Maths School opens in September 2020 and other schools have been approved. The Cambridge Maths School will serve the whole of East Anglia.

We now have an agreement with Brookgate, agreed by the DfE and by the Under Secretary of State for the School System, Baroness Berridge, to develop a site on the Cambridge North development. We are working with the DfE and Brookgate to secure planning approval in late 2021 and opening by September 2023. Brookgate are releasing an on-line platform to communicate and consult on their plans for Cambridge North, likely to go live in October. This will publicly feature the Maths School and may generate some local interest.

We are extremely excited about the opportunities afforded by this site in relation to accessibility to a large East Anglian catchment area and the close proximity to a new and well-connected transport hub at Cambridge North Station. The excellent access to public transport alongside a sustainable school development will ensure the school has a significantly positive environmental impact. The central location of the school site will also allow significant access to and dissemination of the substantial outreach and enrichment offer that CMS will provide to the local community and local education providers.

We would welcome the opportunity to discuss the Cambridge Maths School in more detail with any committee members.”

3.22 Duke of Edinburgh

On 7 July 2020, we launched a 30 day consultation period with the Awards Manager for the Duke of Edinburgh Scheme on a proposal to make that role and the linked role of Young People's Worker redundant following changes introduced by the Duke of Edinburgh charity which came into effect on 1 September. Senior Management Team (SMT) approved the decision to consult on the proposals. The outcome of the consultation which concluded on 6 August was that both roles would become redundant, with the post holder leaving the Council's employment on 18 November. To mitigate the impact, it has been agreed that the Council's Licence to run Gold Residential Awards for the Duke of Edinburgh will transfer to the Education Outdoor Centres.

Education Capital and Place Planning Service Updates during Covid-19

3.23 Cambridgeshire Music

Over 6000 instrumental on-line learning lessons delivered between the start of lock-down and the end of term. 102 Cambridgeshire schools participated in the Virtual Big Sing a Partnership project with Norfolk Music Hub involving national celebrities leading the singing together from home and school.

- 3.24 40 staff were fully redeployed to Shielded Response Team (making up about ¼ of the total workforce). At the peak of the lock-down period, they were handling 1404 clients (almost 20% of the caseload across the county). Those staff have now all returned to work in the Service.

3.25 Education ICT Service

946 laptops and digital devices issued to vulnerable children and young people to support their on-line learning by the end of the summer term. This has been a collaborative project with the Community Hub and with support from a range of colleagues. Next stage will be to agree priorities for allocation of the surplus equipment and distribution arrangements for this.

- 3.26 Eastnet Broadband project (migration of all Cambridgeshire schools onto a new fibre optic network giving safe, secure fast and stable access to the Internet) has been completed.

3.27 ***Admissions & Attendance Service***

The Appeals Service designed and implemented a successful, temporary, written appeals process enabling all Transition Appeals to be heard by the end of August. From the start of September we have been offering a 'virtual' appeals service using either Skype or Microsoft Teams.

- 3.28 The annual admissions transitions round opens on the 10th September for both places in Reception and Year 7 secondary for entry in September 2021. The In Year application process is on track and ready for busy period as we head towards census.
- 3.29 We are closely monitoring the return of pupils to school to identify any increase in the numbers of parents making the decision to home educate their children and conversely, any increase in the number of applications for students entering Year 11 who have been educated at home to return to mainstream school in response to the issues with GCSE this year. We will continue to work with the Elective Home Education (EHE) community to manage the anxieties and to offer support.
- 3.30 The Education Welfare Benefits Team are continuing to support families and schools as an unprecedented 1734 children became eligible for Free School Meals since the beginning of the COVID-19 pandemic.
- 3.31 The Attendance Team are continuing to offer advice, and support schools to ensure that they adopt a supportive and nurturing approach in the first instance to manage any school attendance related issues before any type of legal interventions are considered. We have developed and created a number of different communication channels to get the key messages out to schools and parents in reference to school attendance matters, including a Frequently Asked Questions document.

3.32 ***Home to School/College Transport***

In the absence of guidance from the DfE, we developed a set of principles to inform decisions on transport arrangements for September. Alongside this, all operators have been asked to complete risk assessments for each of their contracted routes. Key messages around use of face coverings by children aged 11+ on Local Authority transport were sent out with bus passes ahead of the start of term.

- 3.33 Parents/carers will shortly be asked to complete a short on-line survey to enable us to get a better understanding of how children are getting to and from school and how this changed since last academic year before the pandemic closures. The information collated will be used to develop an action plan, in conjunction with the Combined Authority, in response to the issues identified e.g., with regard to congestion and capacity on the transport network and to further promote sustainable modes of transport.
- 3.34 The EU Notice and Tender for an initial two year Independent Travel Training pilot was published in July. The deadline for responses has been extended to Monday 5 October in response to the challenges presented by COVID-19. Bidders are being asked to submit a detailed mobilisation plan which takes account of the current restrictions on social distancing and the latest guidance on use of public transport and the wearing of face coverings for those aged 11+. The earliest the programme is expected to date is February 2021.

3.35 ***Place Planning & Education Capital***

A combination of the major fire at Duxford Church of England Community Primary School, roof leaks and floods at a number of primary schools around the County and existing planned capital investment work, has kept the team very busy over the summer break. The cross-Council response to the Duxford fire in liaison with the Diocese of Ely has been exemplary. The school was able to open for all years as planned on 7 September 2020.

3.36 ***Education Safeguarding***

Since the start of lockdown, the Team have provided a dedicated advice line to support schools with concerns and queries about potential child exploitation and risks to health and wellbeing. Alongside this, they have kept schools up-to-date with key changes in government policy and adaptations needed to safeguarding processes including Keeping Children Safe in Education. At the start of September, the Team were able to recommence some face-to-face training, with appropriate social distancing measures in place, initially focused on new Designated Safeguarding Leads, Domestic Abuse Leads and Prevent Leads, working through the backlog of cancelled courses (250 participants) since March.

School and Setting Improvement

- 3.37 In February, we appointed Jason Howard to the role of Assistant Director – Schools and Setting Improvement across Cambridgeshire and Peterborough. Jason Howard is an HMI (Her Majesty Inspector) with Ofsted and joins us on a 12 month secondment. He was a Secondary School Headteacher in Lincolnshire and previously worked as a Regional Director for a large multi-academy trust. His role will focus on leading school improvement.

3.38 ***Early Years' Service***

From March 2020 the service moved to business continuity using new and existing virtual communication channels, this enabled us to support Cambridgeshire's 1200 providers. Our key objective was to support access to quality early years and childcare cross county for children classed as vulnerable and children whose parents were essential keyworkers.

- 3.39 A number of key functions have been delivered by the team including –

- direct advice to schools and settings, aligned to government guidance,
- working with Healthcare Trusts to determine need, the development and delivery of a relevant and online training programme (including a roll out of face to face paediatric first aid essential for offering education to the early years foundation stage),
- the swift development of an emergency Family Information Service to ensure that we could provide advice to parents on accessing provision.
- business and governance support and guidance.
- Working with families of early years children with an Education Health and Care Plan and those in receipt of SENIF (Special Education and Inclusion Funding) to ensure they can access provision and their welfare is well supported.
- Analysis and reporting of daily opening / closure data collection.
- targeted virtual support to settings where quality is compromised
- Changing our funding policy to support provider viability.

- 3.40 Alongside this we opened as the 'Provider of Last Resort' a provision at Trumpington. This is our second provision of this kind with the Oasis provision in Wisbech.

3.41 Our priorities for this term focus on recovery and sustaining enough quality early years and wrap around places, delivery of online continued professional development/qualifications and essential training, supporting early adopters in schools and school managed provision, gathering and analysing child level and setting development data to steer our work.

3.42 ***School Safeguarding***

Safeguarding is everyone's responsibility and must sit at the heart of everything that we do. In the overwhelming majority of our schools, safeguarding culture and practice is strong. However, we know from recent inspections in Cambridgeshire that school that demonstrate high standards can often be overlooked for formal safeguarding audits. As a result, we are making small but significant changes to the way in which we work that are designed to give us an early warning of any such slippage. One or more aspects of safeguarding culture and practice will be checked whenever a school improvement, curriculum, Early Years or SEND adviser visits a school. A new system to facilitate the easy recording of what is found, school by school, will be in place by September. This will enable anyone to see, at a glance, all of the information about safeguarding standards at a school. We will also introduce additional checks to ascertain the extent to which governors are meeting their safeguarding responsibilities.

3.43 The key actions we have taken are –

- Key colleagues have reviewed the draft safeguarding action plan
- A 'question bank' has been provided for colleagues to use as possible prompts around gathering safeguarding evidence on visits to schools
- Notes of Visit and annual monitoring visit templates have been updated so that they contain a dedicated 'safeguarding' section
- Guidance provided to colleagues around which safeguarding checks will happen over the course of the year, as a minimum, and who will carry these out
- Annual update training for schools, EY and SEND teams and a safeguarding knowledge 'self-audit' survey created, so that colleagues can identify safeguarding topics they are confident about and any aspects on which they would welcome further training.
- A 'chronolator' has been established so that colleagues can easily input safeguarding-related information about the schools that they visit
- Generic safeguarding performance management targets have set for all school improvement advisors.
- Safeguarding to be routinely checked and evidence recorded by school improvement advisors, curriculum advisers, early years and SEND colleagues who visit schools.
- We have prioritised safeguarding audits so that schools deemed 'high risk', and those that have not had a review for two years or more, will be visited first from September 20
- Where safeguarding audits evidence concerns about governance, governance reviews are put in place in a timely manner

3.44 ***Post-COVID recovery***

School improvement advisers have been working to support headteachers as they draw up post-COVID recovery plans. The recovery plan template for, written in collaboration with Tracy Fielding (Senior HMI from Ofsted), contains a number of prompts to encourage long term, strategic thinking with the post-COVID context very much in mind. The prompts encourage headteachers to plan for both COVID recovery, and school improvement, under a range of headings including 'safeguarding', 'curriculum', 'governance', 'staffing' and 'leadership'. Headteachers have used the recovery planning document in different

ways, depending upon their school's context. Some have crafted three-year plans; others have considered the 2020-2021 academic year. The recovery planning template has been typically well-received. Many headteachers have remarked that the 'prompts' within it have encouraged them to think strategically as they plan, and that this has been welcome after the day-to-day nature of coping with the immediate COVID period.

3.45 **Curriculum**

Our curriculum advisers and others have been doing much to enable school leaders to keep developing the curriculum in key subject areas during the lockdown period – notably English, mathematics, PE and PSHE. The English and mathematics curriculum advisers carried out thirty 'virtual' school visits, and provided regular subject leader briefings and half-termly updates. Many schools purchased the PE scheme of work during lockdown, and the outside learning guidance, 'Drop Everything and Move', helped keep pupils active. The PSHE team has developed relationships and sex education guidance for schools.

3.46 In addition, materials to help schools with the provision of remote learning were distributed during the lockdown period. Many school leaders have given highly positive feedback about the curriculum team's 'Moving On Up' summer learning packs of English and mathematics resources. Thousands of parents have accessed the online Home Learning Hub, downloading English, mathematics, science PE, Early Years and other learning materials, and accessing resources to promote pupils' well-being.

3.47 We are exploring a potential collaboration with the Haringey Education Partnership to develop curriculum schemes of work in the foundation subjects. Christine Counsell, one of the UK's leading curriculum experts, and others have been working with over 150 Haringey schools to create 'joined up' schemes of work, together with teaching resources, in History, Geography and religious studies. This is a multi-year project, during which other subjects, including science, will be included. The final result will be high quality schemes of work and teaching resources that schools can use and adapt, without every individual school having to 'reinvent the wheel.' Given the contribution other curriculum areas make to pupils' reading and writing skills, and Ofsted's curriculum focus, these resources would be a considerable advantage. A virtual presentation will take place to our headteachers during the autumn term and we will gauge the extent of interest thereafter.

3.48 **Outdoor Centres**

The three outdoor centres – Burwell, Grafham Water and Stibbington joined the School Improvement Service in April. Since then there has been a great deal of work completed to ensure that the centres remain financially viable and offer the best possible opportunities for Cambridgeshire children and also children and adults from other parts of the country. A programme manager was appointed to oversee the work of the centres and to draw up a plan for improvements for the future. There is now a long term strategic plan for the centres and a clear way forward. A programme board was instigated, members include Cllr Bywater and Cllr Schuman and Cllr Goldsack. The Board meets on a monthly basis to monitor and challenge the work of the three centres.

3.49 As the centres offer residential experiences the work has been hampered greatly by COVID 19. The centres have tried to offer 'outreach support' to schools with some success, with a few schools taking up this offer. Grafham Water Centre worked with social care staff to open during the period as a residential centre for children in care. This was most successful with one child obtaining an outdoor education qualification whilst he was at the centre and described it as 'paradise'. A number of staff from Grafham Water were furloughed during the period which has prevented further loss to the budget. Some of the

Grafham Water staff were redeployed to work at the hotel for the homeless in Peterborough, where they continue to do an excellent job.

- 3.50 During the summer term a significant amount of capital building works has been carried out and this will continue into the Autumn term. Grafham Water will have a large, new workshop, Burwell will have new windows and Stibbington improvements to the bedrooms. Work has been carried out to track the finances of the three centres more accurately and to develop a more business-like approach. Work has started on improved marketing and planning new offers for the future. Branding the three centres under the heading of 'Cambridgeshire Outdoors', with a new logo and strapline was the initial step of bringing the three centres together. There is still more work planned to improve branding and publicise the work of the centres.
- 3.51 The Leadership of the three centres has been reviewed and a restructured planned, following consultation which ends on 17th September. The plan is to have one Head of Centre across Burwell and Stibbington and a deputy Head in each centre. This will increase management capacity and will lead to greater savings by collaboration and sharing staff and processes. The job description of the Head of Grafham Water has been revised to reflect the Board's increased expectations, particularly around improving the commercial aspects of the centre.
- 3.52 Links have been made with members of the School Improvement Service and it is planned to review the quality of teaching and learning at the three centres and to improve the profile of the centres with Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Primary Schools

SEND and Inclusion

3.53 ***Return to school arrangements***

Special schools in Cambridge have worked well together to support each other and ensure they have been able to offer continued education to as many SEND children as possible. This has been co-ordinated through regular (twice weekly) Head teacher meetings, which also included head teachers from SEND schools in Peterborough and was attended by various officers from the SEND service, partners from transport, health and social care. This has enabled schools to develop a joint plan of action and agree a consistent format for school risk assessments to support a return to school in September. Risk assessments for all the SEND schools have been completed and reviewed by the LA and has resulted in the vast majority of children being able to return to school from September, see table over:

School * indicates a Maintained School	% of pupils expected to be attending from 3 rd September 2020	% of pupils expected to be attending from 21 st September 2020
The Centre School	32% from 4/9 70% from 7/9 100% from 8/9	100%
Granta (*)	95%	98%
The Harbour School (*)	100%	100%
Highfield Ely Academy	95%	95%

Highfield Littleport Academy	100%	100%
TBAP Cambridge	100%	100%
TBAP St Neots	89%	90%
Samuel Pepys School (*)	100%	100%
Castle School (*)	86%	98%

3.55 Although all SEND schools were focussed on providing 100% return, there have been some instances where children are still considered critically at risk and head teachers are working closely with health colleagues to gain the best guidance to enable effective mitigation to be implemented.

3.56 The LA will continue to support a return to school for all SEND children and will monitor the offer of a continued appropriate education offer during the interim period, which will be supported by individual risk assessments and regular (at least 3 weekly) reviews. Transport for SEND schools has been arranged and the transport team have worked incredibly hard to provide as much support as possible to 'protect' agree bubbles and not stress the budget constraints too much. Every SEND school has an individually agreed transport plan, which is helping to support the effective return to school.

3.57 ***Education, Health and Care Plan (EHCP) easements update***

In May 2020 the DfE revised legislation with regard to the management and assessment of EHC plans in response to the COVID-19 pandemic. The arrangements were temporary and the modification of the regulations (easement duties) allowing local authorities to use "reasonable endeavours" to deliver an EHCP ended on July 31st 2020. The relaxation of the rules about the timescales for carrying out an EHC needs assessment and issuing a plan end on September 25th.

3.58 The easements work will be halted as of the 25th September. We have not yet received responses from all parents or schools and the LA will continue to work to gather this information until the end of September, however, the working party group have agreed that a line must be drawn on this work to enable 'business as usual' to return. The SEND team feel we can effectively demonstrate that we have used our best endeavours to undertake a mammoth task.

3.59 The planning meetings will continue with a focus on monitoring of delivery of EHCPs during COVID e.g. possible need to reconsider if further lockdown occurs and in order to address any emerging issues as schools reopen.

3.60 ***Business as usual***

Since March, we have seen an increase in the number of application for EHCP's. This has been managed exceptionally well by the Statutory Assessment Team, supported by a team of redeployed staff from other services, which have helped to undertake the work required to record our reasonable endeavours, but also have supported the administration of EHCP's. We have improved substantially the percentage of plans being issued within the appropriate timescale. This outlines a monumental effort by the SAT team as they have been able to improve meeting timescales even through the period of time that has seen workloads hugely increase.

3.61 There is an expectation that application for EHCP's may increase further as a direct consequence of the 'lockdown position'. The SEND team are working with schools to support additional needs over a short and medium term and we are engaged with a national funding stream to support mental health and wellbeing in all schools. This will hopefully allow school to support children, who will bring with them various degrees of trauma associated with being out of school for so long or in the most extreme cases may have lost family members due to the Covid-19 Virus. The SEND team are prepared to support the recovery programme over the short, medium and longer term.

3.62 **SEND Recovery Progress during the COVID 19 Period**

As previously outlined to the Committee, Cambridgeshire has an accumulated deficit on its high needs block funding arising a significant increase in pupils requiring support and the inequitable funding we have received. As a result of these pressures we have developed an SEND recovery board to consider areas for change that might reduce our expenditure supporting SEND. During the Covid-19 crisis we paused on SEND Recovery work that required engagement and consultation with schools and providers. Work continued on background and internal work where capacity allowed. The details of progress made on the SEND Recovery Plan since the restrictions imposed by Covid-19 are outlined below:

1. We intend consulting on changing the level of funding we provide for top up funding in mainstream schools. We have been looking at the levels and process of funding in other Local Authorities and we will be bringing proposals to the committee in the autumn for this change. We are preparing to consult on the proposed changes in January 2021.
2. The review of all high cost top up allocations in special schools has been completed, this has delivered £381k in savings and improvements in casework practice. Work is now starting on the review of mainstream high cost top ups.
3. The RAISE (Resilience and Independence in SEND Environment) project to review high cost placements to generate savings began to see diminishing returns. This project has been closed, but activity transferred to business as usual.
4. A strategic forecasting strategy and model has been developed. A SEND commissioning work stream has been established. We now have the tools and structure in place to have greater strategic oversight on commissioning activity and cross functional working between Commissioning and the SEND Service enabling more informed decisions about our future provision.
5. A new model for the Behaviour attendance and improvement partnerships (BAIPS) has been progressed, we expect this to be implemented during November. A 10% reduction in funding will be implemented in September 2020, delivering a £497k saving.
6. A comprehensive review has been completed on the Enhanced Resource Bases and recommendations approved by the SEND Recovery Board. Work is now in hand to progress the implementation of changes which will include further review of specific high cost provision, revised contracts and decommissioning of places.
7. The Social, Emotional and Mental Health review was completed and recommendations shared with stakeholders. The delivery action plan will now be developed.
8. Work has been progressed on the development of a Cambridgeshire Local Offer microsite to make our local offer more accessible and appealing, which will in turn

contribute towards managing the demand for our services. Officers from across People & Communities Directorate have been working to ensure content is updated for the new site which is being developed in house by the Communications web team.

9. Work has now been completed by Business Intelligence on the development of a SEND dashboard providing management and performance information for the Statutory Assessment Team. In addition Business Intelligence has worked with the SAT team to make improvements to business processes and systems. This work has progressed well during Covid and expected to be finished by October.
10. The SEND Quality assurance framework and process has been implemented. Full implementation of the four level audit process came into effect from 1 September 2020.

- 3.63 The SEND recovery board has continued to meet to continue to support the on-going progress of these work-streams and work towards implementing savings where-ever possible. The focus now is for the progress to accelerate as work-streams come to their conclusion and are implemented. There is still a significant amount of work to complete and implementation may take longer than anticipated if we return to a level of lockdown, where, as agreed in March, it would not be appropriate to conduct consultations.

4. ALIGNMENT WITH CORPORATE PRIORITIES

4.1 A good quality of life for everyone

- 4.1.1 Providing high quality education should enhance the skills of the local workforce and provide essential childcare services for working parents or those seeking to return to work. Schools and early years and childcare services are providers of local employment.

4.2 Thriving places for people to live

- 4.2.1 There are no significant implications for this priority.

4.3 The best start for Cambridgeshire's Children

- 4.3.1 There are no significant implications for this priority.

4.4 Net zero carbon emissions for Cambridgeshire by 2050

- 4.4.1 There are no significant implications for this priority.

5. SIGNIFICANT IMPLICATIONS

5.1 Resource Implications

- 5.1.1 There are no significant implications.

5.2 Procurement/Contractual/Council Contract Procedure Rules Implications

- 5.2.1 There are no significant implications.

5.3 Statutory, Legal and Risk Implications

- 5.3.1 There are no significant implications.

5.4 **Equality and Diversity Implications**

5.4.1 There are no significant implications.

5.5 **Engagement and Communications Implications**

5.5.1 There are no significant implications.

5.6 **Localism and Local Member Involvement**

5.6.1 The reports cover issues collectively across the county.

5.7 **Public Health Implications**

5.7.1 Public Health Directorate and Education Directorate working closely on the Covid response and safe reopening of schools.

Source Documents	Location
Determined admission arrangements 2021-22	https://www.cambridgeshire.gov.uk/residents/children-and-families/schools-learning/apply-for-a-school-place/annual-consultation-and-determined-admissions-arrangements/determined-admission-arrangements-2021-22