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Notice of Meeting

People Overview and Scrutiny Panel

Councillors Helen Taylor (Chair), Devon Davies (Vice-Chair), Mandy Brar, Suzanne Cross, Carole Da Costa, Jack Douglas, Genevieve Gosling, George Shaw, John Story, Mark Jervis (Academy Governors Representative), Catherine Hobbs (Portsmouth Diocese) and Tony Wilson (Oxford Diocese)

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Thursday 12 October 2023 7.00 pm

Council Chamber - Town Hall - Maidenhead & on [RBWM YouTube](#)

Agenda

Item	Description	Page
1	Apologies for Absence To receive any apologies for absence from Panel Members.	-
2	Declarations of Interest To receive any declarations of interest from Panel Members.	3 - 4
3	Minutes To consider and approve the minutes of the meeting held on 6 th June 2023.	5 - 10
4	Annual Complaints and Compliments Report 2022/23 The purpose of the report is to share with People Overview and Scrutiny the annual complaints and compliments report for 2022/23 before it is published on the council's website. Whilst Local Authorities are not required to produce an annual report on complaints relating to corporate activities, and are only required to do so on those submitted about Adults and Children's Services, this report details all compliments and complaints made by or on behalf of customers, that are investigated under the: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Adults Statutory Complaints process• Children's Statutory Complaints process• Children's Corporate Complaints process• RBWM's Formal Corporate Complaints policy The Panel are asked to note the report and agree that the report is published on the council's website and that the annual report continues to be produced and presented at future Overview and Scrutiny Panels.	11 - 32
5	Achieving for Children Annual Reports 2022/23 The Achieving for Children (AfC) Board of Directors has now approved the 2022/23 Impact Report, Equalities Report and Annual Report and Accounts. These annual reports provide information about AfC's impact and performance across the boroughs of Richmond, Kingston and Windsor and Maidenhead between April 2022 and March 2023. They are being presented to Cabinet to support the Council's oversight of AfCs performance in its role as joint owner of AfC.	33 - 218

	The Panel are asked to consider and scrutinise the report and make any relevant comments or recommendations for consideration by Cabinet, who will be considering the report at the end of October.	
6	<p>Children and Young People's Strategic Plan for RBWM</p> <p>Produced by RBWM and its partners from across the health and education sectors, this Children and Young People's Plan examines what we know about the health and wellbeing needs of our children and young people. It also sets out how, as a system, we are committed to working together and alongside families to address health inequalities to ensure all children and young people – including the most vulnerable – can enjoy happy, healthy and fulfilling lives.</p> <p>The Plan was considered by the Health and Wellbeing Board in July 2023, a referral was made by the Board for the Panel to also consider and scrutinise the Plan.</p> <p>The full Plan can be viewed on the Achieving for Children website. It is recommended that Panel Members read the Plan in advance of the meeting.</p>	Verbal Report
7	<p>Work Programme</p> <p>To review the ongoing work programme.</p> <p>The Panel are also asked to consider the two scoping documents attached.</p>	219 - 228

By attending this meeting, participants are consenting to the audio & visual recording being permitted and acknowledge that this shall remain accessible in the public domain permanently.

Please contact Mark Beeley, Mark.Beeley@RBWM.gov.uk, with any special requests that you may have when attending this meeting.

Published: 4 October 2023



MEMBERS' GUIDE TO DECLARING INTERESTS AT MEETINGS

Disclosure at Meetings

If a Member has not disclosed an interest in their Register of Interests, they **must make** the declaration of interest at the beginning of the meeting, or as soon as they are aware that they have a Disclosable Pecuniary Interest (DPI) or Other Registerable Interest. If a Member has already disclosed the interest in their Register of Interests they are still required to disclose this in the meeting if it relates to the matter being discussed.

Any Member with concerns about the nature of their interest should consult the Monitoring Officer in advance of the meeting.

Non-participation in case of Disclosable Pecuniary Interest (DPI)

Where a matter arises at a meeting which directly relates to one of your DPIs (summary below, further details set out in Table 1 of the Members' Code of Conduct) you must disclose the interest, **not participate in any discussion or vote on the matter and must not remain in the room** unless you have been granted a dispensation. If it is a 'sensitive interest' (as agreed in advance by the Monitoring Officer), you do not have to disclose the nature of the interest, just that you have an interest. Dispensation may be granted by the Monitoring Officer in limited circumstances, to enable you to participate and vote on a matter in which you have a DPI.

Where you have a DPI on a matter to be considered or is being considered by you as a Cabinet Member in exercise of your executive function, you must notify the Monitoring Officer of the interest and must not take any steps or further steps in the matter apart from arranging for someone else to deal with it.

DPIs (relating to the Member or their partner) include:

- *Any employment, office, trade, profession or vocation carried on for profit or gain.*
- *Any payment or provision of any other financial benefit (other than from the council) made to the councillor during the previous 12-month period for expenses incurred by him/her in carrying out his/her duties as a councillor, or towards his/her election expenses*
- *Any contract under which goods and services are to be provided/works to be executed which has not been fully discharged.*
- *Any beneficial interest in land within the area of the council.*
- *Any licence to occupy land in the area of the council for a month or longer.*
- *Any tenancy where the landlord is the council, and the tenant is a body in which the relevant person has a beneficial interest in the securities of.*
- *Any beneficial interest in securities of a body where:*
 - a) that body has a place of business or land in the area of the council, and*
 - b) either (i) the total nominal value of the securities exceeds £25,000 or one hundredth of the total issued share capital of that body or (ii) the total nominal value of the shares of any one class belonging to the relevant person exceeds one hundredth of the total issued share capital of that class.*

Any Member who is unsure if their interest falls within any of the above legal definitions should seek advice from the Monitoring Officer in advance of the meeting.

Disclosure of Other Registerable Interests

Where a matter arises at a meeting which **directly relates** to one of your Other Registerable Interests (summary below and as set out in Table 2 of the Members Code of Conduct), you must disclose the interest. **You may speak on the matter only if members of the public are also allowed to speak at the meeting** but otherwise **must not take part in any discussion or vote on the matter and must not remain in the room unless you have been granted a dispensation**. If it is a 'sensitive interest' (as agreed in advance by the Monitoring Officer), you do not have to disclose the nature of the interest.

Other Registerable Interests (relating to the Member or their partner):

You have an interest in any business of your authority where it relates to or is likely to affect:

- a) any body of which you are in general control or management and to which you are nominated or appointed by your authority*
- b) any body*
 - (i) exercising functions of a public nature*
 - (ii) directed to charitable purposes or*

one of whose principal purposes includes the influence of public opinion or policy (including any political party or trade union)

Disclosure of Non- Registerable Interests

Where a matter arises at a meeting which **directly relates** to your financial interest or well-being (and is not a DPI) or a financial interest or well-being of a relative or close associate, you must disclose the interest. **You may speak on the matter only if members of the public are also allowed to speak at the meeting** but otherwise **must not take part in any discussion or vote on the matter and must not remain in the room unless you have been granted a dispensation**. If it is a 'sensitive interest' (agreed in advance by the Monitoring Officer) you do not have to disclose the nature of the interest.

Where a matter arises at a meeting which **affects** –

- a. your own financial interest or well-being;
- b. a financial interest or well-being of a friend, relative, close associate; or
- c. a body included in those you need to disclose under DPIs as set out in Table 1 of the Members' code of Conduct

you must disclose the interest. In order to determine whether you can remain in the meeting after disclosing your interest the following test should be applied.

Where a matter **affects** your financial interest or well-being:

- a. to a greater extent than it affects the financial interests of the majority of inhabitants of the ward affected by the decision and;
- b. a reasonable member of the public knowing all the facts would believe that it would affect your view of the wider public interest

You may speak on the matter only if members of the public are also allowed to speak at the meeting but otherwise **must not take part in any discussion or vote on the matter and must not remain in the room unless you have been granted a dispensation**. If it is a 'sensitive interest' (agreed in advance by the Monitoring Officer, you do not have to disclose the nature of the interest.

Other declarations

Members may wish to declare at the beginning of the meeting any other information they feel should be in the public domain in relation to an item on the agenda; such Member statements will be included in the minutes for transparency.

Agenda Item 3

PEOPLE OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY PANEL

Tuesday 6 June 2023

Present: Councillors Helen Taylor (Chair), Devon Davies (Vice-Chair), Carole Da Costa, Mandy Brar, Suzanne Cross, Jack Douglas, Genevieve Gosling, John Story and Gurch Singh

Also in attendance: Councillor Adam Bermange

Also in attendance virtually: Councillor George Shaw

Officers: Mark Beeley, Lin Ferguson and Katharine Willmette

Election of Chair

Councillor Douglas proposed that Councillor Taylor be elected Chair of the People Overview and Scrutiny Panel for the 2023/24 municipal year. This was seconded by Councillor Cross.

Councillor Story proposed that Councillor Carole Da Costa be elected as Chair of the People Overview and Scrutiny Panel for the 2023/24 municipal year. This was seconded by Councillor Carole Da Costa.

A named vote was taken on the first nomination which was for Councillor Taylor to be elected as Chair.

The result was 7 for and 2 against and therefore Councillor Taylor was elected as Chair, with a named vote not occurring on Councillor Story's nomination.

Election of Councillor Taylor as Chair of the Panel for municipal year 2023/24 (Motion)	
Councillor Helen Taylor	For
Councillor Devon Davies	For
Councillor Carole Da Costa	Against
Councillor Mandy Brar	For
Councillor Suzanne Cross	For
Councillor Jack Douglas	For
Councillor Genevieve Gosling	For
Councillor John Story	Against
Councillor Gurch Singh	For
Carried	

AGREED: That Councillor Taylor be elected Chair of the People Overview and Scrutiny Panel for the 2023/24 municipal year.

Election of Vice Chair

Councillor Douglas proposed that Councillor Devon Davies be elected as Vice Chair of the People Overview and Scrutiny Panel for the 2023/24 municipal year. This was seconded by Councillor Brar.

Councillor Carole Da Costa then proposed herself as Vice Chair. This was seconded by Councillor Story.

A named vote was taken on the first nomination which was for Councillor Devon Davies to be elected as Vice Chair.

The result was 7 for and 2 against, therefore Councillor Devon Davies was elected as Vice Chair of the People Overview and Scrutiny Panel. A named vote did not occur on Councillor Carole Da Costa's nomination.

Election of Councillor Davies as Vice-Chair of the Panel for municipal year 2023/24 (Motion)	
Councillor Helen Taylor	For
Councillor Devon Davies	For
Councillor Carole Da Costa	Against
Councillor Mandy Brar	For
Councillor Suzanne Cross	For
Councillor Jack Douglas	For
Councillor Genevieve Gosling	For
Councillor John Story	Against
Councillor Gurch Singh	For
Carried	

AGREED: That Councillor Devon Davies be elected Vice Chair of the People Overview and Scrutiny Panel for the 2023/24 municipal year.

Apologies for Absence

Apologies were received from Councillor Shaw, with Councillor Gurch Singh attending as a substitute.

Apologies were also received from two Co-Optees of the Panel, Mark Jervis and Tony Wilson.

Declarations of Interest

No declarations of interest were made.

Minutes

The Panel noted and agreed to the minutes of the meeting held on 17th April 2023.

Work Programme

Mark Beeley, Principal Democratic Services Officer – Overview and Scrutiny, explained that the work programme was a plan of items which would be considered by the Panel over the course of the municipal year. There were a few suggestions which had been carried forward from the previous year, there were also two task and finish groups which the Panel needed to decide a course of action on.

The domestic abuse task and finish group had been arranged following the adoption of the RBWM Domestic Abuse Strategy, with the group having an initial meeting to decide a way forward. However, two of the three Councillors on this group were now part of the Cabinet. There was also a proposed task and finish group on air pollution, following the topic being referred by the Corporate Overview and Scrutiny Panel. This would look to consider the monitoring of air pollution performance across the borough and whether targets in this area were being achieved. Mark Beeley added that Panel Members could bring forward items of interest by filling out a scoping document.

Councillor Carole Da Costa said that the domestic abuse group had agreed that it would look to continue its work following the election. The RBWM domestic abuse coordinator was part of

the group and they had gathered a significant amount of information which could be provided to members of the group. She was keen to continue the task and finish group.

Councillor Devon Davies and Councillor Brar confirmed that they would be interested in being part of the group.

ACTION – Mark Beeley to work with Councillors and officers to arrange a meeting of the domestic abuse task and finish group.

Councillor Story felt that air pollution performance should be monitored periodically by the Panel.

Councillor Carole Da Costa believed that the item was best considered as part of a task and finish group, depending on how many Panel Members were interested in being part of the group it could be worth opening it up to Councillors on either the Corporate or Place Overview and Scrutiny Panel.

Councillor Cross said that she chaired a meeting on Bray Parish Council where air pollution had frequently come up as a key issue, she was keen to see this area scrutinised.

Councillor Cross and Councillor Douglas highlighted that they would like to be part of the group.

Councillor Carole Da Costa suggested that Councillor Wisdom Da Costa would also be interested.

ACTION – Mark Beeley to speak to Councillors on the Corporate and People Overview and Scrutiny Panels to see if there was interest in being part of the task and finish group on air pollution.

Councillor Brar asked if any work had taken place previously on this group.

Mark Beeley confirmed that no additional work had yet taken place, the scoping document had been drafted and agreed by the Panel.

Councillor Gurch Singh commented on the consultation currently ongoing about sound pollution from flights paths heading into Heathrow.

Councillor Story said that the main public health infrastructure change over the next few years was the creation of the Sunningdale Health Hub. Planning permission had been granted and the project was due to start construction soon. Councillor Story suggested that he would like to see the NHS invited to a Panel meeting to update on progress of the project. There had also been a press release from Frimley Park stating that a new hospital would be created in the borough, this was something that the Panel should have oversight over.

Councillor Brar said that both items could be considered together.

Councillor Carole Da Costa added that the January meeting could be the best time for this, as the NHS would have a better idea of plans for a new hospital and also there would be more of an update to give. She suggested that the Panel should consider the contracts and performance of domiciliary care, there had been some issues in the past and the Panel should scrutinise how well it was being delivered.

Councillor Story felt that the new hospital could be considered in January but the Sunningdale Health Hub was of interest to a significant number of residents and an update should be requested for the next meeting of the Panel in September.

Councillor Cross was interested to explore artificial intelligence around people and the impact that this would have going forward.

Lin Ferguson, Executive Director of Children's Services and Education, said that AI was not currently used in children's services but this would be explored going forward.

Katharine Willmette, Interim ASC Consultant, said that some assisted technology was being used in Optalis so this could be a good starting point.

Councillor Devon Davies added that while there were some concerns around AI, there were also a number of benefits.

Councillor Singh said that if NHS Frimley were being invited to a meeting, it would be worth asking them about St Marks Hospital and the minor injuries walk in being reopened.

Councillor Brar agreed with this suggestion, it was a concern for residents.

Councillor Carole Da Costa said that hospitals had their own plans, the Panel could certainly ask the question but it was unlikely that St Marks minor injuries unit would be reopened as a result. It would be useful to know what accident emergency services would be provided, after hours services and the locations of where these essential services would be provided.

Councillor Douglas said that he had home educated his children and had noted in a presentation by the Executive Director of Children's Services and Education at a previous induction session, that the borough did not know exactly how many children were home educated. This was something that the Panel could look into and investigate what support could be provided to parents and children.

Councillor Brar suggested that the support provided by schools to children with special educational needs could also be considered.

Councillor Gurch Singh asked about co-optees on the Panel.

He was informed that there were currently three co-optees on the Panel, who could provide information and expertise on certain subjects.

Councillor Gurch Singh said that it could be worth Panel Members having a discussion with relevant Cabinet Members to understand what Cabinet would be considering, so that there would be an opportunity for items to be scrutinised before decisions were made.

Mark Beeley encouraged Panel Members to have a look at the Cabinet Forward Plan on a regular basis and flag any items which could be considered by scrutiny. Items could then be commented on and recommendations made for Cabinet to consider.

Councillor Carole Da Costa noted that some co-opted members had not attended many meetings of the Panel over the past couple of years. She felt that it could be worth seeing if all co-opted members were still interested and if they were not, the positions could be opened up to other interested individuals.

Mark Beeley said that he would check to see the term length of co-opted members and consider if any changes were needed.

ACTION – Mark Beeley to see if co-opted members were still interested in being part of the Panel and recruit new co-opted members if necessary.

Councillor Story felt that it was important that scrutiny was involved in the Cabinet process, he asked how this worked.

Mark Beeley explained that Panel Members were able to bring items of interest to the Panel for consideration. Officers would also bring items forward to gain input from scrutiny before taking reports before Cabinet.

Councillor Gurch Singh said that reports should be brought at a draft stage by officers so that scrutiny could have involvement earlier in the process. He said that Cabinet Members should be invited to the next meeting to understand the direction of travel.

Mark Beeley said that Cabinet Members could be invited by the Panel to attend meetings should they wish. It could be worth having an offline meeting between the Panel and the Cabinet Members to discuss priorities over the course of the municipal year.

Councillor Carole Da Costa said that the Panel could look to extend an open invitation to Cabinet Members to attend scrutiny meetings and be involved in the work of scrutiny, as had been the case previously. She proposed that the Panel should extend an open invitation to Cabinet Members. This was seconded by Councillor Devon Davies.

Councillor Gurch Singh disagreed, he said that scrutiny was meant to hold the Cabinet to account and did not think the best way to do this would be to have an open invitation to relevant Cabinet Members.

Councillor Devon Davies supported the proposal made by Councillor Carole Da Costa.

Councillor Brar said that Cabinet Members should be invited for items which they were bringing forward, this would allow the Panel to hear the context behind why certain decisions were planned to be made.

Councillor Douglas asked if Cabinet Members were able to attend scrutiny meetings without an invitation by the Panel.

Mark Beeley confirmed that any Councillor was able to attend scrutiny meetings, the proposal from Councillor Carole Da Costa was to allow Cabinet Members to have an active role in meetings and help assist in formulating the work programme.

The Chair asked if this was constitutionally possible.

Mark Beeley said that the power to allow Cabinet Members to speak would remain with the Chair, the invitation would allow Cabinet Members to be more involved in scrutiny and help to develop a better working relationship between scrutiny and the executive.

A named vote was taken on the motion to extend an open invitation to relevant Cabinet Members to attend future People Overview and Scrutiny Panel meetings.

Proposal to extend an open invitation to relevant Cabinet Members to attend future meetings of the People Overview and Scrutiny Panel (Motion)	
Councillor Helen Taylor	For
Councillor Devon Davies	For
Councillor Carole Da Costa	For
Councillor Mandy Brar	For
Councillor Suzanne Cross	For
Councillor Jack Douglas	Against
Councillor Genevieve Gosling	For
Councillor John Story	For
Councillor Gurch Singh	Against
Carried	

The result of the vote was 7 for and 2 against, therefore the motion was passed by the Panel.

The meeting, which began at 7.00 pm, finished at 8.05 pm

Chair.....

Date.....

Report Title:	Annual Complaints and Compliments report (People) 2022/23
Contains Confidential or Exempt Information	No - Part I
Cabinet Member:	Councillor Hill, Cabinet Member for Highways and Transport, Customer Service Centre & Employment
Meeting and Date:	People Overview and Scrutiny Panel - 12 October 2023
Responsible Officer(s):	Elizabeth Griffiths, Executive Director of Resources and S151 and Nikki Craig, Assistant Director of HR, Corporate Projects and IT
Wards affected:	None

REPORT SUMMARY

The purpose of the report is to share with People Overview and Scrutiny the annual complaints and compliments report for 2022/23 before it is published on the council's website. Whilst Local Authorities are not required to produce an annual report on complaints relating to corporate activities, and are only required to do so on those submitted about Adults and Children's Services, this report details all compliments and complaints made by or on behalf of customers, that are investigated under the:

- Adults Statutory Complaints process
- Children's Statutory Complaints process
- Children's Corporate Complaints process
- RBWM's Formal Corporate Complaints policy

This report supports the councils corporate Value of 'Empowered to improve: Taking ownership of problems, focusing on outcomes, celebrating success and learning lessons when things don't quite work out, innovating and trying new things'. The Lessons Learned section of the report demonstrates the council's commitment to continually strive to make improvements.

1. DETAILS OF RECOMMENDATION(S)

RECOMMENDATION: That the People Overview and Scrutiny Panel notes the report and agrees:

- i) That the report is published on the council's website.
- ii) That the annual report continues to be produced and presented at future Overview and Scrutiny Panels.

2. REASON(S) FOR RECOMMENDATION(S) AND OPTIONS CONSIDERED

Options

Table 1: Options arising from this report

Option	Comments
That the report is published on the council's website and that the annual report continues to be produced and presented at Overview and Scrutiny panels. This is the recommended option	This is a requirement for Children's and Adults annual complaints information and good practice for other complaints areas.
That the report is not published on the council's website and that the annual report continues to be produced and presented at Overview and Scrutiny panels. This is not the recommended option	Not publishing the annual complaints report on the council's website is against statutory requirements.

- 2.1 The council's complaints and compliments report is compiled annually. Whilst there is a statutory requirement to publish information on Adult and Children's complaints and compliments, and no requirement to publish information on about other services provided by the council, the decision has been taken to include all areas in the annual report. This promotes transparency and provides an opportunity to ensure we maximise the learning opportunities from any outcomes from complaints. The report for April 2022 – March 2023 will be published in October 2023 (Appendix 1).
- 2.2 The report contains details of:
- complaints received
 - themes of complaints
 - timeliness of complaint responses
 - outcomes of complaints
 - learning from complaints
 - number of complaints made to and decided by the Local Government and Social Care Ombudsman (LGSCO)
 - numbers of compliments received
- 2.3 Table 2 shows the number of complaints received across the council for 2022/23. This is a significant reduction on 2021/22 when 399 complaints were received.

Table 2: All complaints received

Process	No. of complaints
Adults Statutory	16
Children's Statutory	11
Children's Corporate	74
RBWM Formal Corporate	168
Overall	269

Key implication targets

- 2.4 The 2021/22 key implications targets were met, with the exception of completing complaints within published timescales, which was unmet.

Complaints to be considered by People Overview and Scrutiny Panel

2.5 Whilst all council complaints are included in Table 2, the complaints to be considered at People Overview and Scrutiny Panel are for Adults and Children’s only.

Complaints highlights (People)

2.6 The overall number of complaints received across the council is shown in Appendix 1, 2.3. This shows an overall decrease from 399 in 2021/22 to 269.

Adult Services

- The number of complaints reduced slightly in the last year from 22 in 2021/22 to 16
- The main reasons for complaints was ‘Require help / intervention / guidance’ and ‘You are unhappy with a decision that has been made’
- Overall, 3 LGSCO Adults complaints and enquiries were received
- Responding to complaints within timescales has improved from 32% in 2021/22 to 50%

Children’s

- The number of complaints have increased in the last year from 75 in 2021/22 to 85
- The main reasons for complaints is ‘You are unhappy with a decision that has been made’
- Overall, 10 LGSCO complaints and enquiries for Education and Children’s Services were received
- Responding to complaints within timescales has reduced from 69% in 2021/22 to 45% for Children’s Statutory and 44% in 2021/22 to 39% for Children’s Corporate

Complaints made to and decisions made by the LGSCO

2.7 Appendix 1, section 2.4 shows the LGSCO received a total of 49 complaints and enquiries about the Council in 2022/23 (Appendix A), a decrease on 2021/22, which was 52 complaints.

2.8 As well as specific feedback given by the Ombudsman on remedies and service improvement recommendations, an overview of Services’ learnings from upheld or partially upheld complaints are included in Appendix 1, 5.1 and 8.1.

3. KEY IMPLICATIONS

3.1 For 2023/24, the intention is to achieve the following improvements and outcomes:

Table 3: Key Implications

Outcome	Unmet	Met	Exceeded	Significantly Exceeded	Date of delivery
Reduced percentage of upheld complaints	60 -100%	59%	50-58%	<75%	31 March 2024
Increased percentage of complaints	0 - 60%	61%	62-75%	>75%	31 March 2024

completed within timescales					
Reduced percentage of complaints to the LGSCO are upheld	70 - 100%	69%	50-68%	<50%	31 March 2024

4. FINANCIAL DETAILS / VALUE FOR MONEY

- 4.1 There are no direct financial implications in the publishing of the annual report. There are implications for the council in getting things wrong including resources within Services being redirected to complaints handling, remedy payments and reputational damage.

5. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

- 5.1 The publishing of children's and adult complaints reports is statutory.

6. RISK MANAGEMENT

- 6.1 None

7. POTENTIAL IMPACTS

- 7.1 Equalities. There are no implications under the equality act arising from this report.
- 7.2 Climate change/sustainability. There are no climate change or sustainability implications arising from this report.
- 7.3 Data Protection/GDPR. There are no data protections/GDPR implications arising from this report as no personal data has been processed.

8. CONSULTATION

- 8.1 Consultation has happened with CLT in August 2023 and the report will be presented to Overview and Scrutiny panels in September and October 2023.

9. TIMETABLE FOR IMPLEMENTATION

- 9.1 The annual report will be published on the Council website in October 2023.

10. APPENDICES

- 10.1 This report is supported by 1 appendix:
- Appendix 1 – Annual complaints and compliments report and LGSCO letter

11. BACKGROUND DOCUMENTS

11.1 This report is supported by LGSCO Annual Letter (see Appendix A). These are the annual summary of statistics on the complaint on complaints made to the Local Government and Social Care Ombudsman about the authority for the year ending 31 March 2023. The annual letters and corresponding data tables were published on LGSCO website on 26 July 2023.

12. CONSULTATION

Name of consultee	Post held	Date sent	Date returned
<i>Mandatory: Statutory Officer (or deputy)</i>			
Andrew Vallance	Head of Finance/ interim S151 Officer	14.08.23	
Elaine Browne	Head of Law & Governance/ Interim Monitoring Officer	14.08.23	18.08.23
<i>Deputies:</i>			
Julian McGovern	Senior Business Partner - Finance	18.08.23	18.08.23
<i>Mandatory: Procurement Manager (or deputy) - if report requests approval to go to tender or award a contract</i>			
Lyn Hitchinson	Procurement Manager		
<i>Mandatory: Data Protection Officer (or deputy) - if decision will result in processing of personal data; to advise on DPIA</i>			
Samantha Wootton	Data Protection Officer		
<i>Mandatory: Equalities Officer – to advise on EQiA, or agree an EQiA is not required</i>			
Ellen McManus-Fry	Equalities & Engagement Officer	14.08.23	18.08.23
<i>Other consultees:</i>			
<i>Directors (where relevant)</i>			
Stephen Evans	Chief Executive	14.08.23	18.08.23
Andrew Durrant	Executive Director of Place	14.08.23	24.08.23
Kevin McDaniel	Executive Director of Adult Social Care & Health	14.08.23	24.08.23
Lin Ferguson	Executive Director of Children's Services & Education	14.08.23	18.08.23
Elizabeth Griffiths	Executive Director of Resources	01.09.23	
<i>Assistant Directors (where relevant)</i>			
Rebecca Hatch	Assistant Director of Strategy	04.08.23	
Louise Freeth	Assistant Director of Revenue, Benefits, Library and Resident Services	04.08.23	24.08.23
Nikki Craig	Assistant Director of HR, Corporate Projects and IT	04.08.23	

Alysse Strachan	Assistant Director of Neighbourhood Services	04.08.23	
Adrien Waite	Assistant Director of Planning	04.08.23	24.08.23
Chris Joyce	Assistant Director of Infrastructure, Sustainability and Economic Growth	04.08.23	
<i>External (where relevant)</i>			
N/A			

Confirmation relevant Cabinet Member(s) consulted	Highways and Transport, Customer Service Centre & Employment	Yes
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REPORT HISTORY

Decision type:	Urgency item?	To follow item?
For information	No	No
Report Author: Vanessa Faulkner, Service Lead – HR People Services, 01628685622		



Royal Borough of Windsor and Maidenhead

Annual Complaints and Compliments Report **Adult and Children's Services** 2022-23

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1. Introduction

- 1.1. Every year the Royal Borough of Windsor and Maidenhead (RBWM) publishes an Annual complaints and compliments report, which gives an overview of the complaints the Council has received and how they were dealt with. RBWM welcomes customer feedback, as it helps to identify and address problems for customers, and to improve services. This report, covering the period 1 April 2022 to 31 March 2023, details all compliments and complaints made by or on behalf of customers that are investigated under the:
 - Adults Statutory Complaints process
 - Children’s Statutory Complaints process
 - Children’s Corporate Complaints process
 - RBWM’s Formal Corporate Complaints policy
- 1.2. Whilst Local Authorities are required under statute to report complaints submitted on Adults and Children’s services, they are not required to produce an annual report on complaints relating to corporate activities, however the Compliments and Complaints team produces an annual report detailing the volumes of all complaints and compliments, including insights into response rates and the reasons for complaints. This allows the Council to assess how residents experience the Council in its entirety and can inform service improvement.
- 1.3. This report provides an overall summary of the contacts into RBWM, but only provides detailed information relating to the Children’s and Adult’s complaints and compliments. A separate report relating to Formal Corporate complaints has been produced and is available here [Annual Report - 2022-23 Formal Corporate.docx](#)

2. Summary of Council-wide activity

- 2.1. In 2022/23 the Council received 1,408 contacts from customers that were initially logged as complaints. This is a 9.5% decrease in contacts to the compliments and complaints team from 2021/22 (1,556) and reflects a continued downward trend since 2020. Contacts that were not progressed as complaints were signposted to an alternative means of resolution, for example a service request or via a specific appeals process, such as parking appeals or statutory tribunals or were withdrawn.
- 2.2. The total volume of complaints progressed through Stage 1 of the complaints process was 269 in 2022/23, a decrease of 32.6% on 2021/22 (399). This decrease could reflect the number enquiries and cases being resolved directly by the Compliments and Complaints team, rather than going to Stage 1. Stage 2 and 3 complaints are escalations of Stage 1 and so are therefore not counted as new complaints.
- 2.3. **Error! Reference source not found.** summarises the total volume of complaints at Stage 1 over the year, that were recorded by the Compliments and Complaints team, these have been broken down by outcome. The table contains a comparison to 2021/22 (in brackets):

Table 1: 2022/23 Summary of complaints at Stage 1 (2021/22 in brackets)

Process	No. of complaints	Upheld	Partially Upheld	Not Upheld	No Finding	In progress at the time of reporting	Responded to within timescales
Adults Statutory	16 ↓ (22)	25% ↓ (27%)	19% ↓ (23%)	56% ↑ (45%)	0% ↔ (0%)	0%	50% ↑ (32%)
Children's Statutory	11 ↓ (13)	0% ↔ (0%)	82% ↑ (54%)	18% ↓ (38%)	0% ↔ (0%)	0%	45% ↓ (69%)
Children's Corporate	74 ↑ (62)	22% ↑ (6%)	41% ↓ (47%)	38% ↑ (35%)	0% ↔ (0%)	0%	39% ↓ (44%)
RBWM Formal Corporate	168 ↓ (302)	22% ↓ (27%)	22% ↓ (23%)	42% ↑ (40%)	3% ↑ (0%)	11%	42% ↓ (46%)
Overall	269 ↓ (399)	21% ↓ (23%)	29% ↑ (27%)	41% ↑ (39%)	2% ↑ (0%)	7%	42% ↓ (46%)

Local Government Social Care Ombudsman (LGSCO) letter

2.4. The Local Government Social Care Ombudsman (LGSCO) received 49 complaints and enquiries about the Council in 2022/23 (Appendix A), a decrease on 2021/22 (52).

Error! Reference source not found.2 details the breakdown as:

Table 2: LGSCO complaints received

Service	Complaints and enquiries
Adult Care Services	3
Benefits & Tax	1
Corporate & Other Services	5
Education & Children's Services	10
Environmental Services & Public Protection & Regulation	5
Highways & Transport	7
Housing	8
Null / Other	1
Planning & Development	9
Total	49

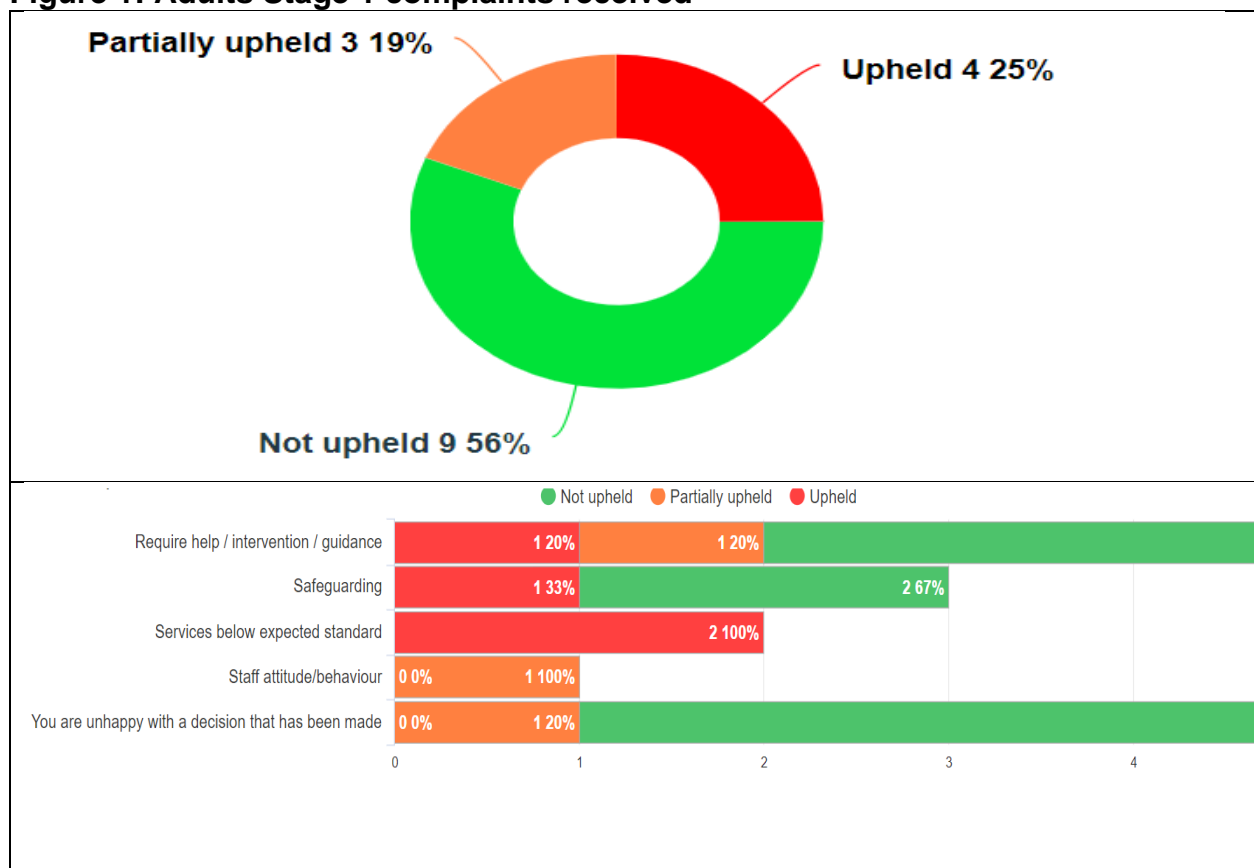
3. Statutory Adults complaints received

Stage 1 complaints received

3.1. 16 Adults' complaints were received in 2022/23, a 27.3% decrease on 2021/22 (22). The majority of Stage 1 Adults complaints (56%) into the Council were not upheld. Figure 1 shows the most reasons for complaints related to 'Require help / intervention / guidance', and 'You are unhappy with a decision that has been made' (5 complaints each) they also had the greatest number not upheld. This can be attributed to the joint

challenges of meeting the cost of care and the shortage of choice of placements, along with the timeliness of services due to challenges with staff recruitment.

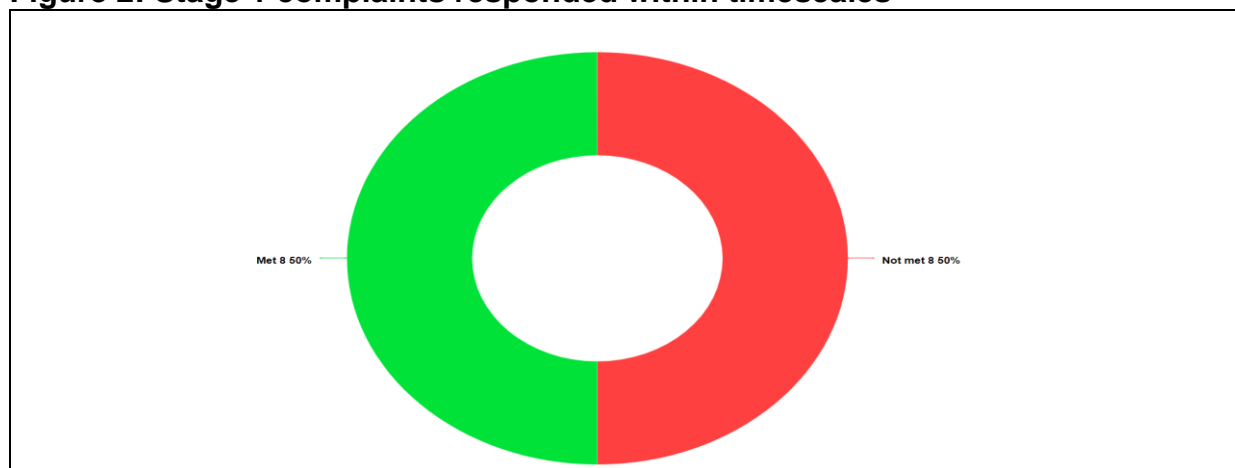
Figure 1: Adults Stage 1 complaints received



Stage 1 timescales

3.5 Of the 16 Adults complaints received, 50% of them were responded to within timescales, which is an increase on 2021/22 (32%). See Figure 2.

Figure 2: Stage 1 complaints responded within timescales



4. Adults Services compliments received

4.1 In 2022/23, Adults received 38 compliments, a significant increase on 2021/22 (16). The team now regularly forward compliments for logging.

5. Lessons learned from Adults Services complaints

- 5.1 An important part of the complaints process is capturing the learning and embedding good practice across the Council. Following are the learning that have been identified by Adult Services:

Adult Social Care (Optalis)

A number of complaints relate to the contribution individuals make towards the cost of their care. This means-tested process often takes place after care needs have been assessed, leading people to be confused or surprised by the scale of the contributions they are expected to make.

As a result, Optalis have created a post within the service to increase the information shared initially by the social work teams and supporting them to reduce the misinformation at the heart of some of these complaints. This post started work in July 2023.

It should be noted that the cost of living crisis is impacting some people's ability to make the assessed contributions and we would expect to see an increase in this type of complaint.

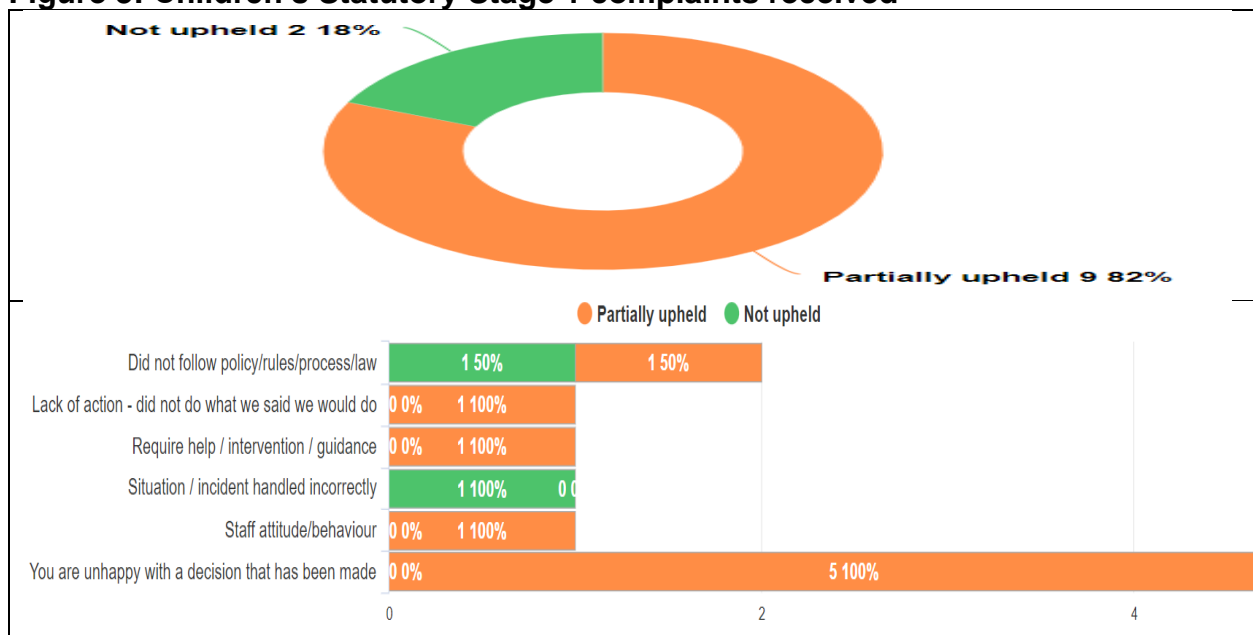
6. Children's Complaints received (Statutory and Corporate)

- 6.1. This section relates to only Children's complaints, both Statutory and Corporate.

Stage 1 Children's Statutory complaints received

- 6.2. 11 Children's Statutory complaints were received in 2022/23, a slight decrease on 2021/22 (13).
- 6.3. The majority of Stage 1 Children's Statutory complaints (82%) into the Council were partially upheld. Figure 3 shows the main reason for complaints was because of 'You were unhappy with a decision that has been made'.

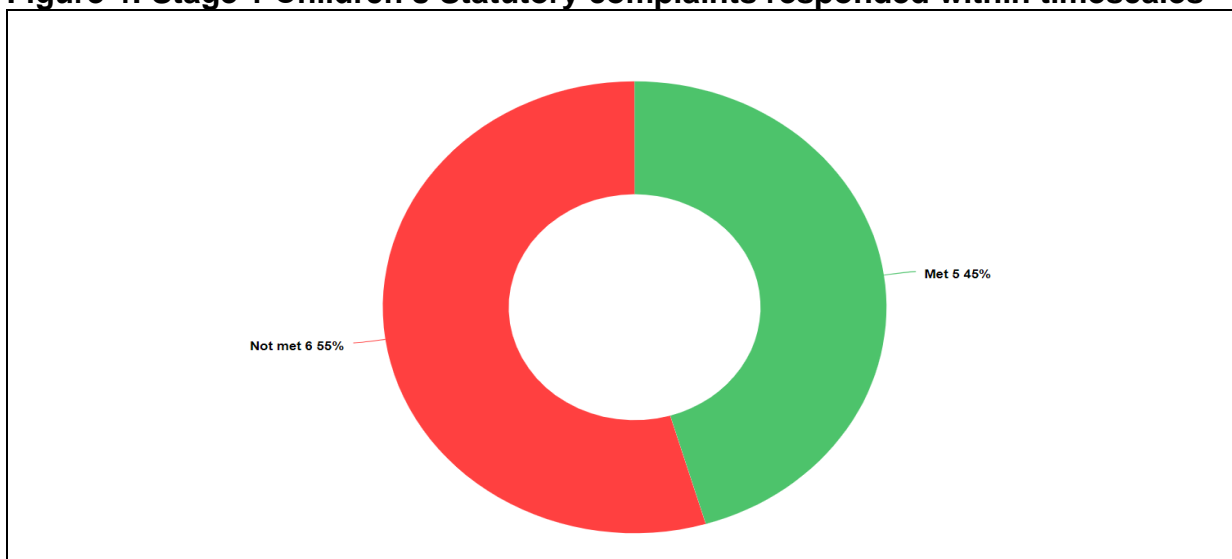
Figure 3: Children's Statutory Stage 1 complaints received



Stage 1 Children's Statutory timescales

6.5 Of the 11 Children's Statutory complaints received, 45% of them were responded to within timescales, which is a reduction on 2021/22 (69%). See Figure 4.

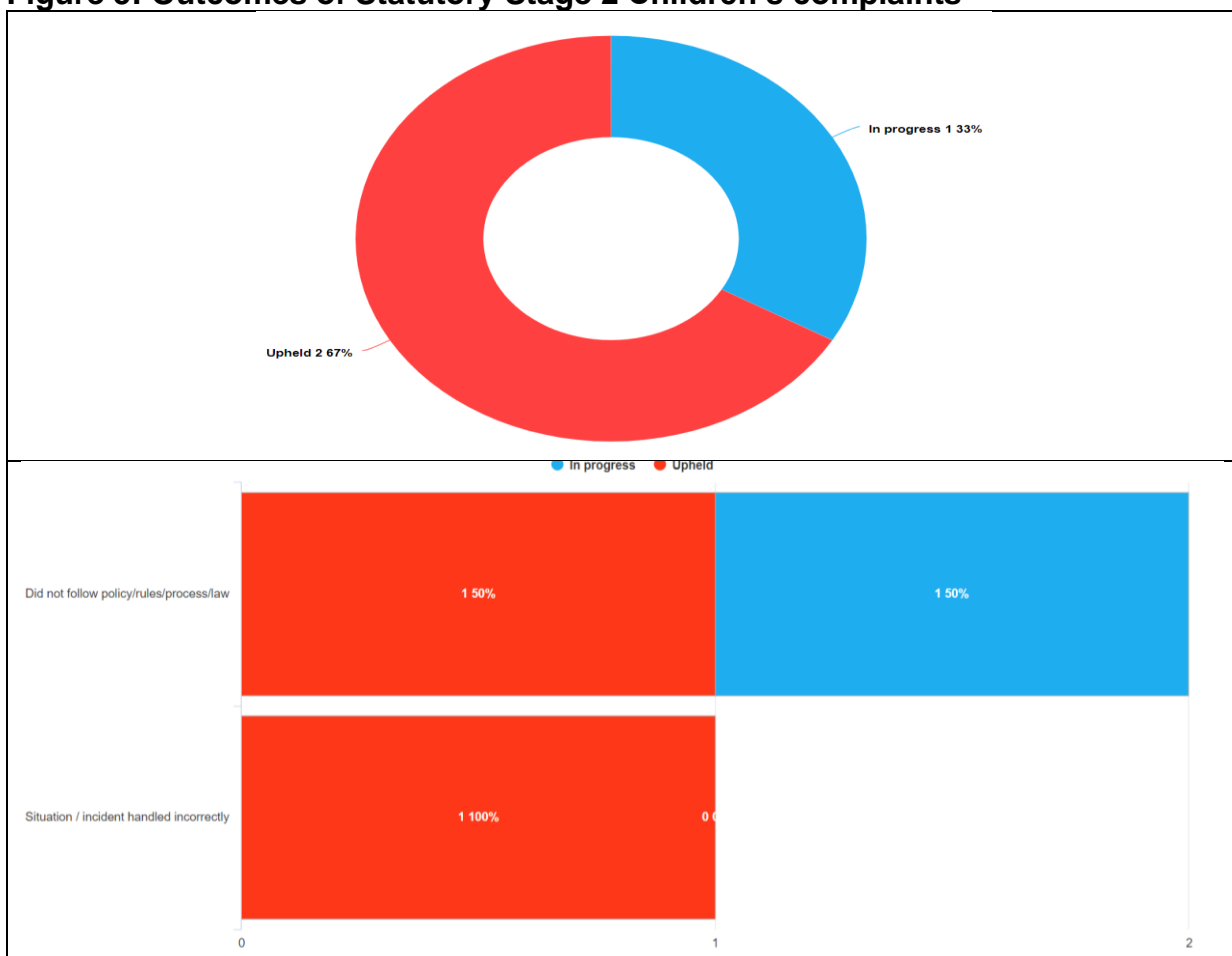
Figure 4: Stage 1 Children's Statutory complaints responded within timescales



Stage 2 Children's Statutory complaints received

6.6 Figure 5 shows that of the 11 Stage 1 Statutory children's complaints, 3 of them progressed to Stage 2, of which 67% were upheld. Whilst small numbers, the primary reason was 'Did not follow policy/rules/procedures/law'.

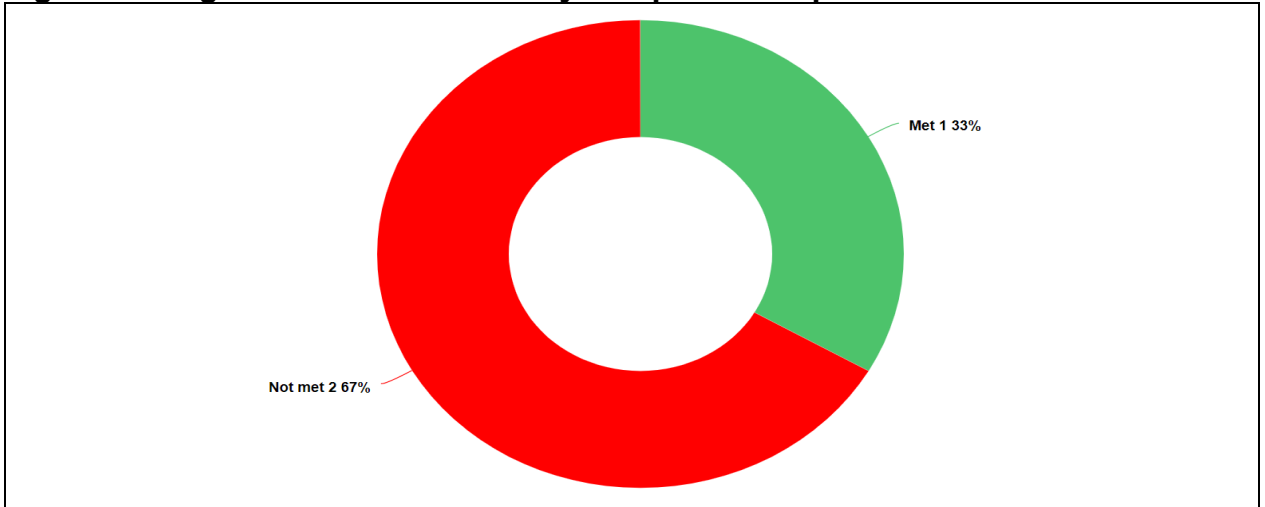
Figure 5: Outcomes of Statutory Stage 2 Children's complaints



Stage 2 Children’s Statutory timescales

6.7 Of the 3 Stage 2 complaints received, 67% of them were not responded to within timescales. See Figure 6.

Figure 6: Stage 2 Children’s Statutory complaints responded within timescales

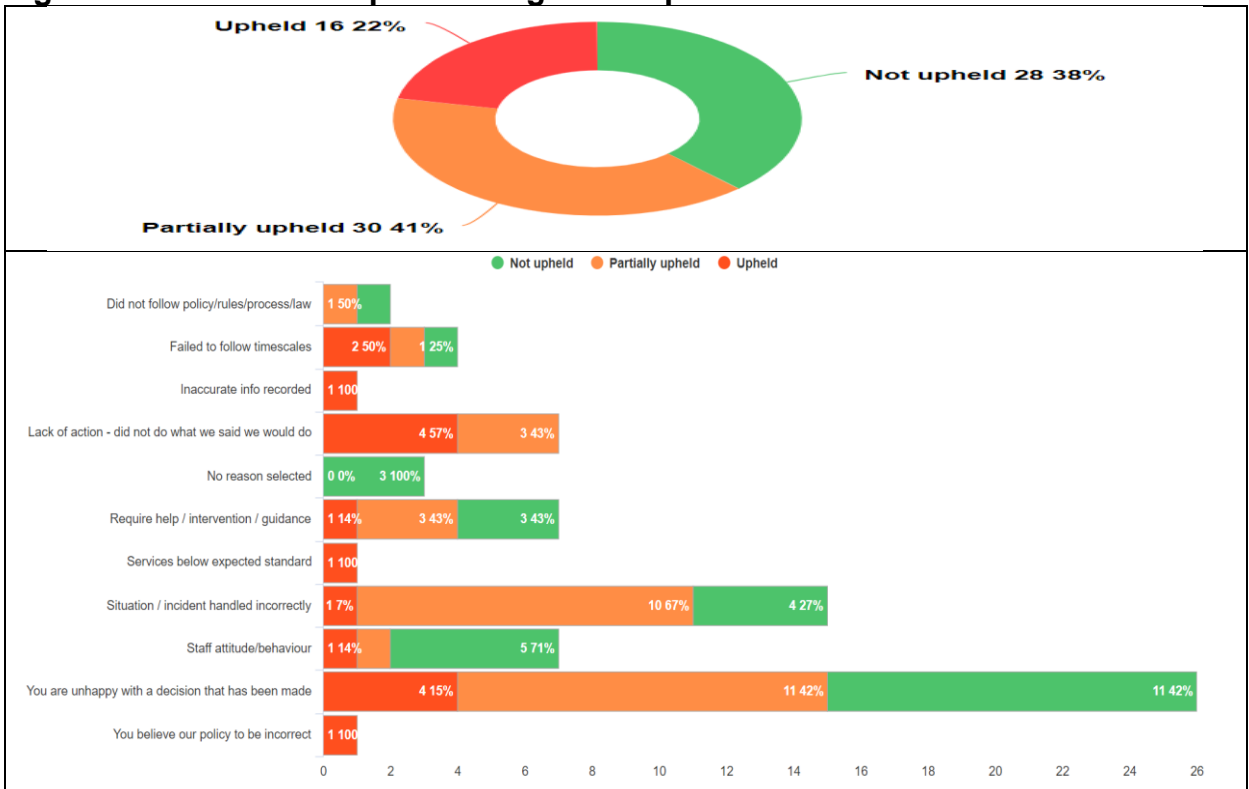


Stage 1 Children’s Corporate complaints received

6.8 74 Children’s Corporate complaints were received in 2022/23, a slight increase on 2021/22 (62). Historically Children’s Corporate and Formal Corporate complaints were reported together, however for 2022/23 these have been separated.

6.9 The majority of Stage 1 Children’s Corporate complaints (41%) into the Council were partially upheld. Figure 7 shows the main reason for complaints was because of ‘You were unhappy with a decision that has been made’ and this can be attributed the complainant not accepting the final decision.

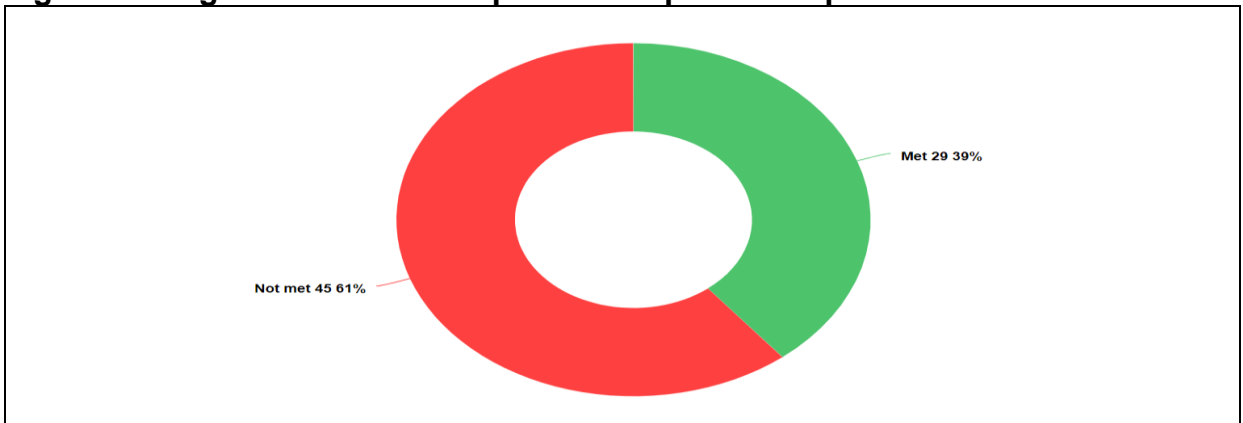
Figure 7: Children’s Corporate Stage 1 complaints received



Stage 1 Children's Corporate timescales

6.10 Of the 74 Stage 1 complaints received, 39% were responded to within timescales, which is a decrease on 2021/22 (44%). See Figure 8.

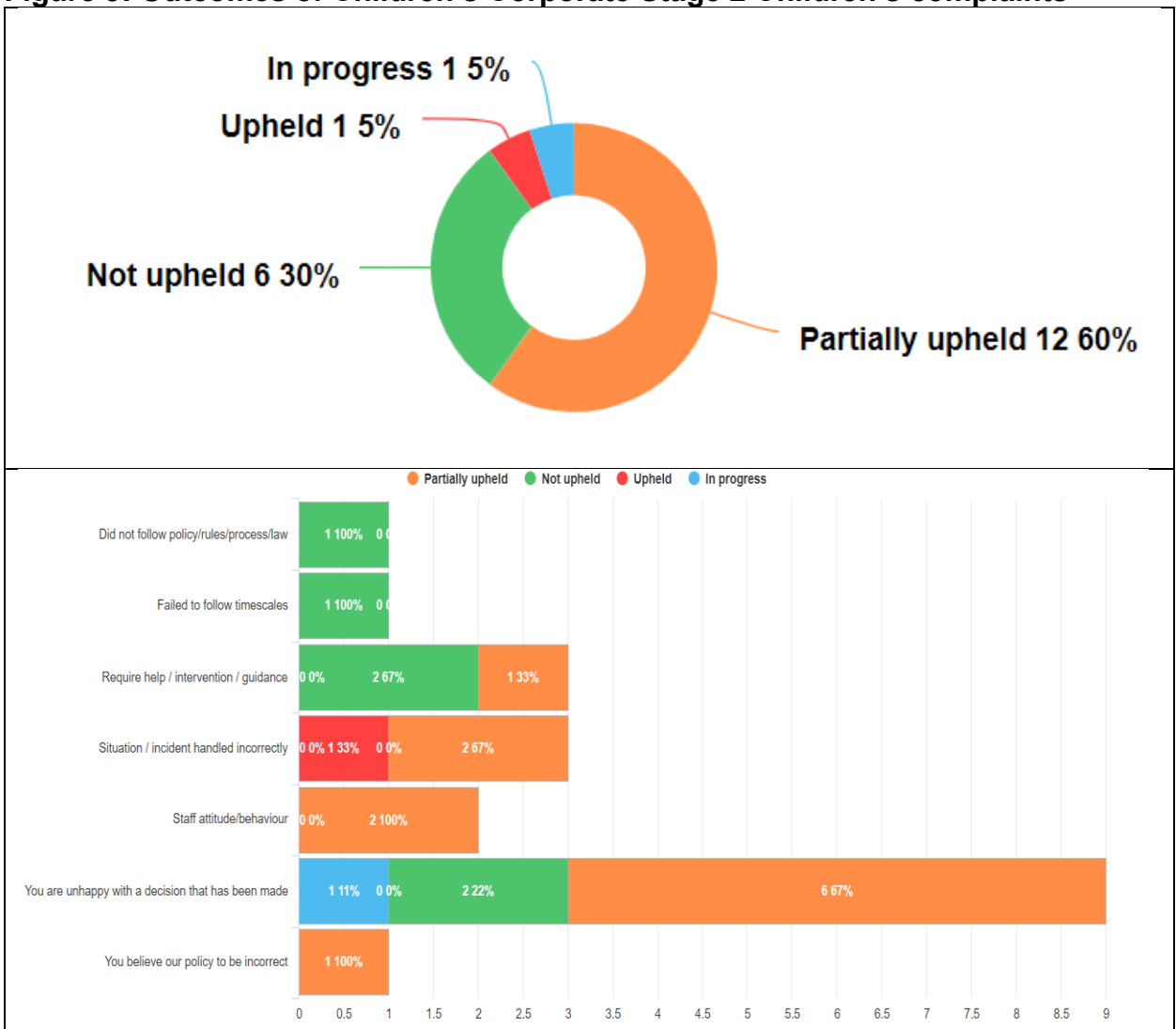
Figure 8: Stage 1 Children's Corporate complaints responded within timescales



Stage 2 Children's Corporate complaints received

6.11 Figure 9 shows that of the 74 Stage 1 Statutory children's complaints, 20 of them progressed to Stage 2, of which 60% were partially upheld. The primary reason was 'You are unhappy with a decision that has been made'.

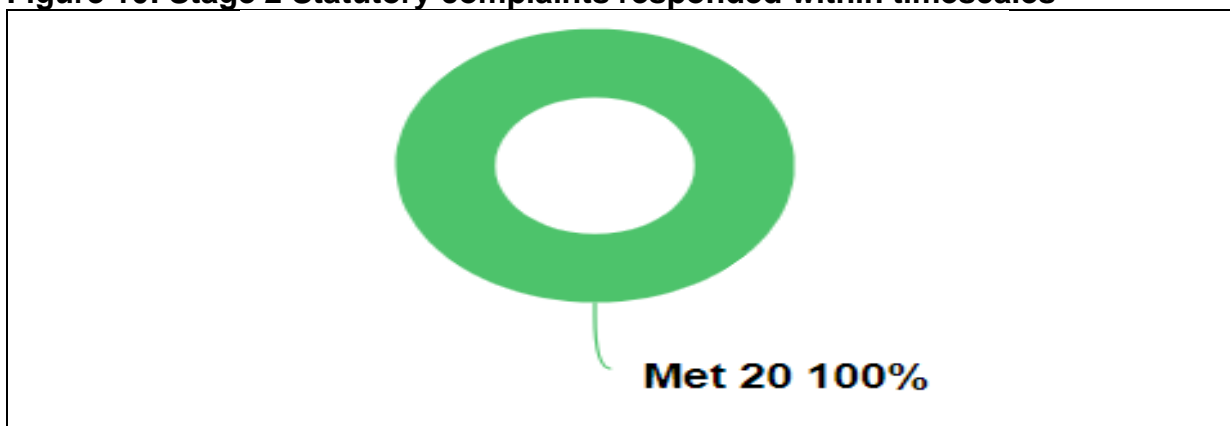
Figure 9: Outcomes of Children's Corporate Stage 2 Children's complaints



Stage 2 Children’s Corporate complaints timescales

6.12 Of the 20 Children’s Corporate complaints received, 100% were responded to within timescales, which is an improvement on 2021/22 (64%). Figure 10.

Figure 10: Stage 2 Statutory complaints responded within timescales



7. Children’s Services compliments received

7.1 In 2022/23, Children’s Services received 69 compliments. Whilst many are received throughout the year, staff sometimes fail to record the compliments they receive; however they do obtain them and are regularly encouraged to log them.

8. Lessons learned from Children’s Services complaints

8.1 An important part of the complaints process is capturing the learning and embedding good practice across the Council. Listed below are some of the learnings from the Children’s complaints:

Children’s Social Care & Early Help

In the last year there has been some significant across service learning from some complaints in particular:

- We have continued to embed regular workshops/meetings between the Complaints/ Compliments Team and service staff
- Regular meetings between the new Deputy Director and Complaints/ Compliments Team are in place which are supporting oversight and tracking of complex and overdue complaints
- We have completed a piece of work, on the back of a complaint, on how we record and communicate with parents on any decision to exclude parents from Children in Care Reviews.
- Our training offer to AfC staff is shaped and influenced through learning from complaints and we continue to review the themes and individual actions/recommendations and capture this in our mandatory training offer to all staff.
- An example of an improvement:
 - 16 Feb 23 - Actions Monitoring – AfC – D&A Reference: xxxxx. Following my review of your complaint I am making the following recommendations, which will be monitored to improve our services: xxxxx’s failure to respond to communication from a parent to be addressed within supervision.

Support and Safeguarding Service and Early Help

As a result of a number of complaints, the following training has been provided to staff, including both group sessions and 1:1 sessions in supervision.

- The importance of timely email communication.
- Training on working with blended families and also non-resident parents, so that lines of communication and issues of confidentiality and consent are clear at the start of any involvement.
- Training on the role of Children's Social Care in Private Law Proceedings and the importance of making parents/carers aware of the limited role that social workers can have, in order to avoid unrealistic expectations.
- The importance of checking factual inaccuracies in assessments.
- Working with families in a non-oppressive and non-judgemental way.
- Workshop on Home Education
- Clarifying roles, responsibilities, processes and procedures at the start of any involvement with families, so they can be clear about expectations.
- When a parent/carer is due to attend a training course, to ensure that expectations are clear from the start and that reasons for not admitting a participant to a training event are communicated clearly, with a clear rationale.
- As a result of one complaint, work was undertaken with advocates to ensure that they know to contact a Manager in the event that they need to escalate an issue.

SEND Team and Children with Disabilities Team

- A new practice standard was put in place in relation to EST assessments, including the expectation for them to be progressed within 45 working days.
- Consent to always be obtained at the start of any assessment process, for information sharing between agencies.
- Staff were reminded not to use any language, other than that spoken by the child when a child is present.
- Training on the use of language when talking about mental health issues.
- No family to pay for Alternative Provision without this being discussed beforehand with the local authority and clarity about costs so there are no misunderstandings.

School Transport

- A new tracking system was put into place to ensure that responses are communicated within target timescales.
- Processes within the Council's Customer Contact Centre were reviewed and updated to better support communications, including escalation processes.
- Application forms were reviewed and updated to capture all needs, in order to avoid delay.
- Regular meetings between the School Transport Team and the Public Transport Team were established to improve information sharing and route/public bus planning to assist journeys to and from school.

9. Lessons learned – final summary

- 9.1. The Council welcomes and recognises the importance of complaints and all customer feedback. We use this in discussion at our leadership meetings and to help drive our services forward. Our complaints processes and procedures are regularly reviewed, and whilst found to be compliant a small number of improvements have been made. This includes the centralisation of the complaint's management processes under the

responsibility of the Deputy Director of Law and Governance and Monitoring Officer. In addition, complaints data is being reviewed on a monthly basis by the Executive Leadership Team (ELT) for performance and improvement purposes.

- 9.2 These initiatives will ensure a consistent methodology to the reporting, investigation and response to all complaints made to the council. Over the next 18 months a new computer system will be procured, which will lead to improved monitoring, better performance recording and the ability to react earlier to patterns and trends highlighted within the complaints report.

10. Appendix A: LGSCO Annual Review 2023 letter

Local Government & Social Care OMBUDSMAN

19 July 2023

By email

Mr Evans
Chief Executive
Royal Borough of Windsor and Maidenhead Council

Dear Mr Evans

Annual Review letter 2022-23

I write to you with your annual summary of complaint statistics from the Local Government and Social Care Ombudsman for the year ending 31 March 2023. The information offers valuable insight about your organisation's approach to complaints. As always, I would encourage you to consider it as part of your corporate governance processes. As such, I have sought to share this letter with the Leader of your Council and Chair of the appropriate Scrutiny Committee, to encourage effective ownership and oversight of complaint outcomes, which offer such valuable opportunities to learn and improve.

The end of the reporting year, saw the retirement of Michael King, drawing his tenure as Local Government Ombudsman to a close. I was delighted to be appointed to the role of Interim Ombudsman in April and look forward to working with you and colleagues across the local government sector in the coming months. I will be building on the strong foundations already in place and will continue to focus on promoting improvement through our work.

Complaint statistics

Our statistics focus on three key areas that help to assess your organisation's commitment to putting things right when they go wrong:

Complaints upheld - We uphold complaints when we find fault in an organisation's actions, including where the organisation accepted fault before we investigated. We include the total number of investigations completed to provide important context for the statistic.

Over the past two years, we have reviewed our processes to ensure we do the most we can with the resources we have. One outcome is that we are more selective about the complaints we look at in detail, prioritising where it is in the public interest to investigate. While providing a more sustainable way for us to work, it has meant that changes in uphold rates this year are not solely down to the nature of the cases

coming to us. We are less likely to carry out investigations on 'borderline' issues, so we are naturally finding a higher proportion of fault overall.

Our average uphold rate for all investigations has increased this year and you may find that your organisation's uphold rate is higher than previous years. This means that comparing uphold rates with previous years carries a note of caution. Therefore, I recommend comparing this statistic with that of similar organisations, rather than previous years, to better understand your organisation's performance.

Compliance with recommendations - We recommend ways for organisations to put things right when faults have caused injustice and monitor their compliance with our recommendations. Failure to comply is rare and a compliance rate below 100% is a cause for concern.

Satisfactory remedy provided by the authority - In these cases, the organisation upheld the complaint and we were satisfied with how it offered to put things right. We encourage the early resolution of complaints and credit organisations that accept fault and find appropriate ways to put things right.

Finally, we compare the three key annual statistics for your organisation with similar authorities to provide an average marker of performance. We do this for County Councils, District Councils, Metropolitan Boroughs, Unitary Councils, and London Boroughs.

Your annual data, and a copy of this letter, will be uploaded to our interactive map, [Your council's performance](#), on 26 July 2023. This useful tool places all our data and information about councils in one place. You can find the detail of the decisions we have made about your Council, read the public reports we have issued, and view the service improvements your Council has agreed to make as a result of our investigations, as well as previous annual review letters.

Your organisation's performance

During the year, we [issued a public report](#) about your Council's failure to properly manage Free Early Education Entitlement after a parent raised concerns they were being charged a top-up fee. We also found the Council failed to ensure the nursery administered clear and transparent invoices. We recommended the Council should apologise and make payments to the complainant, and work with the nursery to ensure its invoices are clear and transparent. I am satisfied with the Council's actions in this case.

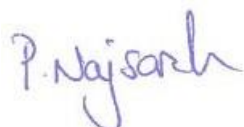
During the year some responses to our enquiries were late. These included three out of four responses from your Children's Services department and a long delay in a response from the Housing department. Investigations that are delayed can further frustrate complainants and I ask that you consider what steps can be taken to address these matters so that your liaison with us improves.

Supporting complaint and service improvement

I know that complaints offer organisations a rich source of intelligence and insight that has the potential to be transformational. These insights can indicate a problem with a specific area of service delivery or, more broadly, provide a perspective on an organisation's culture and ability to learn. To realise the potential complaints have to support service improvements, organisations need to have the fundamentals of complaint handling in place. To support you to do so, we have continued our work with the Housing Ombudsman Service to develop a joint complaint handling code that will provide a standard for organisations to work to. We will consult on the code and its implications prior to launch and will be in touch with further details.

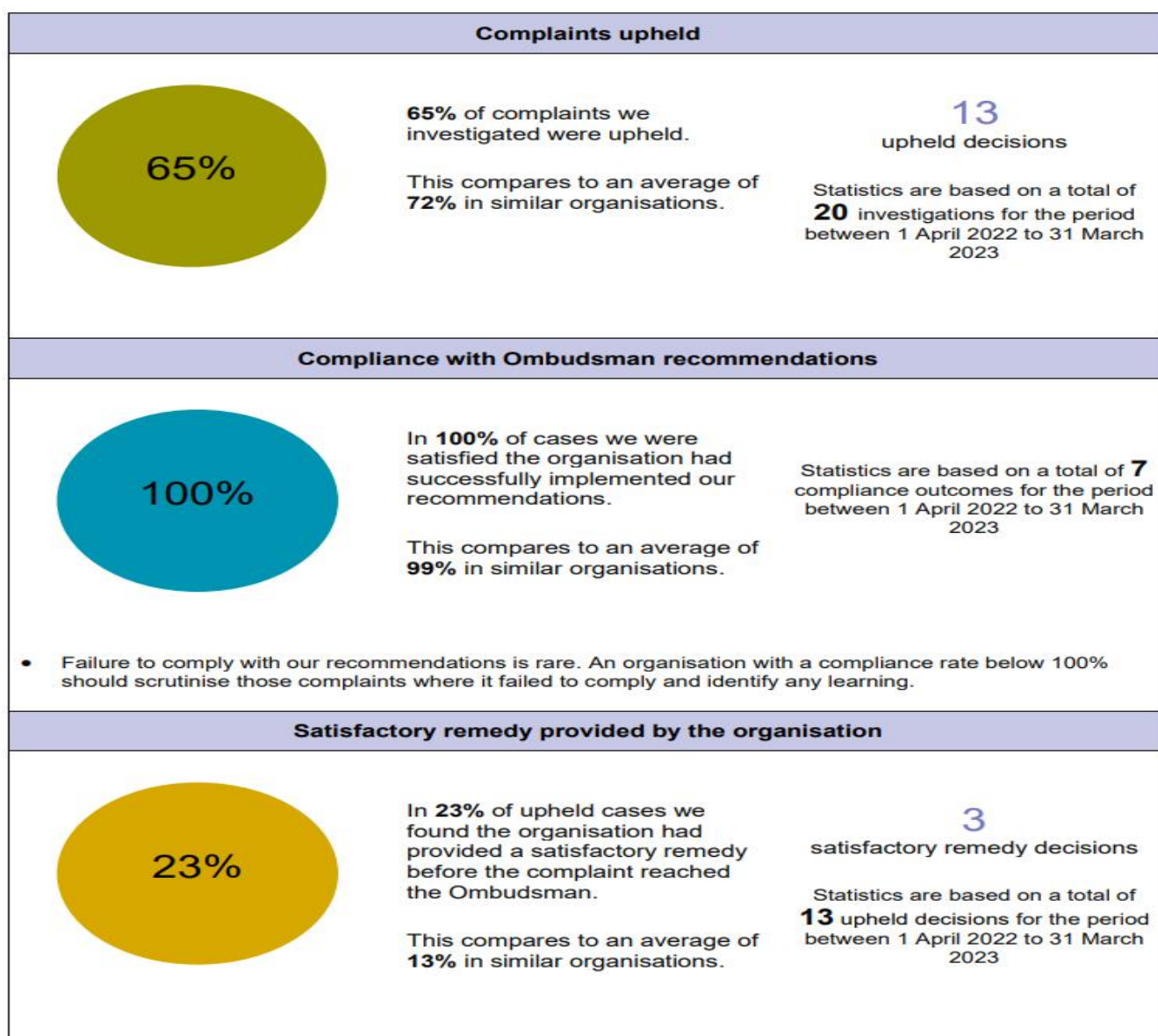
In addition, our successful training programme includes practical interactive workshops that help participants develop their complaint handling skills. We can also offer tailored support and bespoke training to target specific issues your organisation might have identified. We delivered 105 online workshops during the year, reaching more than 1350 people. To find out more visit www.lgo.org.uk/training or get in touch at training@lgo.org.uk.

Yours sincerely,



Paul Najsarek
 Interim Local Government and Social Care Ombudsman
 Interim Chair, Commission for Local Administration in England

Royal Borough of Windsor and Maidenhead Council
For the period ending 31/03/23



11. Appendix B: Council's complaints processes

The stages of the Council's process is detailed in the table below:

Stages	Adult services complaints	Children's services complaints	Formal Corporate complaints	Not within the formal complaints process
Stage 1	Statutory No specific timescale but aim to respond within 10 working days. Response from Service Manager or higher.	Statutory Up to 10 working days. Can agree extension for a further 10 working days. Response from Head of Service.	Up to 20 working days. Can agree extension for a further 10 working days. Response from Head of Service.	N/A
Stage 2	N/A	Statutory 25-65 working days. Completed by independent complaints investigators and report produced. Adjudicating letter in response to report completed by Children's Director of Social Care.	Up to 20 working days. Review of stage 1 complaint and response by Director.	N/A
Stage 3	N/A	Statutory Stage 3 independent panel. Up to 70 working days. Panel of three independent members who produce a report. Letter in response to the report completed by the Directors of Children's Services.	N/A	N/A
LGSCO	Can complain to the Local Government and Social Care Ombudsman	Can complain to the Local Government and Social Care Ombudsman	Can complain to the Local Government and Social Care Ombudsman	N/A
Alternative appeal process	N/A	N/A	N/A	Customer given timescales for response

Report Title:	Achieving for Children Annual Reports 2022/23
Contains Confidential or Exempt Information	No
Cabinet Member:	Cllr Amy Tisi, Cabinet member for Children's Services, Education and Windsor
Meeting and Date:	Cabinet - 25 October 2023
Responsible Officer(s):	Lin Ferguson, Executive Director of Children's Services
Wards affected:	All



REPORT SUMMARY

The Achieving for Children (AfC) Board of Directors has now approved the 2022/23 Impact Report, Equalities Report and Annual Report and Accounts. These annual reports provide information about AfC's impact and performance across the boroughs of Richmond, Kingston and Windsor and Maidenhead between April 2022 and March 2023. They are being presented to Cabinet to support the Council's oversight of AfC's performance in its role as joint owner of AfC.

Children's Services have continued to perform well in 2022/23 and the reports evidence a significant positive impact for the children, young people and families who live in the borough.

The Annual Equalities Report details good progress in embedding a culture of equality, diversity and inclusion within AfC both in terms of staff experience and development as well as in the way we deliver services.

The Annual Report and Accounts for 2022/23 has now been independently audited and the auditors have confirmed that they present a true and fair view of Achieving for Children's financial performance and position. The auditors are also satisfied with the assessment that AfC continues to be a 'going concern'.

1. DETAILS OF RECOMMENDATION(S)

RECOMMENDATION: That Cabinet notes and makes any recommendations in relation to:

- i. The Achieving for Children Impact Report
- ii. The Achieving for Children Equalities Report
- iii. The Achieving for Children Annual Report and Accounts

2. REASON(S) FOR RECOMMENDATION(S) AND OPTIONS CONSIDERED

- 2.1 The Royal Borough of Windsor and Maidenhead owns a 20% share in AfC and also commissions the company to deliver the Local Authority's Children's Services.

Cabinet has an important role in the Ownership Governance of AfC. This role includes making a series of key decisions that inform strategic direction as well as receiving reports regarding the organisation’s performance.

- 2.2 AfC’s three owning councils have appointed a dedicated Board of Directors to oversee strategy and internal control within AfC. As part of this role the Board approves the statutory Annual Report and Accounts each year and also publishes an Annual Impact Report and Equalities Annual Report.
- 2.3 The AfC Board of Directors has now approved the 2022/23 Impact Report, Equalities Report and Annual Report and Accounts. These annual reports provide information about AfC’s impact and performance across the boroughs of Richmond, Kingston and Windsor and Maidenhead between April 2022 and March 2023. They are presented to this Cabinet to support oversight of performance, achievements, challenges and priorities.

Options Table 1: Options arising from this report

Option	Comments
Cabinet notes the information presented	n/a
Cabinet notes the information presented and makes recommendations / requests more information	n/a

3. KEY IMPLICATIONS

Annual Impact Report 2022/23

- 3.1 The Impact Report will be published in September 2023 and provides an overview of AfCs strategic priorities, organisational values and key achievements for the year. It is not a statutorily required document but is a helpful summary of AfC as an organisation and is the main document that is used to update partners and celebrate achievements each year. The Impact Report is attached at appendix A.
- 3.2 Good progress continued to be made against all of AfCs six strategic priorities with staff going above and beyond to support children, young people and partners. AfC’s strategic priorities were agreed by the Local Authority in December 2019 and reconfirmed in March 2023 as part of the Business Plan. We are still seeing the impact on families and young people of the pandemic, particularly in relation to mental health and wellbeing. Supporting families through the cost of living crisis has also been a specific focus this year.
- 3.3 The quality and impact of the AfC offer for Windsor and Maidenhead children and young people has once again been confirmed by a series of positive external inspection results.
 - Our children’s social care services continue to be judged by Ofsted as ‘Good’ in Windsor and Maidenhead.
 - Our independent fostering agency (IFA), which operates across all three boroughs, has been judged ‘Good’ by Ofsted

- We achieved a positive Joint Targeted Area Inspection (JTAI) of the multi-agency response to the identification of initial need and risk in Windsor and Maidenhead in May 2022, which focused on our 'front door', including our Single Point of Access.
- In Windsor and Maidenhead at the end of 2022-23, the Department for Education and NHS England reviewed our progress against our written statement of action and have made the decision that there is no need for it to be formally monitored any more because we have 'demonstrated clear and sustained progress'.
- We received a 'Good' rating across all areas following the Care Quality Commission (CQC) inspection of our Health Visiting and School Nursing Service in Windsor and Maidenhead in November 2022.
- We achieved 'Good' inspection ratings of our Youth Offending Services in Windsor and Maidenhead.
- We achieved a 'Good' inspection rating by Ofsted of our Way to Work Apprenticeship Programme in May 2023.

3.4 The Cabinet is asked to note the following key points:

- **Achieving a strong early help offer** - In Windsor and Maidenhead, we established our family hubs approach, which brings together children's centres, youth centres and parenting services. Our family hubs are now fully staffed and demand for services has been high. We have provided one-to-one support to 823 children and 3,400 children and young people have attended group sessions on topics such as digital safety, drug and alcohol awareness, and esteem. We provide a full menu of interventions to improve parents' skills and knowledge, such as the positive parenting programme and baby massage classes.
- **Achieving fun and engaging holiday activities** - To support our families during school holidays, we successfully delivered the FUEL (Feed Ur Everyday Lives) programme. The programme, which took place over the Easter, summer and Christmas holidays offered a range of fun and enjoyable activities and food to children and young people aged five to 16 years who are eligible for benefits-related free school meals (FSM). 832 children and young people attended sessions at Easter, Summer and Winter during 2022.
- **Achieving with our families** - The newly formed Families First team (final name to be decided) supports families in crisis who are at imminent risk of having their child or children taken into care. Families are fast-tracked to receive support, and are ultimately supported to keep their children at home or find a family network in order to care for their children. The team also supports children to return home from care, if this is the best option for them, as well as 'step downs' of children/young people from residential care to family based care, when this is appropriate.. So far, we have supported 11 families and in all cases the children have remained in the family home.
- **Achieving positive futures through apprenticeships** - Our Way to Work apprenticeship service was rated 'Good' by Ofsted this year which confirms that our service continues to help young people on their journey into work. We

specialise in supporting learners who may be more vulnerable through the provision of dedicated pastoral care that wouldn't be available with other providers. 93% of our learners progress into a higher apprenticeship, employment, or further training. 100% of apprentices that complete their apprenticeships in Achieving for Children remain in our organisation

- **Achieving Better Mental Health** - Since the pandemic, we have found that our children and young people are needing more support to help them improve their mental health. In Windsor and Maidenhead, the Emotionally Related School Avoidance (ERSA) project has been established to support those children who find it difficult to attend school. Through the project, 44 schools have received training, support and consultation on ERSA, have been given access to a newly created toolkit, and have been provided with additional strategies to help them to effectively support these children. Feedback from pupils, parents and the schools has been extremely good. We now have a dedicated specialist therapist for Children in Care. This post provides consultation for staff, 1:1 therapy for individual children and young people and is a key link with health colleagues to ensure priority and robust pathways for this cohort of children.
- **Achieving for our children and young people with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities** - We are working hard to improve the inclusive services we provide to children and young people with SEND. This includes supporting our young people with SEND to transition to independence and adulthood through our supported internships. We have improved and will be continuing to improve our Local Offer for parents and carers and our new Parent/Carer Forum, SEND Voices has been established and is embedding well.
- **Achieving a more diverse and inclusive organisation** - Our staff led EDI Board has continued to be instrumental in driving forward EDI improvements across the organisation. This year we have launched our AfC EDI Staff Networks, learnt together through a series of focus months, piloted 'safe spaces', enhanced our staff development offer and supported a staff Ramadan Challenge.

Annual Equalities Report 2022/23

3.5 AfC's Annual Equalities Report will be published in September 2023 and outlines AfCs approach to supporting equality, diversity and inclusion, key demographics of our workforce and service users as well as what was achieved during 2022/23 and planned for the next couple of years. The Annual Equalities Report is attached at Appendix B. There has been a strong focus on strengthening EDI in relation to our workforce during 2022-23. Of particular note this year:

- In 2022/23, 177 AfC staff members, of which 45 were managers, attended 1,449 hours of EDI training. An additional 282 members of staff completed our equality and diversity eLearning. We also trialled safe spaces during November and plan to use the learning from what AfC colleagues found helpful to shape our approach in future.
- To raise awareness, we have successfully celebrated a number of cultural events, such as Black History Month (BHM), LBGQTQI+ Month,

International Women's Day and Menopause Awareness Day. We put on an extensive programme for BHM in 2022. This included special guest speakers, spotlights on staff from Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic backgrounds, blogs from senior leaders relating to BHM topics, and a considerable bank of BHM resources for staff to consider. To build on this, the EDI Board has created an EDI calendar of events, which includes key celebrations for all protected characteristics.

- We launched a reverse mentoring programme designed for staff in non-management posts and from underrepresented groups (such as Black, Asian and Minority ethnic backgrounds; staff with disabilities; LGBTQI+ staff). Three of our senior leaders nominated themselves to be mentored by staff members who had put themselves forward to be part of the programme. Mentors received training prior to the programme starting and then met monthly with the senior leader that they were matched to to provide guidance, insight and challenge. Feedback from those taking part has been positive and the EDI Board and the Leadership Team will be reviewing the programme to decide whether to roll it out more widely.
- We are in the process of trialling a virtual support hub to improve how we support AfC colleagues working with disabilities. The hub is a group of AfC colleagues, with different specialisms, who come together to jointly think about what reasonable adjustments and resources can be made available to support all AfC colleagues to reach their potential at work. We hope the hub will improve how we support our colleagues, improve our inclusive culture and lead to a more timely response to needs.
- We reported for the first time as part of the Workforce Race Equality Standard (WRES) last year. The WRES which aims to better understand the experience of staff from Black Asian and Minority Ethnic backgrounds based on a number of metrics relating to leadership, recruitment and retention, learning and career development, culture and experience, health and wellbeing, and employee voice. We have incorporated the data from the WRES into our annual equalities report for this year.
- We advertised, and recruited to, a funded part-time EDI Lead role who will become the vice chair of the EDI Board. There was a significant level of interest in this post and interviews were held with eight excellent internal candidates. Taz Mudali, Events and CPD Consultant for the Social Work Teaching Partnership, was appointed and will start in her role in August. We are excited to have dedicated time to support the organisation to continue learning and developing. We will be working to establish our second organisational action plan in the Autumn of 2023 with a focus on embedding learning into our natural organisational culture and approach.

Annual Report and Accounts 2022/23

- 3.6 The publication of an Annual Report and Accounts is legally required to comply with the Companies Act 2006. The document has been audited by Crowe LLP who have confirmed that they are satisfied that it provides a true and fair view of the company's

financial position and performance for the 2022/23 financial year. They have also confirmed that they are satisfied with the view of the AfC Board that the organisation is a 'Going Concern'. The Annual Report and Accounts will be submitted to Companies House for publication in October 2023. The Annual Report and Accounts is attached at appendix C. The document is made up of two key sections:

Annual Report

3.7 The purpose of the annual report is to give an overview of the organisation's key priorities and performance against those priorities as well as to provide factual information regarding governance arrangements. The minimum scope of content and topics to be addressed are prescribed by the Companies Act 2006 and the company has flexibility to include additional sections where there is further information that it would like to share or where it would be beneficial to the reader. The Annual Report comprises three key elements:

- **Introduction** by the Chair of the AfC Board
- **Strategic Report** which outlines progress against the organisation's 2022/23 key objectives, key risks and how the organisation intends to manage those risks, summary financial information (management accounts basis) and a brief look forward to the next five years.
- **Directors Report** which outlines the organisation's governance arrangements, workforce information, Board and senior leadership remuneration and responsibilities.

Statement of Accounts

3.8 The Statement of Accounts is the technical part of the report that summarises the financial performance and position of the organisation. It has been produced in accordance with the requirements of International Financial Reporting Standards. These standards prescribe the minimum level of disclosure / content and the accounting basis on which figures must be reported. This accounting basis is different to the methodology used to produce AfC's management accounts, which are reported to the Committee for budget monitoring and outturn purposes. Note nine of the accounts provides a reconciliation between the two reporting presentations. The core statements are comprised as follows:

- **Statement of comprehensive income and expenditure** shows the company's financial performance during the 2022/23 year. On a financial accounting basis AfC made a surplus of £73 million last year. The surplus was generated by the actuarial valuation of AfC's Local Government Pension Scheme assets and liabilities. There were positive returns on investment and changes in demographic / financial assumptions. The in year surplus has reduced the overall pension deficit being carried forward but does not represent a cashable surplus.
- **Statement of changes in equity** shows the movement and value of the organisations net worth for the 2022/23 year. At the end of March 2023 the organisation was worth -£5.3 million compared to -£78.5 million the year before. This negative position is being driven by the deficit associated with the Local Government Pension Scheme relative to AfCs status as a Community Interest Company meaning that it cannot hold significant assets. The net deficit has significantly reduced during 2022/23 due to favourable movements in the

valuation of the pension fund deficit.

- **Statement of financial position** shows the net worth of the Company as at the 31st March in accordance with IFRS. It shows what the Company owes and owns and the equity within the Company that is attributable to AfC's parent Councils. AfC held assets worth £56 million at the end of the year and these were mainly made up of buildings leased from the three owning councils, amounts owed by debtors including the three councils and cash. There was £61 million of liabilities including the pension fund deficit and amounts borrowed from the council via an established operational cash flow facility.
- **Statement of cashflows** shows the changes in cash and cash equivalents during the reporting period and how cash movements relate to the profit and loss for the period. At the end of the year AfC held £8.4 million in cash and cash equivalent assets. AfC holds cash flow for operational purposes and does not invest money long term to generate interest.
- **Notes to the core financial statements** provide additional detail about the figures in the statements outlined above. Note nine provides a comparison of the organisation's management accounts position that is reported to this Committee during the year to the Financial Accounting surplus detailed earlier in this report.

4. FINANCIAL DETAILS / VALUE FOR MONEY

- 4.1 AfC has been established as a Community Interest Company limited by guarantee. As one of the owners of AfC, Windsor and Maidenhead owns 20% of the company.
- 4.2 AfC has reported a net surplus for the year of £73 million and a total value of -£5.3 million. The overall surplus results from Local Government Pension Scheme valuation and does not represent a cashable surplus. The nature of the AfC set up is that the company is not permitted to own significant assets. This means that the net worth of AfC is always likely to be negative as there will always be significant financial obligations attached to offering staff the Local Government Pension Scheme. These obligations are managed over time with triennial valuations assessing the level of employer contributions needed to ensure that pension obligations can be met at the time scheme members retire and they become due. The 20% stake in AfC attributes a proportion of the profits and losses to the Local Authority.
- 4.3 Benchmarking information continues to indicate that the services delivered by AfC represent good value for money. Impower, an independent consultancy company who has a model that maps Local Authority performance, rated the Windsor and Maidenhead services as low spend and high outcomes. National financial benchmarking information shows that on a per head of 0 - 25 population basis the spend on children's services are in the lowest 10% when compared to 151 comparative Local Authorities. Children's Services continued to be rated as good by independent inspectors.

5. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

- 5.1 Achieving for Children is required to produce and publish an Annual Report and Statement of Accounts that complies with the Companies Act 2006 and International Financial Reporting Standards. There are no specific legal implications arising from the recommendations in this report.

6. RISK MANAGEMENT

Table 1: Impact of risk and mitigation

Risk	Level of uncontrolled risk	Controls	Level of controlled risk
Risk that the quality of children's services deteriorates as levels of need continue to increase and the level of financial resources become tighter.	High	Experienced and qualified professionals oversee children's services for the borough on a day to day basis. These professionals work together to advise on how to manage risk at a strategic and operational level. Officers will provide advice and guidance to inform Councillor decision making in terms of how funding could be prioritised to best meet local young people's needs and also on what strategies can be adopted to support families and children, including on how to manage escalating levels of need.	Medium
Risk that AfC is not a 'going concern' and this leads to financial and reputational damage to the Local Authority as well as service disruption.	Medium	The AfC Board makes an annual assessment of whether AfC is a 'going concern'. This judgement is informed by the Chief Operating and Finance Officer who is an experienced and qualified accountant. The assessment and annual accounts are independently audited each year by an external audit firm that is appointed by AfCs three owning councils. The Annual Report and Accounts are also presented to Cabinet each year alongside the audit opinion to enable a dedicated space for Cabinet scrutiny.	Low

<p>Risk that AfC fails to operate in a way that supports equality, diversity and inclusion (EDI) leading to reputational damage and services that don't align with the Local Authority's own values.</p>	<p>Medium</p>	<p>AfC and the Local Authority formally review strategic direction at least once a year to ensure it remains aligned. EDI is embedded into AfCs priorities and values. AfC also has a dedicated EDI Board who meet quarterly to review progress, set future plans, resolve problems or explore opportunities and consider emerging information from an EDI perspective. The EDI Board is chaired by the Chief Operating and Finance Officer which provides a direct link into the AfC Leadership Team and AfC Board. The AfC Board includes council appointed directors and also the council's Director of Children's Services. The Annual EDI Report summarises progress and priorities and is presented to the Cabinet each year for discussion.</p>	<p>Low</p>
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7. POTENTIAL IMPACTS

- 7.1 AfC undertakes an Equality Impact Assessments for all significant programmes of work. Assessments are published on the AfC website to support transparency. The principles of equality, diversity and inclusion are echoed through AfCs priorities, delivery models and policies. No EQIA is needed for this report as there are no decisions being requested.
- 7.2 AfC is part of the work being undertaken by all three owning Local Authorities that seek to move towards more sustainable ways of working. AfC also seeks to work in an environmentally sustainable way. Examples of ongoing programmes include improving the environmental footprint of our buildings, moving to more sustainable fleets for home to school transport, moving to paperless working and working with contractors during tenders to set environmental targets or expectations. AfC agreed its first Environment Strategy and plan in 2022 and it is available to view on the company website.

8. CONSULTATION

- 8.1 The documents presented in this report provide information on the 2022/23 performance and position of AfC. Where relevant, specific consultation and engagement activity has been undertaken for each of the priorities or activities undertaken during the year. The AfC Board and relevant officers have been engaged in the production of the annual reports.

9. TIMETABLE

9.1 The documents discussed in this report were formally published on the AfC website in September 2023. The Annual Report and Accounts will also be lodged with Companies House for publication in line with statutory company reporting requirements.

10. APPENDICES

10.1 This report is supported by three appendices:

- Appendix A - AfC Annual Impact Report 2022/23
- Appendix B - AfC Annual Equalities Report 2022/23
- Appendix C - AFC Annual Report and Accounts 2022/23

11. BACKGROUND DOCUMENTS

11.1 This report is supported by two background documents:

○

- AfC Reserved Matter Ownership Decisions February 2023
<https://rbwm.moderngov.co.uk/documents/s45552/Item%208%20Reserved%20Ownership%20Decisions%20Covering%20Report.pdf>
- AfC Business Plan approval December 2019
<https://rbwm.moderngov.co.uk/documents/s28856/fullAfC%20Business%20Plan%202020-24-%20December%202019-%20for%20RBWM%20v2.pdf>
- AfC Governance Review
https://rbwm.moderngov.co.uk/documents/s29683/Governance%20proposed%20next%20steps%20January%202020_240220.pdf

12. CONSULTATION

Name of consultee	Post held	Date sent	Date returned
<i>Mandatory:</i>		<i>Statutory Officer (or deputy)</i>	
Andrew Vallance	Head of Finance/ interim S151 Officer	22/8/23	27/9/23
Elaine Browne	Deputy Director of Law & Governance & Monitoring Officer	22/8/23	27/9/23
<i>Deputies:</i>			
<i>Mandatory:</i>		<i>Procurement Manager (or deputy) - if report requests approval to go to tender or award a contract</i>	

Lyn Hitchinson	Procurement Manager	22/8/23	27/9/23
<i>Mandatory:</i>		<i>Data Protection Officer (or deputy) - if decision will result in processing of personal data; to advise on DPIA</i>	
Samantha Wootton	Data Protection Officer	22/8/23	27/9/23
<i>Mandator y:</i>		<i>Equalities Officer – to advise on EQiA, or agree an EQiA is not required</i>	
Ellen McManus-Fry	Equalities & Engagement Officer	22/8/23	24/8/23
<i>Other consultees:</i>			
<i>Directors (where relevant)</i>			
Stephen Evans	Chief Executive	27/9/23	27/9/23
Andrew Durrant	Executive Director of Place	27/9/23	27/9/23
Kevin McDaniel	Executive Director of Adult Social Care & Health	27/9/23	27/9/23
Lin Ferguson	Executive Director of Children's Services & Education	11/8/23	21/8/23
<i>Assistant Directors (where relevant)</i>			
	Assistant Director of		
	Assistant Director of		
	Assistant Director of		
<i>External (where relevant)</i>			
N/A			

Confirmation relevant Cabinet Member(s) consulted	Cabinet Member for Children's Services, Education and Windsor	Yes
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REPORT HISTORY

Decision type:	Urgency item?	To follow item?
Non key decision	No	No

Report Author: Lucy Kourpas, Achieving for Children Chief Operating and Finance Officer, lucy.kourpas@achievingforchildren.org.uk

Equality Impact Assessment

For support in completing this EQIA, please consult the EQIA Guidance Document or contact equality@rbwm.gov.uk

www.rbwm.gov.uk



1. Background Information

Title of policy/strategy/plan:	<u>AfC Annual Reports</u>
Service area:	<u>Achieving for Children</u>
Directorate:	<u>Children's Services</u>

Provide a brief explanation of the proposal:

- What are its intended outcomes?
- Who will deliver it?
- Is it a new proposal or a change to an existing one?

The Achieving for Children (AfC) Board of Directors has now approved the 2022/23 Impact Report, Equalities Report and Annual Report and Accounts. These annual reports provide information about AfC's impact and performance across the boroughs of Richmond, Kingston and Windsor and Maidenhead between April 2022 and March 2023. They are being presented to Cabinet to support the Council's oversight of AfCs performance in its role as joint owner of AfC.

This is an information sharing report and there is no proposal and no impact on protected groups.

2. Relevance Check

Is this proposal likely to directly impact people, communities or RBWM employees?

- If Yes, state 'Yes' and proceed to Section 3.
- If No, please explain why not, including how you've considered equality issues.

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Will this proposal need a EQIA at a later stage? (for example, for a forthcoming action plan)
No

If 'No', proceed to 'Sign off'. If unsure, please contact equality@rbwm.gov.uk

3. Evidence Gathering and Stakeholder Engagement

<p>Who will be affected by this proposal? For example, users of a particular service, residents of a geographical area, staff</p>
<p>Among those affected by the proposal, are protected characteristics (age, sex, disability, race, religion, sexual orientation, gender reassignment, pregnancy/maternity, marriage/civil partnership) disproportionately represented? For example, compared to the general population do a higher proportion have disabilities?</p>
<p>What engagement/consultation has been undertaken or planned?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How has/will equality considerations be taken into account? • Where known, what were the outcomes of this engagement?
<p>What sources of data and evidence have been used in this assessment? Please consult the EQIA Evidence Matrix for relevant data. Examples of other possible sources of information are in the Guidance document (Section 2.3).</p>

4. Equality Analysis

Please detail, **using supporting evidence**:

- How the protected characteristics below might influence the needs and experiences of individuals, in relation to this proposal.
- How these characteristics might affect the impact of this proposal.

Tick positive/negative impact as appropriate. If there is no impact, or a neutral impact, state 'Not Applicable'.

More information on each protected characteristic is provided in the EQIA Guidance document (available on the intranet).

	Details and supporting evidence	Potential positive impact	Potential negative impact
Age			
Disability			
Sex			
Race, ethnicity and religion			
Sexual orientation and gender reassignment			
Pregnancy and maternity			
Marriage and civil partnership			
Armed forces community			
Socio-economic considerations e.g. low income, poverty			
Children in care/Care leavers			

5. Impact Assessment and Monitoring

If you have not identified any disproportionate impacts and the questions below are not applicable, leave them blank and proceed to Sign Off.

What measures have been taken to ensure that groups with protected characteristics are able to benefit from this change, or are not disadvantaged by it? For example, adjustments needed to accommodate the needs of a particular group
Where a potential negative impact cannot be avoided, what measures have been put in place to mitigate or minimise this? <ul style="list-style-type: none">• For planned future actions, provide the name of the responsible individual and the target date for implementation.
How will the equality impacts identified here be monitored and reviewed in the future?

6. Sign Off

Completed by: Lin Ferguson	Date:22.9.23
Approved by:Lucy Kourpas	Date:22.9.23

If this version of the EQIA has been reviewed and/or updated:

Reviewed by:	Date:
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Achieving for Children

IMPACT REPORT 2022/23



**achieving
for children**⁴⁹

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Welcome

We are Achieving for Children, and this is our impact report for 2022-23. It sets out what we have been doing over the past 12 months and highlights some of our proudest achievements.

Who we are

We are a not for profit organisation that is focused on supporting the children and young people of the Royal Borough of Kingston, the London Borough of Richmond and the Royal Borough of Windsor and Maidenhead, to live safe, happy, healthy and successful lives. We are unique and different because we are owned by three local authorities and we are an organisation of talented children's services professionals who are focused on working together and with partners to provide the best possible support to young people.

We deliver services to more than 120,000 children and young people in a range of areas including early help, children's social care, education, health, and special educational need and disability (SEND) services. Our vision is to provide children and their families with the support and services they need to live safe, happy, healthy and successful lives.

Over 1,200 people work for us in a wide variety of roles including social work, teaching, nursing, occupational therapy, physiotherapy and clinical psychology.



We are good at what we do, as demonstrated by a range of positive inspection outcomes

Our children's social care services are judged by Ofsted as 'Outstanding' in Kingston and as 'Good' in Richmond and in Windsor and Maidenhead.



Our independent fostering agency (IFA), which operates across all three boroughs, has been judged 'Good'.



We achieved a positive Joint Targeted Area Inspection (JTAI) of the multi-agency response to the identification of initial need and risk in Windsor and Maidenhead in May 2022, which focused on our 'front door', including our Single Point of Access.



In Windsor and Maidenhead at the end of 2022-23, the Department for Education and NHS England reviewed our progress against our written statement of action and have made the decision that there is no need for it to be formally monitored any more because we have 'demonstrated clear and sustained progress'.



In October 2022, Ofsted revisited our SEND services in Kingston and confirmed we were making sufficient progress against our Written Statement of Action, and as a result, the formal quarterly support and challenge visits from the Department for Education and NHS England will come to an end.



We received a 'Good' rating across all areas following the Care Quality Commission (CQC) inspection of our Health Visiting and School Nursing Service in Windsor and Maidenhead in November 2022.



We achieved 'Good' inspection ratings of our Youth Offending Services in Kingston and Richmond, and Windsor and Maidenhead.



Although we are extremely pleased with what we have achieved, and the external recognition we have received as a result, we are not complacent and we remain committed to improving our services further.

Support for families and the children and young people in our care

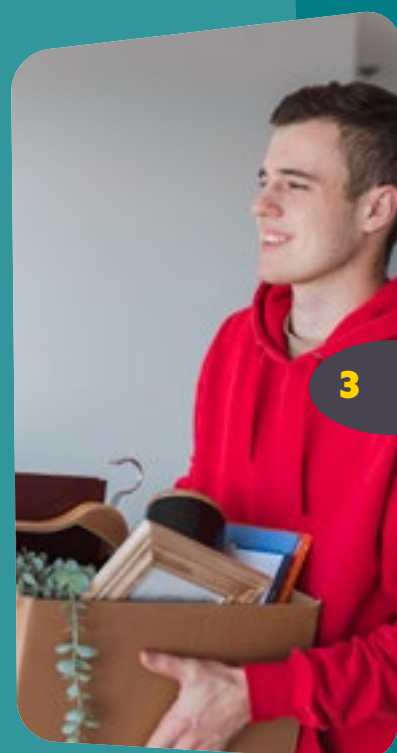
Early intervention and prevention is at the heart of our work with families so that we are able to meet the needs of children and young people as early as possible and well before statutory services are required. Our impact report sets out our excellent early help offer and highlights our children's centres, family hubs and our incredibly successful holiday activity and food programme.

Our support for children and young people in care, and on the edge of care, is always developing and improving. We have just started an early help and social care transformation programme across all three boroughs. This review will take place over the next few years and will look at how we deliver all of our social care services so we can focus on working in the ways that have the most impact and best meet the needs of our communities.

We are working hard to make sure that when we do need to support a child or young person in care they are placed in the best possible accommodation and receive the correct support. To help us to do this, we operate a number of in-house accommodations. This includes our children's home, Hope House, and our purpose-built overnight short break care centre, Rainbow House, which are both well established now and provide high quality care for our most vulnerable children and young people.

We are excited that we will be working with Kingston Council to develop a new children's home over the coming 18 to 24 months so we can support more of our children and young people locally.

Participation and engagement with children and young people is incredibly important to us. We have done lots of work over the last year to make sure we can hear the voices of our children and young people, such as establishing regular meetings between the Youth Council and the AfC Board of Directors and working with our children in care councils to support their peers who are being looked after by our social care services. Over the last year, they have contributed to the development of the care leavers' enhanced local offer, assisted in the launch of the HaveMySay app, which enables children in care to provide feedback whenever they want to, and created baby packs for care leavers who become parents for the first time.



Schools and special educational needs and disabilities

We are really proud of the excellent school standards in Kingston, Richmond, and Windsor and Maidenhead, which are amongst the highest in the country. Over the past year we have supported 25 schools with their Ofsted inspections through our school improvement support, and now 95% of our schools across all three boroughs are judged 'Good' or 'Outstanding'. Our Virtual School and Virtual College support the education of those children and young people who are in our care. Last year they continued to do brilliantly in their exams to outperform their national peers.

We know that we need to get even better with our support to children and young people with SEND in all three boroughs. We are working hard to address the areas that were identified as weaknesses in written statements of action (WSOA) in Richmond and Windsor and Maidenhead, particularly in relation to strengthening our relationships with our parent carer forums so the voices of families more clearly influence our work. However we are pleased that it has been recognised that we are making good progress in our WSOAs, to the extent that there is reduced monitoring due to the increased confidence in our ability to deliver what is needed.



Our workforce

Undoubtedly, our greatest strength is our amazing workforce and we aim to create a supportive and encouraging environment for all our staff. During the year, we were delighted to re-launch our annual staff awards. The new scheme proved incredibly popular, with over 250 nominations across the whole organisation in 11 different categories, including champion for children, inspirational leader, rising star and outstanding contribution. We had 30 individuals or team winners, and we came together in person in both operational areas to celebrate their achievements.

We were also extremely proud to have two winners in the national Social Worker of the Year Awards announced in November 2022. Annmarie Nero, who works in our Adolescent Safeguarding Team won the Children's Social Worker of the Year Gold Award, and Mi-gyung Kim, who works in our Safeguarding Team, won the Newly Qualified Children's Social Worker of the Year Silver Award. This is a fantastic achievement, in recognition of their hard work and commitment in their roles.

We do recognise that we face a number of recruitment and retention challenges, driven by national shortages of qualified and experienced social workers. There is a lot of ongoing activity to address this, from refreshed staff benefits to provide staff with increased annual leave and new parking options, to new recruitment and retention incentives, including welcome payments and market supplements for social care teams. To support our recruitment and retention activity, we launched a digital marketing campaign targeted at social workers. So far, it has allowed us a reach of 186,000 people, has resulted in 54,000 clicks through to more information on our roles, and has led to 148 expressions of interest being submitted.

Smart working

As an organisation, we are always trying to find ways to work smarter. For example this year, significant progress has been made in terms of digital transformation:

- robotic process automation has been implemented in the Single Point of Access, resulting in the successful recording of over 3,500 contacts in the last year
- a new automated process has been developed for the verification of addresses on school place applications, which will streamline the admissions process for more than 11,000 applications received annually
- digital payment points have been deployed to nine children's centres
- a new digital customer platform has also been introduced, providing an online, self-service option for people who want to evaluate services, book appointments, send feedback, submit referrals, upload documents, complete questionnaires and request callbacks

During 2022-23, we have continued our focus on improving our interfaces with our workforce and our external stakeholders. We have experienced a fantastic response to and usage of our new intranet Connect - which was named by one of our staff. It provides a new digital workspace that enables staff to work more collaboratively and to access key information and documents more easily. In January 2023, we also launched our brand new company website with a fresh new look. The website makes it easier to find information such as fostering and apprenticeships or links to services by council area.

As you will see in this impact report, we have been very busy over the past 12 months and achieved a lot. However, we still want to do more. Based on the progress we have made in 2022-23, we are confident about the future of Achieving for Children and our ambition to reach every child and young person who needs us, so that they are able to live safe, happy, healthy and successful lives.

Sian Wicks, Chair of the Achieving for Children Board

Lucy Kourpas, Chief Operating and Finance Officer

Ian Dodds, Director of Children's Services in Kingston and Richmond

Lin Ferguson, Director of Children's Services in Windsor and Maidenhead



Sian Wicks
Chair of the Achieving
for Children Board



Lucy Kourpas
Chief Operating
and Finance
Officer



Ian Dodds
Director of Children's
Services in Kingston
and Richmond



Lin Ferguson
Director of Children's
Services in Windsor
and Maidenhead

Key information about Achieving for Children



124,115

children and young people aged 0 to 19 across the three boroughs



4,577

children and young people

We support **4,577** children and young people with special educational needs and disabilities who have an education care and health plan.



9,074

additional school places

Since 2014, we have delivered **9,074** additional school places, including expanding SEND provision in mainstream schools and five new free schools.



91%

of schools 'Good' or 'Outstanding'

We support **165** schools to deliver high quality teaching and learning. **91%** of schools across our three boroughs are 'Good' or 'Outstanding' (Ofsted).



10,000

young people

More than **10,000** young people each year regularly use our youth services to take part in positive activities that develop their interests and talents.



13,000

families

More than **13,000** families attend children's centres or family hubs for health appointments, to access local childcare, or for activities that help their children get ready for school.



1,074

families

We have completed early help assessments for **1,074** of our families to identify what support they may need from us.



2,944

children and young people supported by social care services

800 who are children in need

431 on child protection plans

376 who are children looked after

Our strategic priorities

We have six strategic priorities within Achieving for Children. These are the areas where we most want to make a difference and they help to decide what work we do. All the activity we undertake is rooted to these six strategic priorities.



Stronger families

We will work hard, alongside our key partners, to make sure the children and young people we support are safe from harm and that the families we work with are supported to help themselves so that any positive change is lasting.



Financial stability

Given the difficult financial circumstances, both nationally and locally, we will make sure we are delivering efficient, cost-effective and financially sustainable services so we are able to support those most in need.



Positive futures

We are focused on improving our local education, health and care offer so that our children and young people can attend school and get any support they may need, close to home. We want to help them to develop their independence and prepare for adulthood.



Successful organisation

We want Achieving for Children to be adaptable and flexible so we can meet the needs of the children and young people we support, even if these needs change.



Excellent workforce

Our workforce will be experienced, talented, empowered and motivated to deliver the best possible services and outcomes for children and young people. We will invest in the recruitment, retention and development of our workforce and reward their achievements.



Smarter working

We will review and improve our internal processes and use more technology so that we can free up our staff to spend more time with the children, young people and families we support.

Examples of our impact



ACHIEVING a strong early help offer

Our children's centres and family hubs are a central part of our early help offer which helps to give children, young people and their families, the best start in life.

In Kingston and Richmond we have seen the number of people attending our children's centres increase over the past 12 months. We:

- delivered over 6,000 sessions for families either in person or online
- saw over 17,000 individuals in person or online
- had over 80,000 interactions with our families
- held an extremely successful event for National Play Day which saw almost 2,500 people come together for the first time since the pandemic to celebrate play
- supported health colleagues to deliver polio and flu vaccination clinics over the weekends in the autumn
- worked with local businesses to provide families with 75 hampers and over 100 presents at Christmas
- now have over 7,000 members on our Facebook groups

As part of our response to the cost of living crisis, our children's centres have provided warm spaces twice a week as part of an eight week pilot, with activities, quiet space for homework and support for families with children aged 0 to 11 years. We also ran a 'warm coats and shoes' project during winter and recycled and distributed 184 coats and 54 pairs of shoes to families.

In Windsor and Maidenhead, we established our family hubs approach, which brings together children's centres, youth centres and parenting services. Our family hubs are now fully staffed and demand for services has been high:

- we have provided one-to-one support to 823 children
- 3,400 children and young people have attended group sessions on topics such as digital safety, drug and alcohol awareness, and self-esteem

We provide a full menu of interventions to improve parents' skills and knowledge, such as the positive parenting programme and baby massage classes. Our family hub model includes our health visiting services, which offers all families with a new baby a health assessment within two weeks of birth. It was inspected this year and we were really pleased to receive a 'Good' Ofsted rating which demonstrates the positive impact we are having.

We receive lots of positive feedback from the families we have worked with.

This includes:

“ You have consistently supported my children and me. You have always made allocations and allowances for us, and you have done this with so much patience and understanding and respect. I am so, so, so thankful and so grateful for everything you do for my family. ”

“ Thank you to your amazing team. 100% truth - we would not be where we are today, without your support and trust and confidence. You have been an integral part of our journey here, and given me momentum. It absolutely has been a mutually organic relationship and continues to grow. The children's centre is without doubt our happy place. Thank you for being my safe space. Thank you for being a safe stable strong space for my children. We are incredibly lucky that you have been here when we too are here. ”



ACHIEVING fun and engaging holiday activities

We know that school holidays can be a difficult time for some families, with trying to juggle childcare with work.

To support our families during school holidays, we successfully delivered the FUEL (Feed Ur Everyday Lives) programme in Kingston, Richmond and Windsor and Maidenhead in response to the Department for Education funding for the holiday activities and food (HAF) programme. This was our third year delivering the programme, which took place over the Easter, summer and Christmas holidays and offered a range of fun and enjoyable activities and food to children and young people aged 5 to 16 years who are eligible for benefits-related free school meals (FSM).

Across all boroughs, the programme grew throughout each holiday period with increasing numbers of providers, locations and spaces on offer. In total, almost 40 different partners worked with us to deliver the programme; with over 3,500 children and young people attending a range of fun and exciting activities. Of these, over 200 of the children and young people had additional needs.



Our families love the programme. Some of the feedback we received includes:

“ They both loved it, they originally only planned to go for one day but enjoyed it so much they went back a second day. They came out enthused and it definitely built up their confidence as they loved chatting about the other kids they had met and taking part in the activities as they felt very supported by staff. ”

“ She had an amazing time and was very upset when it finished! She is excited to go again. The staff were amazing! ”

“ The club has been amazing for my autistic son. He has a lot of additional needs, however, the club have been able to manage his needs effortlessly. I only booked him for one week but he wanted to go back for the second week too. It was absolutely amazing and I will be booking this club again if it's available. ”

ACHIEVING with our families

We want to make sure we are giving good support to those of our families who may need some additional help. To do this, we have established a new Families First model.

In Kingston and Richmond, the Families First service commenced in April as a two year project. It aims to support social workers and the families they work with who present with a trio of vulnerabilities (domestic abuse, mental health, substance misuse) through the key principles of co-location, joint working and group supervision. Over 140 families have been supported and the project has shown that for most families, where the Families First team provides support, they are less likely to need as much help going forward and are better equipped to help themselves. The feedback received from families has been excellent.

“ The relationship with my children has greatly improved, especially communication, confidence in parenting and ability to offer a stable environment. ”

“ I am more positive and confident and able to meet the needs of my children, especially emotionally. We talk more and we enjoy doing things together. ”

“ I am listening more and also helps me and the whole family cope better, which in turn has had a positive impact on our emotional and mental health. I also feel more confident in my parenting and ability to support my child and that we are doing the right thing for her. ”

Based on the success of this programme, we are now developing a similar service in Windsor and Maidenhead. The newly formed Families First team supports families in crisis who are at imminent risk of having their child or children taken into care. Families are fast-tracked to receive support, and are ultimately supported to keep their children at home or find a family network in order to care for their children. The team also supports children to return home from care, if this is the best option for them.

So far, we have supported 11 families and in all cases the children have remained in the family home.

ACHIEVING positive futures through apprenticeships

Way2Work is Achieving for Children's approved apprenticeship training provider listed on the Register of Approved Apprenticeship Training Providers (RoATP). It offers high quality apprenticeships and traineeships, and works with employers to provide relevant and meaningful training to anyone aged 16 plus. It offers apprenticeships in a range of sectors including early years, business support, customer services and teaching. And as well as working with local businesses and schools to provide opportunities, it provides apprenticeships within Achieving for Children.

Throughout their apprenticeships, learners receive information, advice and guidance, including CV development, interview skills and assistance with their job search. Way2Work is a specialist in supporting the most vulnerable learners, including those with special educational needs and disabilities, children who are looked after and care leavers.

We know that this is having a positive impact.

- 93% of our learners progress into a higher apprenticeship, employment, or further training
- 87% of our Way2Work apprentices rate the quality of teaching and learning as good or better
- 87% would refer Way2Work to a friend
- We are particularly proud that 100% of apprentices that complete their apprenticeships in Achieving for Children remain with the organisation

At the end 2022-23, Way2Work was supporting 58 apprentices. Of these, 20 are directly employed by Achieving for Children, 26 are aged 16 to 24 years old, 28% are from a Black, Asian or Minority Ethnic background, and 12% have special educational needs or disabilities, are children looked after, or are care leavers.

One of our former apprentices now manages Way2 Work, Matt Burke, Business Manager at Achieving for Children, said:

“ Way2Work apprenticeships gave me direction after leaving college and provided me with great opportunities to develop skills and gain work experience. Since completing my apprenticeship which gave me the base to build from, I have created good working relationships with internal colleagues and external customers and now enjoy my role as manager of Twickenham Training Centre and leading on recruitment at Way2Work. ”



ACHIEVING for our children and young people with special educational needs and disabilities

We are working hard to improve the inclusive services we provide to children and young people with SEND. This includes supporting our young people with SEND to transition to independence and adulthood through our supported internships.

Misha's story

Misha attended a local special school and when she finished her studies, we worked with her to secure a place on a year-long supported internship run by Mencap. While undertaking the internship, Misha was able to complete an extended work placement and develop other employability skills, such as communication, by participating in group discussions at Mencap, practising interviewing skills and researching the type of careers that might suit her.

She also had the opportunity to work towards completing her Functional Skills (which is offered to learners who have not already achieved a pass grade at school). She was delighted to be informed having sat the exam, that she had passed her Functional Skills in maths at Level 1.

When she completed the internship, she had not been offered paid employment, however within a very short time after leaving the programme, she independently applied to a local food shop and attended an interview and was offered a role with 20 contracted hours.

Misha told us:

“ I absolutely love my job, I get on really well with my manager and my colleagues and actually they have offered me more hours, so having the knowledge that I am going to get paid at the end of the month is such a nice feeling and I'm really pleased I completed the internship, because it gave me knowledge that I needed. ”



ACHIEVING a more diverse and inclusive organisation

Our strong focus on equality, diversity and inclusion (EDI) has continued during 2022-23.

Our staff-led EDI Board has continued to be instrumental in driving forward EDI improvements across the organisation. Key activity has included:

- Launching our employee networks - we are delighted to have three fully established networks, led by staff, that focus on menopause, leaders of all colours and LGBTQI+ and allies.
- Successfully celebrated a number of cultural events, such as Black History Month (BHM) and LGBTQ History Month. We put on an extensive programme for BHM in 2022. This included special guest speakers, spotlights on staff from Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic backgrounds, blogs from senior leaders relating to BHM topics, and a considerable bank of BHM resources for staff to access.
- Taking part in the Workforce Race Equality Standard (WRES) pilot in social care, which was led by the Department for Health and Social Care, and reporting for the first time about the experiences of our Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic staff. The WRES aims to gather data and information about staff to identify any areas of best practice, or any areas for improvement in relation to race and ethnicity. Our WRES report is now included in our annual equalities reporting



Jabed Hussain, our Associate Director for Business Efficiency and Digital Transformation, invited colleagues to take part in the Ramadan Challenge at the end of March 2023. Twelve staff members took part and fasted for a day alongside their Muslim colleagues with the aim of promoting understanding and awareness of the difficulties and rewards of observing Ramadan. After the event, those that took part shared their experiences with other colleagues including the challenges they faced during the day, what they learned about

“ Overall, the Ramadan Challenge provided participants with a greater understanding of the significance of fasting in Ramadan, fostered a sense of community, and encouraged dialogue and empathy among colleagues with different beliefs and backgrounds. I'm very proud of the organisation and my colleagues for supporting and taking part in this with me. Hopefully we will get even more participation next year. ”

Thank you

Collaboration and partnership working are instrumental to our success as an organisation. Thank you to all our staff, service users and partners for helping us achieve our ambition to reach every child and young person who needs us, so that they are able to live safe, happy, healthy and successful lives. We look forward to having further positive impact over the coming year.

To find out more about Achieving for Children and the work we do, please visit [our website](#).



Equalities Report 2022-23



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August 2023

1. Introduction

Background

Achieving for Children (AfC) was created as a community interest company in 2014 and is now owned and commissioned by the Royal Borough of Kingston upon Thames, the London Borough of Richmond upon Thames and the Royal Borough of Windsor and Maidenhead to deliver children's services.

We produce an equalities report each year to demonstrate our compliance with the public sector equality duty (PSED).

This report sets out:

- our approach to equality, diversity and inclusion
- what we know about equality, diversity and inclusion in relation to our workforce and to the children, young people and families we support
- what we have done about it in 2022-2023
- our equality objectives (what we plan to achieve by 2024)

The PSED came into force on 5 April 2011 with the aim of embedding equality considerations into the everyday work of public bodies to enable them to tackle inequality and discrimination more effectively. The PSED has three general duties that require public bodies to be aware of the need to:

- eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment, victimisation and other conduct prohibited by the Equality Act 2010
- advance equality of opportunity between people who share a protected characteristic and people who do not share it
- foster good relations between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not share it



2. Our approach to equality, diversity and inclusion

Our approach to implementing equality, diversity and inclusion (EDI) is set out in our equality, diversity and inclusion policy, which has been agreed by the Company Leadership Team. The policy sets out the following implementation steps.

- Ensuring the Achieving for Children Board of Directors and Company Leadership Team oversee and scrutinise our progress against the equality duty.
- Ensuring our staff are aware of the equality, diversity and inclusion policy and receive appropriate training.
- Supporting the EDI Board, which was established in 2021 to drive our equality and diversity change agenda in line with our organisational values. The purpose of the board is to lead cultural change across AfC so that as an organisation we embrace and celebrate diversity. Its aim is to support staff to understand differences and behave respectfully to each other so that people want to work and stay working in the company and that AfC can respond to the different needs of service users.
- Ensuring the aims and objectives of the EDI policy align with the AfC EDI Board and their associated action plans.
- Monitoring all areas of employment, including recruitment, promotion, training opportunities, pay, grievances and disciplinary action, to ensure there is equal treatment for all employees and that action is taken where any disparity is found.
- Establishing specific equality and diversity policies wherever necessary and linking to the overarching equality, diversity and inclusion policy.
- Supporting any equality and diversity groups established within Achieving for Children and linking them in with the annual equalities reporting process to highlight impact. This will include, for example, the AfC employee networks which have been established to represent different groups of staff.
- Ensuring that all contractors and organisations providing services on our behalf have rigorous and appropriate equality policies covering employment and service delivery which meet the requirements of the public sector equality duty.
- Linking with performance improvement plans, external and internal inspections, and reviews that cover equality performance in services areas as part of wider improvement measures.
- Ensuring that equality objectives are regularly set, monitored and reviewed as part of the business planning process, and that our progress is reported against the public sector duty in our annual equalities report.
- Ensuring that all service restructures or reorganisations and all new services, policies or functions are subject to an equality impact assessment (EIA) to consider any potential equalities impact, and all services delivered by Achieving for Children carry out EIAs as appropriate on regular basis.
- Working with children, young people and their families to help develop, monitor and review our policies, practices, functions and services.

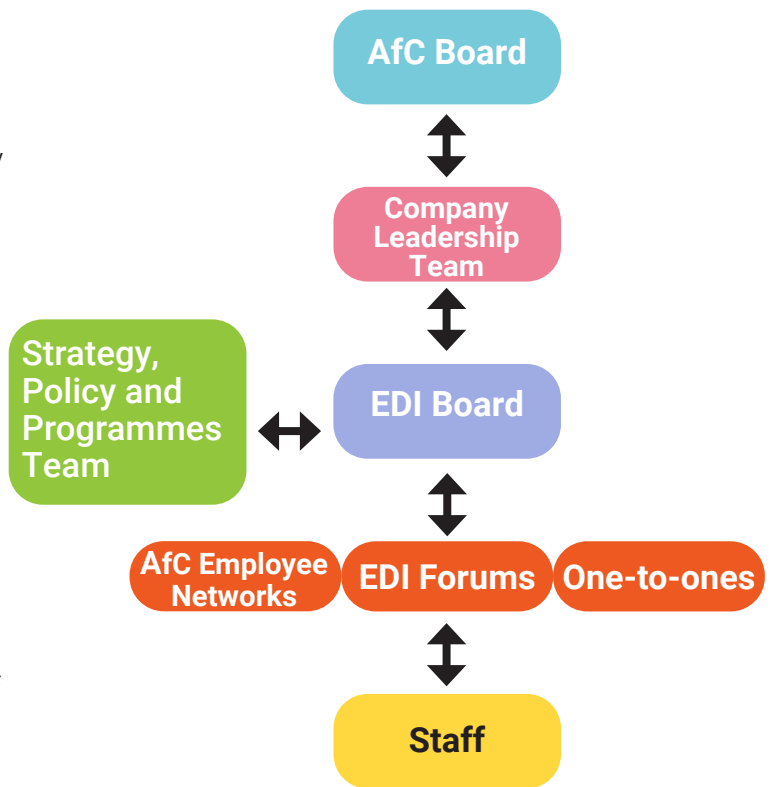
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Responsibility for equality, diversity and inclusion

While the AfC Board of Directors and Company Leadership Team have ultimate responsibility for equality, diversity and inclusion on an operational basis, the Chief Operating and Finance Officer takes the lead in this area. Support is provided by the AfC equalities lead, who is an officer in the Strategy, Policy and Programmes Team.

The EDI Board is responsible for implementing EDI work on an annual basis, in line with an action plan. They report into the AfC Board of Directors and Company Leadership Team. The EDI Board is made up of AfC staff members from key AfC services. All other staff at AfC can get involved in EDI by taking part in AfC Employee Networks (AENs), attending monthly EDI Forums or one-to-ones with the chair or vice chair of the EDI Board.

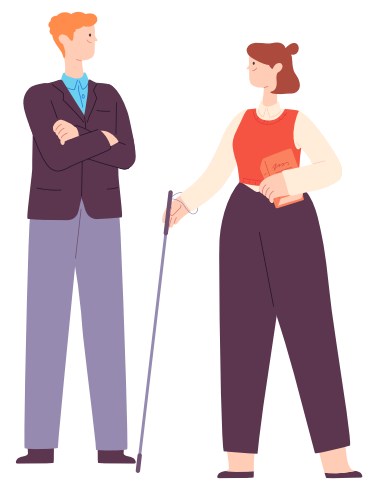


Equality Diversity and Inclusion Board

The EDI Board was established in 2019. Its purpose is to drive AfC’s EDI change agenda, in line with our organisational values. The EDI Board helps implement our action plan based on the E&D Action for Change pyramid which has been designed to promote, improve and sustain equality, diversity and inclusion across AfC. The action plan was created in response to a staff survey, who expressed their views of EDI at AfC.

The EDI Board is responsible to act on feedback from staff gathered via various channels such as the EDI Staff Forum, AENs and one-to-one drop-ins.

It is chaired by the Chief Operating and Finance Officer, with a staff member as vice chair. The EDI Board includes officers from our two operational areas and Business Services, including senior management representatives.



Challenge to our approach to equality, diversity and inclusion

The EDI Board provides challenge to AfC's equality, diversity and inclusion practice. In addition, the equalities lead attends EDI meetings within each council as required. Achieving for Children attends the Richmond External Stakeholders Scrutiny Group (ESSG) twice a year to receive external challenge. ESSG is an independent equalities group made up of a range of people from across the protected characteristic groups and from the community and voluntary sector. It also includes four local residents who act as critical friends and who have professional backgrounds in the public sector and considerable experience of EDI.

Equality impact assessments

AfC requires managers to complete equality impact assessments (EIAs) to demonstrate that we are considering the equality implications of the decisions we are making. Actions from EIAs are monitored through team plans by service managers.

An EIA schedule is compiled annually as part of the business planning process. It includes key projects from our business plan (the completion of an EIA is mandatory for all key projects) and any ad hoc areas of work that require an assessment of the equality implications. Key EIAs are published on our website to demonstrate how we meet our public sector equality duties. We have also made the EIA process accessible in line with government requirements.

4

Reporting and monitoring

AfC produces this annual equalities report in the summer of each year in keeping with the business planning cycle to enable us to demonstrate how we are meeting the PSED. Other equality reports are produced as and when requested by the owning councils.

From 2022-23, the Annual Equalities Report also includes an update on the workforce race equality standard (WRES) report that we opt in to collating with the aim to identify and address any areas that will improve the workplace experience and representation at all levels for Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic staff. An update to our 2021 WRES report and its action plan is now included in Section 9.



Language and terminology

In 2021, we carried out an equality and diversity staff survey, for which 30% of the workforce responded. Generally, staff members identified with the protected characteristic categories set out in the survey. However, there were some categories which staff felt did not represent them well enough. In particular:

- some respondents commented that the gender categories were not inclusive and representative enough. Non-binary and intersex were missing for instance
- some respondents commented that the sexual orientation categories were not inclusive and representative enough. Respondents wanted the 'plus' category to be broken down into individual and stand alone categories
- there is an ongoing debate about the acronym BAME (Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic) and its inclusiveness across AfC. Some staff have raised concerns about different ethnicities being grouped together into one acronym

In response to the points around gender categories and sexual orientation categories, we did research to find best practice for collecting data on protected characteristics. Based on this research and on the feedback the equality and diversity staff survey, we changed the categories we included in our annual staff survey, specifically for both gender and sexual orientation categories.

We included more inclusive and representative terms for both categories and added the option for staff to prefer not to say or self-describe.

Regarding point 3 above, around race and ethnicity categories and the use of the term BAME (Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic), in March 2021, the Commission on Race and Ethnic Disparities recommended that the government stop using the term BAME for the reasons that it excluded other minority groups and that the term was not widely recognised.

In response to this and the feedback from our equality and diversity staff survey, we sent out a poll to our workforce in October 2021 to establish an alternative to the term BAME. The poll was anonymous and did not capture any personally identifiable information.

The results of the poll proved to be inconclusive, as no respondent expressed the wish to keep using the acronym BAME and there was no consensus over which alternative to use. We followed up with an EDI Forum to analyse the poll results further and openly discuss what this meant to individuals.

At the EDI forum, colleagues discussed at length that they did not want to be categorised. However, they also recognised the importance of data collection to reduce discrimination.

For the purpose of this report, as there was no clear consensus on which term to replace BAME with, we will use the term Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic, rather than the BAME acronym.



3. What do we know about equality, diversity and inclusion in relation to our workforce?

As of April 2023, Achieving for Children has 1,793 employees (equating to 1,127 full time equivalent employees), excluding agency workers. Our employees come from a broad range of professional disciplines including social work, teaching, health services and public sector management.

Please note that the following information covers a snapshot of workforce data as of April 2023. Figures include all permanent and temporary staff, but excludes casual and agency workers.

Percentages show the proportion of employees for which equalities data is known and recorded and therefore, percentages reflect the known numbers. The unknown numbers are excluded when calculating percentages. (Unknown = no information is held about an employee's protected characteristics and no assumptions have been made. This includes those who prefer not to say.)

Age: The majority of employees are aged between 30 and 59. The smallest percentage of employees are aged 16 to 19.

- 11.5% are aged 60 and over
- 23.2% are aged 50 to 59
- 22.3% are aged 40 to 49
- 22.6% are aged 30 to 39
- 17.9% are aged 20 to 29
- 2.5% are aged 16 to 19

Locally, our workforce is largely representative of the general population. We have a number of apprenticeships and traineeships in place across the organisation to attract young people to work for Achieving for Children so we can increase the number of employees amongst the lower age brackets.

Disability: 7% of our employees reported that they had a disability, the same percentage as the previous year.

Although there are no directly comparable statistics available across the local government workforce regarding disability, it is thought that 19% of working age adults have a disability (Scope: Disability facts and figures). This suggests as an organisation we are not sufficiently representative of those with a disability. It should be noted however, not all employees have stated their disability status in the three boroughs, so the actual figure may be higher.

As an employer, we make reasonable adjustments for staff with disabilities and enable them to access flexible working arrangements as necessary. To strengthen the support we provide to staff members with a disability, we have created guidance for managers to provide advice on making reasonable adjustments.



Ethnicity: 25% of our employees are from ethnically diverse communities.

Our workforce has a slightly higher Black, Asian and Ethnic Minority representation than the general population in Richmond (16.2%) and Windsor and Maidenhead (13.9%), but is less representative than the general population in Kingston (33.1%). As our workforce is not fully representative of the local communities, we need to ensure they are trained and equipped to be knowledgeable and informed about the different ethnic backgrounds of the children, young people and families that we support. We are making efforts to improve this through our work on the workforce race equality standard.

Gender: 80.6% of our employees are female.

The percentage of our workforce which is female is not representative of the general population, as national and local data indicates a male to female gender split which is approximately 50/50. However, this is in line with the workforce across local government and children's social care. A 2017 report by the Local Government Information Unit (LGIU), 'Does local government work for women', found that 78% of local government officers are female. Similarly, a Department for Education report in 2018, 'Children and family social work workforce in England', found that 85% of children and family social workers are female.

The high number of women in the workforce has an impact: for example, in terms of maternity leave and women being more likely to have caring responsibilities. AfC implements a flexible working policy and a menopause policy, which are reviewed every three years to support our female workforce and those with caring responsibilities.

Gender reassignment: We currently do not report on this and do not ask staff whether they are transitioning or have transitioned.

Religion or belief: The largest faith group within our workforce is Christian (27.5%). Employees with no faith or religion or who did not declare their religion account for 64% of the workforce. The religious status of our workforce is reflected locally.

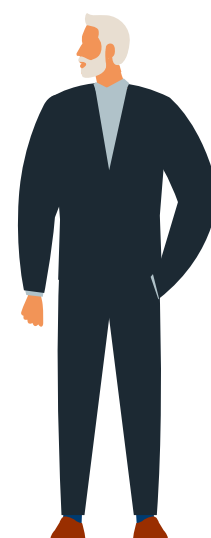
Marital status: 30.2% of our employees are married or in a civil partnership, 25.8% are single and 6.6% have a partner.

The figures relating to relationship status largely reflect local data. More work is required to increase the number of respondents so the figure for 'not known' reduces.

Pregnancy and maternity: We currently do not report on this, but data is collected at a team level when staff take maternity or paternity leave. Our policies on maternity and paternity have been reviewed and updated in the last year.

Sexuality: For the data we hold, over 2% of our employees identify as gay, lesbian, bi-sexual or other.

Local statistics on sexual orientation are not available. Nationally however, in 2016, a report from the Office of National Statistics suggested that 2% of the UK population aged over 16 are lesbian, gay or bisexual. This would suggest our workforce is largely representative.



4. What have we done for our workforce?

Our EDI Board, which is described earlier in the report, has created a 12 month action plan. This plan is based on the EDI staff survey which we carried out in 2021 and the subsequent E&D Action for Change Pyramid which came out of the survey, to drive AfC's EDI agenda forward.

The 12 month action plan's focus is to improve EDI for AfC's workforce. The EDI Board will then create a longer term vision of three years, which will have a stronger focus on improving EDI for children, young people and families.

Below, we outline the different areas of activity from the EDI Board's 12 month action plan and what we achieved so far. The different areas are as follows.

- Governance and communication
- EDI training
- Raising awareness
- Recruitment, retention and development
- Children, young people and families
- Performance

Governance and communication

We have established the EDI Board's governance by creating terms of reference created, scheduling monthly EDI Board meetings and embedding reporting processes. Two members of the AfC Board of Directors have joined the EDI Board to provide greater oversight of EDI activity at a strategic level.

The EDI Board has carried on the work started in the E&D Action for Change pyramid by creating a 12 month action plan.

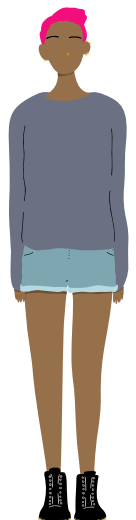
EDI training

Continual work is taking place to promote and champion EDI within the workplace, encourage discussions and raise staff awareness on issues and topics.

In 2022-2023, 117 staff members, of which 45 were managers, attended 1,449 hours of EDI training. An additional 282 members of staff completed our equality and diversity e-learning.

There follows the list of EDI training courses we provided for staff in 2022-2023.

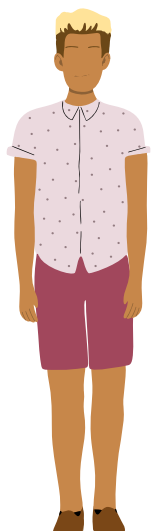
- Advanced skills in dyslexia
- Autism and anxiety (Emotional Health Service)
- Autism, special interests and family dynamics-presented (Emotional Health Service)
- Creating autism friendly classrooms
- Deaf awareness
- Developing a racial justice strategy for your school
- Developing EAL pupils' proficiency in English within mainstream lessons



- Developing mainstream quality teaching for Pupil Premium Grant (PPG) pupils
- ERSA and gender diversity (Emotional Health Service)
- Exploring intersectionality (LGBTQ+, race and ethnicity) (Richmond)
- Focus on PPG: Cost of living crisis and post COVID recovery (Governors)
- Focus on racial justice and multilingualism (Governors)
- Introduction to ADHD - Level 1
- Introduction to autistic spectrum conditions - Level 1
- Working with ADHD - Level 2
- Working with autistic spectrum conditions - Level 2
- KRSCP: Cultural awareness and cultural competency
- KRSCP: Safeguarding children with disabilities
- Managing racism in the workplace
- Mixed, unclear and unstable (MUU) ideology and extremism
- New to leading on PPG
- New to PPG responsibilities (Governors)
- Prevent duty training
- Relationships, sex education and puberty for carers of young people with learning disabilities
- SPARK Pupil Premium network meetings
- SPARK Racial justice and multilingual network meeting
- Talking with schools about race and racism (AfC Only)
- Welcoming EAL pupils - Supporting new arrivals to the UK

Analysis of the attendance data and feedback shows that:

- the overall attendance at the core learning events by AfC employees increased by 23% in the last quarter, while attendance from external partners increased by 32%. However, this is not reflected in attendance of our EDI courses, where attendance by AfC decreased by 5.6% over the same period and external partners by 15.8%
- attendance from schools in Kingston and Richmond remains high, having run two successful racial justice programmes and regular SPARK networks
- 96% of delegates rated our racial justice conference as outstanding
- all AfC staff are required to complete the equality and diversity e-learning as part of their induction
- EDI workshops are an integral part of all conferences. For example, the early years conference included the following sessions - 'Let's talk about race' and 'Unconscious bias in the early years'
- quarterly early help and social care whole service events have included themes around identity, gender awareness, social graces, young carers, unconscious bias and special educational needs and disabilities (SEND). The attendance figures of these events have successfully grown over the last year ensuring that the majority of staff are receiving training in this area regularly



- disability awareness has had to be rescheduled twice in the last year due to low take up, with one session being cancelled
- attendance by managers in Windsor and Maidenhead has increased to 14% from 10% last year, but still remains a focus area to improve
- feedback from delegates attending the 'Managing racism' course is outstanding

Training needs are under constant review and various courses are commissioned as and when required. The EDI Board gives feedback and guidance on all EDI training.

Raising awareness

To better understand our workforce and their needs, the EDI Board runs lunchtime EDI forums. EDI forums are held once a month with the day changing to give the opportunity for all staff members to attend, covering a wide range of topics focused on protected characteristics.

To raise awareness, we have successfully celebrated a number of cultural events, such as Black History Month (BHM), LBGQTQI+ and Pride Month, and International Women's Day. We put on an extensive programme for BHM in 2022. This included special guest speakers, spotlights on staff from Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic backgrounds, blogs from senior leaders relating to BHM topics, and a considerable bank of BHM resources for staff to consider. To build on this, the EDI Board has created an EDI calendar of events, which includes key celebrations for all protected characteristics.

The EDI Board has launched AfC employee networks, which are employee-led groups aiming to create a more inclusive workplace. AfC employee networks can focus on a protected characteristic such as, gender, ethnicity, religion etc, but can also focus on shared lifestyle or interests.

AENs help create a sense of community and belonging for AfC staff by connecting people in a social and professional way and encouraging interaction between individuals and groups of colleagues.

The purpose of AENs is to:

- create open staff groups for employees who share a common identity to meet and support one another in building their community and sense of belonging
- empower staff groups by offering them organisational support and access to decision-makers
- facilitate a clear line of communication to leadership to voice concerns and solve problems
- provide a resource for leadership regarding employee and community issues, needs and policies
- seek to advance a respectful and inclusive company culture and reinforce the importance of inclusion



Recruitment, retention and development

The EDI Board has researched best practice in recruitment, retention and development and added actions in its 12 month action plan. Key highlights from 2022-23 included the following.

- Advertising, and recruiting to, a funded part-time EDI lead role who will become the vice chair of the EDI Board. There was a significant level of interest in this post and interviews were held with eight excellent candidates. Taz Mudali, Events and Continued Professional Development (CPD) Consultant for the Social Work Teaching Partnership, was appointed and started in her role in August and will lead on refreshing the action plan for the Board.
- Launching a reverse mentoring programme designed for staff in non-management posts and from underrepresented groups (such as Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic backgrounds, staff with disabilities, LGBTQI+ staff). Three of our senior leaders nominated themselves to be mentored by staff members who had put themselves forward to be part of the programme.

Mentors received training prior to the programme starting and are meeting monthly with the senior leader that they were matched to to provide guidance, insight and challenge. Feedback from those taking part so far has been positive and senior leaders are reviewing the programme to decide whether to roll it out more widely.

- Further researching the potential for implementing blind recruitment and for increasing the diversity of our recruitment panels. In relation to blind recruitment, this includes reviewing our recruitment systems to identify if this is possible and undertaking research to better understand how this can be rolled out effectively.

For more diverse recruitment panels we are liaising with other local authorities, including our owning councils, to better understand how it can be implemented effectively without becoming tokenistic. These actions will be carried over to 2023-24.



Equality impact assessments

We recently added a screening tool to our EIA process to ensure we are effectively able to identify when we need to complete a full EIA. Key EIAs are published on our website to demonstrate how we meet our public sector equality duties and key policies are subject to the EIA screening process.

An EIA workshop was organised and facilitated for AfC staff to make sure they know how to write an EIA when commencing a new project, developing a new policy or strategy, or making changes to an existing service.

Performance

We undertook our annual staff survey, having undertaken research into best practice in equalities data monitoring which informed changes to the questions we ask. We are currently analysing the findings and these will be reported to the EDI Board, with responses broken down by protected characteristic groups where possible. This will inform the development of the new EDI Board action plan.

We have signed up to the workforce race equality standard and developed and published our WRES action plan (see Section 9 for more information).

We conducted an unacceptable behaviour poll and ran an EDI Forum on the same topic, in order to collect more data for the WRES. As a result, we have reviewed and amended our unacceptable behaviour policy, in consultation with staff, and have now published the latest version on our intranet.

We report on our gender pay gap on a yearly basis (see below for more information).

Gender pay gap

Under the Equality Act 2010 (Specific Duties and Public Authorities) Regulations 2017, public sector employers with 250 or more employees are required to publish a snapshot of their workforce data.

The following paragraphs summarise the latest findings from the 2021 published report.

- 79% of our workforce are women
- 80% of the top quartile of earners are women
- The average hourly pay for women is -2.82% lower than for men.
This means women have a higher average hourly pay
- The median hourly pay for women is -2.49% lower than for men.
This means women have a higher median hourly rate of pay

The gender pay gap is not about equal pay for men and women. It is the difference between the average and median pay of men and women. It does not measure equal pay, which relates to what women and men are paid for the same jobs or work of equal value. In Achieving for Children equal pay is addressed through our job evaluation scheme.

The data required by the government is a fairly simplistic indicator of a complex set of issues. Our ambition is to ensure equality of opportunity for women.



5. What do we know about equality, diversity and inclusion in relation to the children, young people and families we support?

We collect and collate a range of information about the children and young people that we work with and support. This includes equalities information which is reported to Kingston, Richmond, and Windsor and Maidenhead councils as part of our contract arrangements and to the corporate parenting groups in all three boroughs.

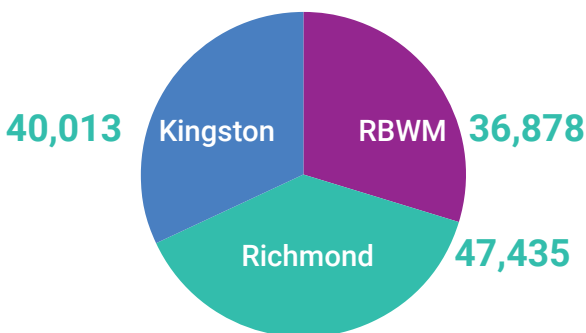
To provide context to our work and to show an understanding of the children and young people we work with, we have included a range of equalities data relating to groups such as children subject to a child protection plan, looked-after children and the school population. This information is used by services to ensure that we are effectively meeting the differing needs of our children and young people. This allows us to highlight any key issues or trends as they arise and take action to address them.

The data included below comes from a range of sources including: School Census Spring 2023, Kingston: Children and young people needs assessments 2017, Richmond: Children and young people's needs assessment 2019, ONS Census 2011, Department for Work and Pensions - Children in low income families: local area statistics report 2022, Windsor and Maidenhead data from 2021-22, South London CCIS Service, Kingston and Richmond SEND dataset - June 2023, UK population estimates 2021-22.

General information about our children and young people

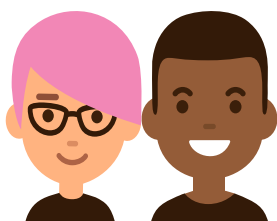
124,326
children and young people
aged 0 to 19 years old

30.2% of children and young people are from a Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic (including White other) background



4,628
children and young people with an education, health and care plan

9.3%
of children in poverty



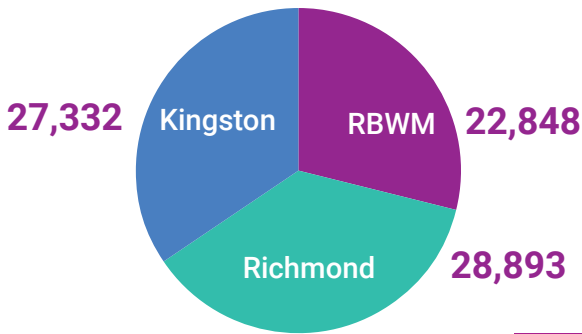
The gender breakdown of males and females aged 0 to 19 is almost **50/50** in all boroughs with a slightly higher proportion of males across all three **80**

3.8% of young people not in education, employment or training (or not known)

School population

79,163 pupils

13% of pupils are eligible for free school meals

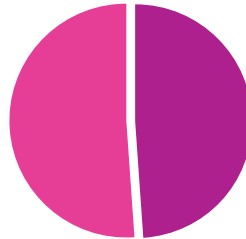


177 schools (not including independent settings)

14.4% of pupils have a disability (with an EHCP or receiving SEN support)



50.4% of pupils are from a Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic (including White other) background

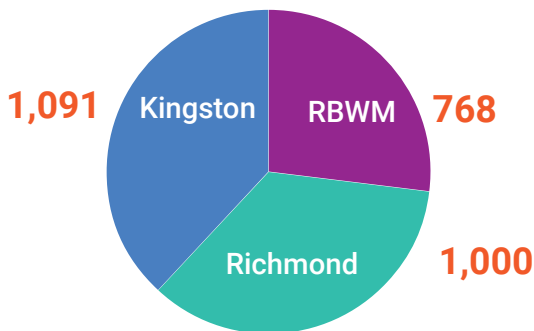


Of all pupils, **49.3%** are female and **50.7%** are male

14

Children in need (CiN) (including those aged 18+ receiving a leaving care service)

2,859 children and young people supported by children's social care



14.7% of CiN who are supported have an EHCP



5 to 9

The most common age group amongst the CiN cohort is 5 to 9 years old

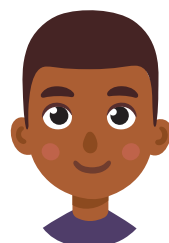
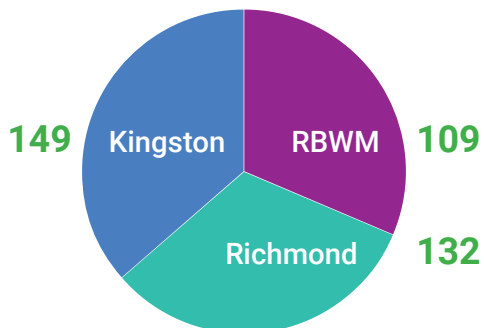
The most common belief in the CiN cohort is no religion



57% of CiN are from a Black Asian and Minority Ethnic (including White other) background

Children subject to a child protection plan (CPP)

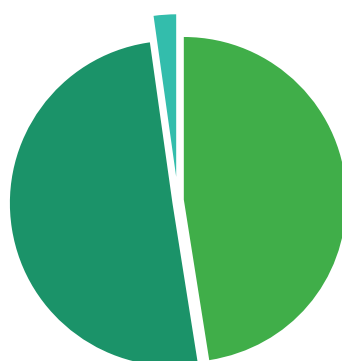
390 children subject to a CPP



49.7% of children subject to a CPP are from a Black Asian and Minority Ethnic (including White other) background

5 to 9

5 to 9 is the most common age group for the CP cohort.



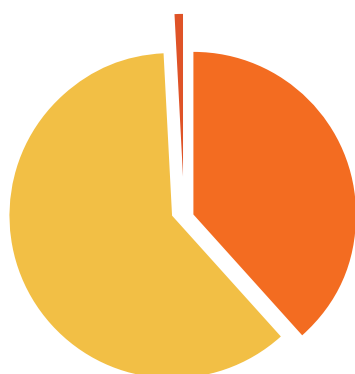
Of the children subject to a CPP, **47.6%** are female and **50.2%** are male (**2%** unborn)

Children looked after (CLA) and children in care (CiC)

385 Total of children looked after and children in care

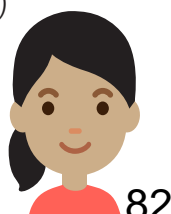


20.7% of CLA have a disability (with an EHCP)



Of the RBWM cohort (66), **38.4%** are female and **60.8%** are male (**0.8%** unborn)

The most common age group for CLA is **16 years old plus**



53% of CLA are from a Black Asian and Minority Ethnic (including White other) background

82

Children and young people with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND)



8,338 Number of children and young people with SEND

Most common age group for children and young people with SEND



Of those with SEND, **36.4%** are female and **63.5%** are male



4.4% of children and young people have a disability (with an EHCP)

Children with an EHCP

Kingston	1,673
Richmond	1,752
RBWM	1,203

16

6. What have we done for the children, young people and families we support?

This section sets out our key achievements in relation to equality, diversity and inclusion (EDI) and demonstrates how we are implementing the PSED and working towards our equality objectives (set out in the following section). Furthermore, our [impact report](#) sets out the impact that we have had on the lives of children, young people and families during 2022-23 that does not directly relate to the protected characteristics.

Age

- Our children's centres and family hubs, which primarily provide support for children aged 0 to 5, are a central element of our early help offer. Attendance at our children's centres in Kingston and Richmond has increased over the past 12 months. We delivered over 6,000 sessions for families either in person or online, saw over 17,000 individuals either online or in person, had over 80,000 interactions with families, and we now have over 7,000 members of our Facebook groups. One of the highlights of the year was our events for National Play Day which saw almost 2,500 people come together for the first time since COVID to celebrate play.
- Our children's centres have worked closely with our local partners - we supported health colleagues to deliver polio and flu vaccination clinics over the weekends in the autumn, we worked with local businesses to provide families with 75 hampers and over 100 presents at Christmas, and throughout the year we have delivered rhyme time sessions for families in our libraries. As part of our response to the cost of living crisis, our children's centres provided warm spaces twice a week as part of an eight week pilot, with activities, quiet space for homework and support for families with children aged 0 to 11 years. We also ran a 'Warm coats and shoes' project during winter and recycled and distributed 184 coats and 54 pairs of shoes to families.
- In Windsor and Maidenhead, in recent years, we have established our family hubs approach, which brings together children's centres, youth centres and parenting services. Our family hubs are now fully staffed and fully functioning and demand for services has been high - we have provided one-to-one support to 823 children. 3,400 children and young people have attended group sessions on topics such as digital safety, drug and alcohol awareness, and esteem.
- We also provide a full menu of interventions to improve parents' skills and knowledge. This includes Incredible Years, which is for parents of children who are neurodiverse, the Freedom Programme for mothers who are experiencing domestic abuse, Supporting Parents and Carers Emotions (SPACE) for parents who need support with their own emotional wellbeing, the Positive Parenting Programme for parents to manage the behaviour of their children in a non-punitive and positive way, specific parenting groups, for parents within the Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic community, and our baby massage group, which supports parents to improve communication with their babies through touch and eye contact.



- School standards in Kingston, Richmond, and Windsor and Maidenhead are amongst the highest in the country and 95% of our schools across all three boroughs are judged 'Good' or 'Outstanding'. In terms of attainment, Kingston and Richmond are both now in the top 20 performing local authorities nationally, from early years to key stage 4, while Windsor and Maidenhead are in the top performing 50 local authorities. This is an exceptional achievement, particularly in light of the challenges posed by COVID.
- Over the past 12 months, we have provided a range of support to our most vulnerable families. In Kingston and Richmond, through the local and household support grant, we have given out approximately 8,500 food vouchers, valued at £15 a week per eligible child, for each school holiday period for families with children who are receiving free school meals, 3 or 4 year olds who are accessing pupil premium grant or disadvantaged 2 year olds.
- To support our families during school holidays, we successfully delivered the FUEL (Feed Ur Everyday Lives) programme in Kingston, Richmond, and Windsor and Maidenhead in response to the Department for Education funding for the holiday activities and food programme.
- This was our third year delivering the programme, which took place over the Easter, summer and Christmas holidays and offered a range of fun and enjoyable activities and food to children and young people aged 5 to 16 years who are eligible for free school meals. In Kingston and Richmond, the programme grew throughout each holiday period with increasing numbers of providers, locations and spaces on offer.
- In total, over 25 different partners worked with us to deliver the programme with over 2,700 children and young people attending a range of fun and exciting activities. Of these, over 200 of the children and young people had additional needs. In Windsor and Maidenhead, 832 children attended the programme, with almost 6,500 attendances at different activities over the course of the holidays, and we delivered our own provision through our family hubs with over 130 children attending. We were particularly pleased to offer free travel for any attendees at SEND sessions and minibus pick-ups for children for offsite activities.
- Way2Work (W2W) is Achieving for Children's approved apprenticeship training provider listed on the Register of Approved Apprenticeship Training Providers. It offers high quality apprenticeships and traineeships, and works with employers to provide relevant and meaningful training to anyone aged 16 plus. It offers apprenticeships in a range of sectors including early years, business support, customer services, and teaching, and as well as working with local businesses and schools to provide opportunities, it provides apprenticeships within Achieving for Children.
- Throughout their apprenticeships, learners receive information, advice and guidance, including CV development, interview skills, and assistance with their job search. W2W is a specialist in supporting the most vulnerable learners, including those with special educational needs and disabilities, children who are looked after, and care leavers. At the end 2022-23, W2W supported 58 apprentices. Of these, 20 were directly employed by Achieving for Children, 26 were aged 16 to 24 years old, 28% were from a Black, Asian or Minority Ethnic background, and 12% had special educational needs or disabilities, were children looked after, or care leavers.

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We know that this is having a positive impact.

- 93% of our learners progress into a higher apprenticeship, employment, or further training.
- 87% of our W2W apprentices rate the quality of teaching and learning as 'Good' or better.
- 87% would refer W2W to a friend.
- We are particularly proud that 100% of apprentices that complete their apprenticeships in Achieving for Children remain with the organisation.

Disability

- We have delivered a range of high quality SEND provision at our children's centres in Kingston and Richmond during the year, including:
 - Chat and Play sessions for our families who have concerns around their children's development
 - Let's Nurture sessions for children showing early signs of autistic spectrum condition or attention deficit hyperactivity disorder
 - well-attended parenting wellbeing courses for parents for SEND children
 - 74 families who have also benefited from the development of a new 'Little Stars' course for children with emerging speech and language needs
 - delivering English Speakers of Other Languages (ESOL) courses for families from Ukraine as part of our parent offer
 - along with colleagues from the Emotional Health Service, we established nurture groups for parents and carers who have experienced trauma through bereavement or domestic abuse
- We have made good progress towards our written statement of action (WSOA) in Richmond, and Windsor and Maidenhead. The WSOAs are plans that have been created to address areas for improvement that have been identified by Ofsted in the delivery of our services to children and young people with SEND.

In Richmond, in collaboration with our schools, we have amended our annual review template to ensure it reflects a more-person centred approach and supports the promotion of preparing for adulthood outcomes. We have also mapped out our continuing health pathways, making it easier for our young people aged 16 to 25 who have a disability, to access support with health needs.

In early March 2023, we had our Windsor and Maidenhead WSOA monitoring visit. We are awaiting feedback, but we expect the outcome to be positive, given the progress we have made.

- Meanwhile, in Kingston in October 2022, we received a SEND reinspection to identify progress against previously identified four areas for improvement. The revisit confirmed we had made sufficient progress in addressing all four areas and the inspector noted improvements in the relationships with families in the local area, the quality of education, health and care plans (EHCPs), and our quality assurance processes.



- In Kingston and Richmond, we held the SEND Futures conference in October 2022. It was attended by over 350 people, including around 55 parents and carers, and practitioners from 135 different organisations, who came together to share ideas and best practice in SEND. Speakers included two of the highest profile people in the SEND system nationally who discussed matters highlighted in the recent SEND green paper. There were also a range of workshops delivered by local parents and practitioners. Feedback was overwhelmingly positive and attendees have already been in contact to tell us about changes they have made to their practice as a result of the conference.
- In Windsor and Maidenhead, we held our Inclusion Summit, with over 140 attendees, including a mixture of parents and carers, schools and market place representatives. Attendees were introduced to the new SEND strategy and were part of the official launch of the new parent carer forum. Feedback from the event was great as stakeholders valued the opportunity to network and share learning, with 90% of the attendees stating they would recommend the event to colleagues.

In February 2023, our 'Ambitious about inclusion' conference brought together almost 90 senior leaders with SEND and inclusion coordinators to listen to a number of nationally recognised keynote speakers who came together to share information and celebrate developments in SEND across the borough. We are particularly proud that the event was co-produced between Achieving for Children, the Independent Advice and Support Service, Children and Young People's Integrated Therapy Service and schools, and was supported by RBWM SEND voices.

- During the year, 27 learners with EHCPs in Kingston and Richmond completed supported internships, delivered in partnership with Mencap and Project Search, with a variety of host employers including Hounslow Council, GSK, West Middlesex Hospital and the FairShot Cafe. We have supported other young people to access specialised internship schemes - one young person is completing an internship in the hospitality sector and one is completing a theatre based programme.

One of these learners has already been offered employment at West Middlesex Hospital once he completes his internship, and the other is expecting to be offered an apprenticeship within the NHS. We have also supported 12 learners with EHCPs to undertake apprenticeships within a variety of sectors including hospitality, education, administration and horticulture.

- We have been responsible for delivering the Mayor of London's European Social Fund employability programmes focusing on young people aged 16 to 25 who are not in education, employment or training in Kingston and Richmond. This past year, we supported over 50 young people through the programme. Thirty five of these young people had EHCPs, and of these, 14 have now progressed into employment or education.
- In Windsor and Maidenhead, the social emotional and mental health (SEMH) intervention project, which was established in 2019 to reduce the risk of permanent exclusion in schools, has continued to thrive. Since it began, the project has worked in 42 schools and supported 91 individual children. Of those children, just three have been permanently excluded and they have been supported in their transition to alternative provision.

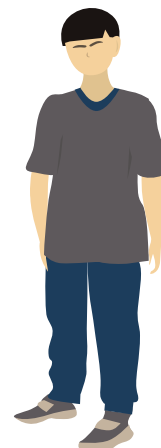


As part of the project, we trained 873 school staff to help them support children with challenging behaviours linked to SEMH difficulties, as well as delivering updated training to 140 staff and bespoke training to 115 staff. At the same time, we established 140 SEMH leads in schools and held three SEMH network meetings a year where leads can be signposted to early help services and share learning and feedback.

We have also purchased a subscription to the Online Boxall Profile which enables schools to assess the needs of their children quickly, set targets, and monitor progress. Sixty one of our schools are actively using this assessment and tracking tool which will enable us to analyse data to support transitions and target areas of need.

- The expansion of additional school places for children and young people with SEND to meet rising demand continues to be a priority.
- In Kingston, the following 28 specialist resource provision (SRP) places were created in September 2022: Malden Oaks, a further eight, Robin Hood Primary, 14, and Surbiton Hill Nursery, six. Good progress continues to be made towards establishing Spring School, the new 90-place autism-specific special free school, in September 2023. Work continues regarding the feasibility of creating a post-16 SEND campus in the borough, which would include 50 new special school sixth form and college places.
- In Richmond, 16 specialist places were created in September 2022: a small Strathmore centre at Darell Primary, six, and a new social and emotional and mental health (SEMH) SRP at Teddington, 10. Progress towards establishing London River Academy, the 90-place SEMH special school for children and young people with SEMH needs continues. Proposals to create additional centres for Clarendon and Strathmore special schools, to provide 80 places in Petersham and 24 places in Hampton respectively, are advanced and planning applications are due to be made for both.
- In Windsor and Maidenhead, we successfully submitted a bid for a 100 place new special free school for children and young people aged seven to 16, with EHCPs for SEMH needs. The new school will be located in a new development planned on the western edge of Windsor and we will now move forward to the next stage of planning. In addition, in September 2023, a new SEND provision is opening at South Ascot Village School, for 10 pupils with autistic spectrum condition.

We are also planning to open an early years readiness hub in September 2024, which will provide interventions to support children who are unable to self-regulate and so are not yet ready to learn in a mainstream school setting.



- The emotionally related school avoidance (ERSA) project has been established to support those children who experience difficulties attending school, due to a range of factors. Through the project, which operates in Windsor and Maidenhead, 28 schools have received training, support and consultation on ERSA, have been given access to a newly created toolkit, and have been provided with additional strategies to help them to effectively support these children. A further 16 schools have been trained during Spring 2023. A multi-agency steering group oversees the project, including the development, dissemination, training and implementation of the ERSA toolkit and further refining the ERSA multi-agency graduated pathway. Feedback from pupils, parents and the schools has been extremely good.
- In Kingston and Richmond, our Emotional Health Service (EHS) received over 1,400 referrals during the year, with 352 referrals received on the neurodevelopmental assessment pathway in relation to attention deficit hyperactivity disorder and autistic spectrum disorder. This is an increase of 7% from the previous year.

The EHS delivered a range of online groups including low mood groups for young people aged 15 to 18 years, attended by 22 young people, anxiety groups for young people aged 12 to 18 years, attended by 29 young people, and groups for parents of anxious primary aged children, with 43 parents in attendance. We also collaborated with Art and Soul to run two art therapy groups which were accessed successfully by 12 children. We launched our sixth Mental Health Support Team (MHST) in schools, which has meant that every school in both Kingston and Richmond now has access to an MHST. Over 1,400 children accessed the MHSTs in 2022-23 for individual or group therapy, which is a 55% increase from the previous year.

22

- We have successfully recommissioned our Short Breaks Service and our Special Educational Needs and Disabilities Information, Advice and Advocacy Service (SENDIASS) in Kingston and Richmond.

For short breaks, a successful tender exercise was completed in the summer of 2022 and the new offer came into effect 1 September 2022. We have contracted five providers to deliver our provision, both from partners we have previously worked with, but also some new organisations.

For SENDIASS, we completed a successful procurement exercise and the new contact has now been awarded and implemented during April 2023.

This was a real team effort from colleagues across AfC and our partners, especially Kingston and Richmond parent carer forums.

- In January 2023, we launched our brand new company website. The website has a fresh new look and makes it easier to find information such as fostering and apprenticeships or links to access services by council area.

We continually work hard to ensure our websites are accessible and aim to ensure all visitors to the site are able to access our information easily and have the ability to use a range of digital accessibility tools such as language translators, text mode, audio readers, and changeable colour themes and fonts.



Gender (sex)

- We run a youth club 'Good4Girls' for young women aged 10+ at Ham Youth Centre on a weekly basis. The aim is to offer a space for young women only, to try new activities, make friends and have fun. They engage in art, sports, cooking, discussions, fashion, media, trips and lots more. The project also offers emotional wellbeing support.
- Following the success of the sexual harassment survey for girls, which had over 800 respondents, a working group of our Youth Council in Kingston and Richmond has continued working in partnership with professionals from the Safer Kingston Partnership and Community Safety Service for Richmond, to develop a boys and young men sexual harassment survey.

The objective of the survey was to give boys and young men the opportunity to share their views and feelings around sexual harassment. The survey has also been used as a way of exploring boys' and men's understanding of sexual harassment in their schools and local communities. The survey had over 300 participants, aged from 11 to 19 years. Respondents were from 22 local schools across Kingston and Richmond with diverse participation in terms of gender identity and ethnicity. The working group presented their findings to headteachers and at the cross-borough South West London Safer Streets Conference.

Sexual orientation

- We welcomed almost 100 young people to our No Straight Answer (NSA) youth club for young people aged 11 to 25 who are, or feel they may be, a part of the LGBTQ+ community, held at Heatham House in Twickenham. Over the last 12 months the session has provided its members with full access to all of Heatham's activities, including sport, music, cooking, and art and crafts. Each term, members are given the opportunity to devise their own termly plan meaning the sessions are tailor-made to meet the needs and wishes of their members.

Young people have engaged in a variety of fun and interesting activities ranging from garden parties and tote-bag making to upcycling fashion shows. Young people are given the opportunity to explore their understanding of LGBTQ+ identity (including trans and non-binary), relationships and mental health through activities, discussions and informative workshops led by staff and guest speakers. In addition, we provide access to a qualified counsellor who can speak to the young people.

In July, the group hosted Richmond's first-ever cross-school LGBTQ+ Pride Celebration event for young people in key stages 3, 4 and 5, aged 11 to 19 and in August, we held a three day residential trip. A young person aged 14 who attended said, "It's a safe space for me. I feel like I can be myself. I can talk about my sexuality freely as much as I want. There are many activities so it doesn't feel boring. I don't feel out of place. Everyone is accepting and caring".

- During the past 12 months, the Windsor and Maidenhead Educational Psychology and Wellbeing service provided ongoing assistance to secondary schools in terms of evidence-based good practice about how best to support and include pupils who are LGBTQIA+.



Gender reassignment

- We have developed guidance for managers supporting staff who identify as trans that includes practical advice and resources. Although this guidance is to support AfC staff, it reinforces a culture of inclusion at AfC for people choosing gender reassignment, which will also benefit the children, young people and families we work with. Work is currently underway to finalise guidance on supporting service users who identify as trans.

Marriage and civil partnership

- We provide training to raise awareness on forced marriage through the Safeguarding Children Partnership in Kingston and Richmond, and through the Forced Marriage Unit (FMU), run by the Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office (FCDO) and Home Office, for our Windsor and Maidenhead staff.

The course is designed to enable participants to recognise and know how to respond to children and adults who are at risk of, or experiencing harmful practices. Staff have access to the Forced Marriage Unit's public helpline that provides advice and support to victims and potential victims of forced marriage, and to professionals dealing with cases.

Pregnancy and maternity

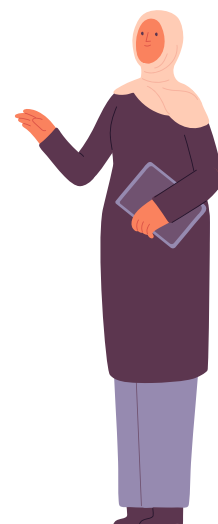
- In Windsor and Maidenhead, our Health Visiting Service, which offers all families with a new baby a health assessment within two weeks of birth, received a 'good' Ofsted rating when inspected this year. Our universal offer to all families with a new baby includes an invitation to a nurture group which are held weekly in three venues across the borough. The sessions are an opportunity for parents to access health and parenting advice. Average monthly attendance at these sessions is 136 and feedback from parents is overwhelmingly positive.
- We continued to work closely with the Growbaby project in Kingston and run a long established life-skills session for young parents up to the age of 25 in the Kingston area, in collaboration with midwives and health visitors. The group helps young parents to access support and establish long lasting friendships with other parents, where they have felt isolated from traditional parent groups.
- In partnership with the Children in Care Council, we have continued with our highly successful Baby Packs project for care leavers who are new mums and dads. They include quilts from the Linus Project, self-care items, baby grows, and a book on parenthood. Feedback from new parents has been extremely positive.



Race and ethnicity

- We worked with Kingston and Richmond councils to establish two satellite centres of the St Mary's Ukraine Supplementary School. The schools run on Sundays in term time and provide Ukrainian education and extracurricular activities for 50 pupils in each school, as well as signposting to external support. This is a key step forward in our work to support Ukrainian families to adjust to life in the UK and to support their children's education.
- We continue to support schools in their work on racial justice. Professor Paul Miller gave our keynote speech for the decolonising the curriculum course to leads from 24 schools and key members of our school improvement team. We then developed this work, enabling schools to implement their learning, share their progress and ideas. This will lead on to a new course for a further group of schools next year and the advisory team are working closely together to ensure that racial justice and multilingualism are key themes in all networks held with schools. We had a particular focus on this in networks for leaders focusing on disadvantage this year, advising staff on how to meet the needs of pupils who are multilingual, refugees, and from racially minoritised communities effectively through their Pupil Premium Grant strategies.
- Our second racial justice conference was attended by 55 delegates from across our boroughs. 96% of those who attended, rated the conference as outstanding. Keynote speeches were given by Viv Grant and Dr Neville Lawrence. The workshops engaged delegates in both reflective and practical ideas, including a significant focus on the importance of multilingual approaches to learning.
- The second run of our racial justice course which was delivered over the year was attended by 20 schools. We trained 35 schools through this course, and continue to support all schools through our school improvement team's work, including the launch of our anti racist pledge in September 2023 and our self reflection tool for schools, both of which have been written in collaboration with our schools.
- We secured funding from the Greater London Authority to develop our work on Welcoming Hong Kongers in liaison with Kingston and Richmond councils. The first bid enabled us to provide a comprehensive online course for school leaders on how to welcome Hong Kong pupils and their families effectively. The course was delivered in partnership with Kingston BEATS, a new community led initiative which supports Hong Kongers in Kingston and surrounding areas. This work was designed using antiracist, multilingual approaches which dovetailed with the wider ongoing work with schools.

We also were able to give funding to a number of schools for Cantonese and bilingual books, translation and interpreting services. Feedback was overwhelmingly positive and led to bespoke support for parents and pupils, parent and whole school initiatives and ongoing partnerships with schools. In this year's round of funding, we are focusing on supporting parents to understand the school system, with online workshops on transition and SEND attended by 80 parents, a guide on Cantonese GCSE and A level, guidance on PSHE and RSE and online video advice 'shorts' on five main aspects of the education system. We are also developing cultural specific advice for schools on PSHE as emotional wellbeing is a key aspect that has been identified for this group.



- The Educational Psychology Service in Windsor and Maidenhead hosted three workshops for Hong Kongers and met with Hong Kong community leaders for a community building project. The workshops explored how the local authority could support Hong Kong families better in their transitions to life, work, local community, leisure, English language and education in Windsor and Maidenhead. Through funding by the South East Strategic Partnership for Migration, we also developed a web page specifically to welcome Hong Kongers, alongside a welcome for Ukrainian refugees.
- In Kingston, the arrival of new communities has increased our need to focus on guiding schools in how to effectively provide for those who arrive as refugees, including those who arrive post 14. We have developed guidance in collaboration with schools and local organisations such as Refugee Action Kingston (RAK) which will be disseminated next year. Supporting RAK with their successful bid for funding for the Bright Futures project, has been significant in terms of ensuring that schools can access wrap-around services for all refugee pupils who experience significant inequalities. Our Admissions Team has also worked closely with RAK to ensure that refugee pupils and their families gain support as soon as they arrive.
- We are part of the newly established Richmond Sanctuary Partnership which brings together council teams, local services and voluntary sector organisations to work together collaboratively to strengthen services for refugees who come to the borough. In December, 2022 Richmond Council declared its intentions to become a Borough of Sanctuary, which is a formal accreditation gained from the charitable organisation, City of Sanctuary.

The Borough of Sanctuary status will show that Richmond is providing a comprehensive package of support to refugees and that they feel welcome, safe and respected. We will be working closely with the council and partners to develop a strategy that clearly sets out what we intend on doing to further improve the experience of refugees in the borough.

- The Kingston and Richmond Youth Council has undertaken accredited racial literacy training with the aim of using their new found knowledge and awareness to develop, in partnership with Safer Kingston Partnership, an online questionnaire which explores young people's experiences of racism. 1,000 young people completed the online survey. The information we gather will be used to update how we record racist incidents at schools and youth clubs.
- In Windsor and Maidenhead, we produced and disseminated guidance for schools and colleagues on supporting young people who experience war, conflict and crisis. The guidance sets out how to notice signs of trauma and signposts to available support as well as providing hints for strengthening the cohesion within schools.
- The SEND Service and Educational Psychology and Wellbeing Service in Windsor and Maidenhead have established English as an Additional Language cluster peer group meetings twice every term to bring SEN coordinators and school staff together to share learning and discuss inclusive practice.



Religion and belief (including no religion and belief)

- Our staff have attended the Kingston and Richmond Safeguarding Children Partnership training around the impact of culture, faith and belief systems on safeguarding children. The course enables participants to increase their understanding of the influences of their own and their families race, culture, faith or beliefs on the parenting of children, gain confidence in talking about attitudes and beliefs and how these might affect judgement, and improve knowledge of practice skills in relation to culture, faith and beliefs systems when completing assessments or offering services.
- To celebrate cultural diversity at AfC, we created an annual EDI calendar of events that includes key religious festivals and celebrations. Communications go out on our intranet from our directors, associate directors and staff who want to speak about their religion.
- Jabed Hussain, our Associate Director for Business Efficiency and SEND Transport, invited colleagues to take part in the Ramadan Challenge at the end of March 2023. Twelve staff members took part and fasted for a day alongside their Muslim colleagues with the aim of promoting understanding and awareness of the difficulties and rewards of observing Ramadan. After the event, those that took part shared their experiences with other colleagues including the challenges they faced during the day, what they learned about Ramadan, and any personal insights gained from the experience.

Jabed said: "Overall, the Ramadan Challenge provided participants with a greater understanding of the significance of fasting in Ramadan, fostered a sense of community, and encouraged dialogue and empathy among colleagues with different beliefs and backgrounds. I'm very proud of the organisation and my colleagues for supporting and taking part in this with me. Hopefully we will get even more participation next year."

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Other vulnerabilities: families affected by domestic abuse, mental health, or substance misuse, care leavers

Families affected by domestic abuse, mental health, or substance misuse

- The Families First Service commenced on 1 April 2022. A two year project in Kingston and Richmond it aims to support social workers and the families they work with who present with a trio of vulnerabilities (domestic abuse, mental health, substance misuse) through the key principles of co-location, joint working and group supervision. Over 140 families have been supported, and the feedback received from families has been excellent. The project has shown that proportionally, for child protection and child in need cases, where there is a Families First intervention, they are more likely to step down at the nine month review. We will continue to monitor the impact of the project during 2023-24 and are confident it will continue to benefit our families going forward.



- Based on the success of this programme, we have begun to develop a similar service in Windsor and Maidenhead. The newly formed Families First Team supports families in crisis who are at imminent risk of having their child(ren) taken into care. Families are fast-tracked to receive support, and are ultimately supported to keep their children at home or find a family network in order to care for their children. The team also supports children to return home (if appropriate) from care. Additional funding has recently been approved by the council to expand the team further so it can be responsive to a range of needs pre care, during care and after care, and so evening and weekend support can be given where needed. So far, 11 families have been supported and in all cases the children have remained in the family home.

Care leavers

- During 2022-23, we established the Kingston and Richmond Targeted Support Service as a pilot to provide high quality and affordable in-house outreach services to children, young people and families who require additional one-to-one staffing support for a time-limited period. The aim of the pilot was to see how successful the service could be in terms of reducing the number of care leavers at risk of losing their placements, reducing the number of young people on the edge of care by helping them to stay at home for longer, supporting carers with respite and providing AfC with the ability to achieve cost savings and work more flexibly to meet changing demands.

During the year, we recruited two full time specialist targeted support workers which enabled us to accept more complex referrals and support children and young people with higher needs in the home. The two workers received 73 new referrals and provided 4,540 hours of outreach hours. Feedback from practitioners and parents and carers has been exceptional, and one of the workers received the AfC Rising Star award in recognition of impact. Findings are now being collated but as a result of the successful pilot, a business case is now in the process of being developed to request additional funding for the service to make it permanent.

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7. Intersectionality

We understand that our workforce and the children, young people and families that we support, may be impacted by their experiences across a number of the protected characteristic groups. For example, a member of staff may be from a Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic background and may also have a disability. Both these characteristics may impact on their life experience.

Our work over the last 12 months, has highlighted some areas of intersectionality, particularly where children and young people from more than one protected characteristic group are impacted or may be affected by disproportionality.

Children and young people in care

Research and data shows that nationally and locally, children and young people in care are more likely to:

- be male
- be of secondary school age
- have a disability
- be from ethnically diverse communities

Progress in this area

- In Kingston and Richmond, we carried out a review of our Leaving Care Service with the aim of ensuring it is better able to meet increasing demand and so that it is more sustainable moving forward. Care leavers were consulted as part of the review and their feedback helped shape the recommendations.
- We have worked with our children in care councils to support their peers who are being looked after by our social care services. Over the last year, they have been incredibly busy and have contributed to the development of the care leavers' enhanced local offer, assisted in the launch of the HaveMySay app, which enables children in care to provide feedback whenever they want to and created baby packs for care leavers who become parents for the first time. They also established their own initiatives, such as GetConnected, which includes a summer fun day and football camp, and organised the celebration of achievement awards and the annual residential.
- AfC's Virtual School and Virtual College, which operates across all three boroughs, has provided invaluable support to the educational attainment of our looked after children. In the most recent 2022 examinations, results for key stage 4 improved again. They are now significantly above national averages for looked after children, and our looked after young people with SEND outperformed their national peers at the same level.



At the request of our looked after children, we have been focusing on educational stability, and held a well-received multi-agency 'Stability Symposium' to bring together a range of stakeholders, including keynote speakers from the Department for Education and Oxford University.

As a result of the event, our children and young people have launched their education stability charter which sets out clearly what they expect from the organisations that support them. Similarly, during the year, we were delighted that a number of local businesses signed up to our Care Leavers' Covenant and our Attachment Aware Community Charter at our Better Futures Business Event, which was organised in collaboration with John Lewis.

- With the expansion of virtual schools nationally to support all children with a social worker, we have grown our Attachment Aware Schools Award. This involves a year-long programme of training and support for schools so they are better able to meet the specific needs of these children and young people. We are now working with 69 schools as part of the award and as a result of this work, we have seen a reduction in the number of exclusions.

To further strengthen our support for children with a social worker, we have extended the work of the AfC Virtual School Transition Hub which provides direct support for the children, their families and their school.

In addition, we have developed a new data collection system for capturing absence and exclusion data for 847 of our children in need daily. The data is shared with social workers, who have been attending our Virtual School clinics to receive advice and guidance, to help them provide the best possible support to the children and young people they work with. We have also been able to use the data to identify and then visit a number of targeted schools who have benefited from strategic support.

- In September 2022, we bid to the Department for Education's Capital Fund for match funding for a new children's home in Kingston. We were delighted to find out in early 2023 that we had been successful and the project has now been approved by the council.

The intention is to build a children's home to accommodate between three and five children and young people at any time who may be difficult to place elsewhere due to their complex needs. The home will be a safe and welcoming space for them where they can be supported to grow and develop into adulthood. The home will give us more affordable and higher quality placements for young people in Richmond and Kingston. We expect the project to take between 18 and 24 months to complete.

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Children and young people with special educational needs and disabilities

National data shows that young people with SEND are more likely to be male.

There is a complex relationship between ethnicity and SEND with many other variables such as socio-economic status, language and cultural barriers influencing children's outcomes. At an aggregate level, the national school census shows that Black pupils are slightly more likely to have education health and care plans and Asian pupils are slightly less likely, on average. However, there is more variation within some of these ethnic groups than between them, so meaningful conclusions cannot be drawn at this aggregate level.

There is an established link between disability and poverty, with national research in 2016 indicating that half of people in poverty are disabled or live with a disabled person.

Progress in this area

- For progress in this area, please see the achievements section in relation to disability earlier in this document.

Young offenders

Research and data nationally show there are a number of specific characteristics of the young people who may be involved with the Youth Offending Service (YOS). They show they are more likely to:

- be aged 16 to 17 years
- have SEND than the general population
- be male
- be from a Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic background than the general population
- have been a child in need, looked after child or on a child protection plan than the general population
- have substance misuse issues than the general population
- be NEET than the general 0 to 19 population

Available local data shows that the youth offending cohort is more diverse than the 0 to 19 population and the overall population. This is in line with national data which shows that young people from a Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic background are disproportionately represented throughout the youth justice system. For example, minority ethnic children make up a growing proportion of those offending for the first time, reoffending, and serving custodial sentences. Today 41% of under-18s in custody are from minority backgrounds, compared with 25% a decade ago. Young Black people are now nine times more likely to be in youth custody than young white people.



The Lammy Review, chaired by David Lammy MP, was an independent review of the treatment of, and outcomes for Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic individuals in the Criminal Justice System (CJS). It was published in September 2017. The review identified no single explanation for the disproportionate representation of Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic groups and summarised that so many of the causes of, and answers to, the problem lie outside the criminal justice system: poverty, lone-parent families, school exclusions, and growing up in the care system. The report stated that a third of young people in custody have spent time in the care system, and a similar proportion have mental health issues. Nearly half arrive with substance misuse problems, but these problems are not being picked up as often for minority ethnic children as White children.

Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic children in custody are less likely to be recorded as having substance misuse concerns, to be at risk of self-harm, to have learning difficulties, to have mental health concerns, to be disengaged from education, and to have problematic family relationships. Lammy concluded, 'the pattern is too consistent to ignore. It is hard not to conclude that minority youngsters face bias in our criminal justice system.'

Progress in this area

- In Kingston and Richmond, we continued to deliver our highly successful Project X which is funded through the Violence Reduction Unit and has a focus on reducing serious youth violence and knife crime. This includes working with young people at risk of criminal exploitation as well as victims of serious youth violence and robberies. In July 2022, Project X's mixed martial arts fitness project received a commended award in the best charity and social enterprise category. The project is used as an exploitation and youth violence prevention, early intervention and diversion tool. It is a group-work term-time provision, which offers three separate age group sessions: Years 5 to 6, Years 7 to 12, ages 18 to 25.
- As part of Project X, the Emotional Health Service has been training staff to deliver cognitive behavioural therapy (CBT) within current best practice in violence-reduction and related partnership approaches to effectively supporting children affected by extra-familial violence and related harms. This programme is called Your Choice and is for 11 to 17 year olds who are assessed as medium or high risk of harm or vulnerability as a result of extra-familial harm and have been considered by a multi-agency panel. The aim of Your Choice is to help children to better understand themselves and to take better care of themselves by equipping them with tried and tested coping strategies.
- In partnership with Thames Valley Police, the Windsor and Maidenhead Family Hub Service have developed a project aimed at engaging with 11 to 18 year olds who are believed to be in some way connected to knife crime or carrying a knife. The project, which launched in January 2023, predominantly works with the young people and their families and carers on a one-to-one basis. or as part of a group, to safeguard them and prevent criminal activity in the future.

The programme is intelligence led to provide the earliest intervention possible with a public health approach as opposed to waiting for a young person to be arrested for using a knife. The main criteria is where there is insufficient evidence to pursue a knife related criminal investigation. Nine young people have been supported to date, with three closed to service having completed the intervention. In addition, five youth violence workshops have been delivered to 991 young people in local schools.



8. What are our equality objectives and what progress have we made to date?

In line with national guidance, and to enable us to demonstrate how we meet the PSED, in 2021-22, we identified five key equality objectives that we want to focus on over the next four years. Details of these objectives, and progress so far, is set out below.

Equality objective 1:

Providing support to the increasing numbers of unaccompanied asylum seeking children (UASC)

National data shows that the number of UASC entering the UK has seen a 15% increase on the number prior to the COVID pandemic. In the last year, there were 5,242 applications from UASC, compared to 3,553 in the year ending March 2020. The increasing number of UASC has been attributed to the ongoing refugee crisis. In Kingston and Richmond, there are at least four new UASC coming into our looked after children and leaving care services each month.

In Windsor and Maidenhead, we were not accommodating UASC as part of the voluntary transfer scheme unless we were sure that we could support them in the borough. The government's shift from a voluntary to a mandatory scheme last year has seen our UASC scheme increase dramatically in the last six months.

Progress in this area

- We provide dedicated support to our UASC to help them to grow and develop. Our Leaving Care and UASC Team hold regular healthy relationship workshops, delivered by the teenage sexual health nurse, child sexual exploitation worker and AfC gangs worker that are tailored to meet the needs of our UASC. Topics include: trafficking, grooming, sexual exploitation, criminal exploitation, positive relationships, sexual health, British culture, female genital mutilation (FGM) and honour-based violence.
- In Kingston and Richmond, our Leaving Care and UASC team is a multicultural team. Where possible, we match the UASC to a social worker and personal adviser who are from the same country or who speak the same language. UASC are supported to integrate into British society, by attending ESOL lessons. Our team provides interpreters to all appointments as necessary.

We also support UASC in understanding the complex immigration process, including ensuring they understand all their options such as voluntary return home if they are considered 'appeal rights exhausted', meaning that their asylum support is stopped. The team has a rolling contract with Refugee Action Kingston to offer up to 10 sessions of counselling, focusing on loss and bereavement as well as supporting them with the uncertainty of their future in the UK.



- In Windsor and Maidenhead, historically our number of UASC has been lower compared to other local authorities. However, we have always provided a high standard when considering educational and employment opportunities.
- In October 2022, the Children in Care Council organised a celebration of achievement awards ceremony where every UASC received a gold certificate highlighting one of their main achievements. One of our UASC was also supported to attend the Home Office Young People's Board to discuss and give their view on how issues related to them could be improved.
- We have successfully been running Culture4Keeps, an arts and leisure programme for children looked after and unaccompanied asylum seeking children. Young people get free access to art and leisure centres (swimming and sports classes) in Richmond. They can bring a supportive buddy as part of the scheme. Activities include free ice skating, theatre tickets at Christmas and regular arts opportunities at local historical venues like Hampton Court Palace and Kew Gardens. Culture4Keeps provides opportunities for young people to meet and socially engage with their local community, including artists and experts.
- UASC have access to AfC Virtual School's Transition Hub which provides intensive support for new into care. Impact data demonstrates raised percentages of young people achieving age related expectations and improved attendance on leaving the programme. AfC Virtual College has established a 'welcome programme' to support UASC which is being trialled in Windsor and Maidenhead. The programme offers two hours a day, four days a week of English tuition from a qualified ESOL teacher who works in AfC Virtual College. This is supported by a programme of cultural capital educational visits such as to Windsor Castle.



Equality objective 2:

Integrating care and support for children and young people with special educational needs and disabilities within their local communities, ensuring SEND provision is high quality, and supporting young people to transition to adulthood

Why did we choose this objective?

- The number of children and young people with an education, health and care plan is growing nationally and locally. This has been accompanied by an increase in the number of children with severe and complex needs.
- In addition, there is a recognition that the support we provide to children and young people with special educational needs and disabilities is an area for improvement.
- We know that we must make improvements to SEND provision, not just in AfC, but also in our schools, colleges, health services and social care. This is a partnership issue and we are working collectively (including with parents, carers and young people) to improve our local offer and the quality of services. To do this, we have put in place transformation plans, committed considerable resources, and we are working with parents to better learn from their experiences. Continuing to develop and improve provision in this area will continue to be a priority in the coming year.

Progress to date

- A strategic plan is in place to ensure the quality of provision is improving across Kingston and Richmond - the SEND Futures Plan 2020-2026.
- In Windsor and Maidenhead, we have developed our new SEND strategy, which was drafted based on feedback from key stakeholders including young people and parents and carers. The strategy sets the direction for our SEND activity over the next five years.
- Progress with the implementation of these plans is set out previously in this document under achievements in relation to disability.



Equality objective 3:

Improving our mental health support for children and young people so it more effectively meets their needs

Why did we choose this objective?

A large and growing body of research shows that good mental health is essential for individual wellbeing, for a happy, healthy society, and for a prosperous economy. Unfortunately, child mental health problems are on the increase nationally and locally, with a rising demand on services and increasing complexity of need. Research shows that:

- at least one in 10 children has a diagnosable mental health condition. This figure is likely to be higher and growing
- over half of all mental ill health starts before the age of 14, and 75% has developed by the age of 24
- demand is going up – over three years, there has been a 14% rise in children admitted to hospital after harming themselves; specialist child and adolescent mental health services (CAMHS) are on average turning away 23% of the young people referred to them for treatment
- children from low income families are four times more likely to experience mental health problems than children from well off families
- amongst LGBTQI+ young people, seven out of ten girls and six out of 10 boys described experiencing suicidal thoughts

Concerns have also been raised about the quality of mental health services and the availability of access to this support, with unclear pathways and thresholds that are not understood by families.

Please note that the title of this objective has changed so that it better reflects the ongoing work to improve mental health services across AfC.

Progress to date

- The emotionally related school avoidance (ERSA) project has been established to support those children who experience difficulties attending school, due to a range of factors. Through the project, which operates in Windsor and Maidenhead, 28 schools have received training, support and consultation on ERSA, have been given access to a newly created toolkit, and have been provided with additional strategies to help them to effectively support these children.

A further 16 schools have been trained during Spring 2023. A multi-agency steering group oversees the project, including the development, dissemination, training and implementation of the ERSA toolkit and further refining the ERSA multi-agency graduated pathway. Feedback from pupils, parents and the schools has been extremely good.



- In Kingston and Richmond, our Emotional Health Service (EHS) received over 1,400 referrals during the year, with 352 referrals received on the neurodevelopmental assessment pathway in relation to attention deficit hyperactivity disorder and autistic spectrum disorder. This is an increase of 7% from the previous year.

The EHS delivered a range of online groups including low mood groups for young people aged 15 to 18 years, attended by 22 young people, anxiety groups for young people aged 12 to 18 years, attended by 29 young people, and groups for parents of anxious primary aged children, with 43 parents in attendance.

We also collaborated with Art and Soul to run two art therapy groups which were accessed successfully by 12 children. We launched our sixth Mental Health Support Team (MHST) in schools, which has meant that every school in Kingston and Richmond now has access to an MHST. Over 1,400 children accessed the MHSTs in 2022-23 for individual or group therapy, which is a 55% increase from the previous year.

Equality objective 4:

Ensuring Achieving for Children is an inclusive and diverse organisation that celebrates differences and that represents the local communities it serves

Why did we choose this objective?

Research shows that promoting and supporting diversity in the workplace is an important aspect of good people management - it is about valuing everyone in the organisation as an individual. However, to reap the benefits of a diverse workforce it is vital to have an inclusive environment where everyone feels able to participate and achieve their potential.

Diversity is about recognising differences. It is acknowledging the benefit of having a range of perspectives in decision-making and the workforce being representative of who the organisation serves.

Inclusion is where people's differences are valued and used to enable everyone to thrive at work. An inclusive working environment is one in which everyone feels that they belong without having to conform, that their contribution matters and they are able to perform to their full potential, no matter their background, identity or circumstances. An inclusive workplace has fair policies and practices in place and enables a diverse range of people to work together effectively.

Greater inclusivity and diversity brings a number of benefits, including:

- recruiting from a diverse pool of candidates means a more qualified workforce
- a diverse and inclusive workforce helps avoid employee turnover costs
- diversity fostering a more creative and innovative workforce
- diversity and inclusion brings us all opportunities to learn from others and grow



Progress to date

- We are proud to have established our staff-led EDI Board which is driving forward our EDI work. We want to become an even more diverse and inclusive organisation and we are committed to listening to our staff and children and families that we support to better understand their experiences and shape our activity based on this feedback.
- See Key EDI achievements for our workforce for more information on what our EDI Board has achieved to date.

Equality objective 5:

Tackling racial inequality

Why did we choose this objective?

In October 2020, the London Innovation and Improvement Alliance commissioned a data analysis of disproportionality across children's outcomes in London for education, social care, health and justice. This data included that of Kingston and Richmond.

A summary of analysis concludes that across all key datasets, pupils of Black heritage are disproportionately represented. In Kingston and Richmond this is particularly notable and above London and England averages in:

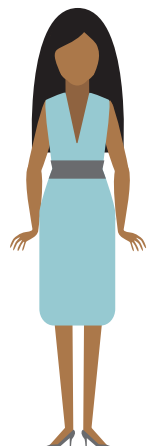
- children looked after data
- fixed term exclusion in Kingston - mixed heritage is also above average more than one fixed term exclusion
- permanent exclusion in Richmond (no data for Kingston)
- reading, writing and maths at key stage 2. There are concerns overall for Black and mixed heritage (White and Black) pupils.
- percentage difference in Attainment 8 scores
- Attainment 8 scores in Richmond - this is also lower for Asian and mixed heritage pupils
- strong pass in English and maths GCSE in Richmond - this also lower for Asian and mixed heritage pupils
- SEND without an education, health and care plan and in Richmond it is also high for mixed heritage pupils
- SEND with an EHCP, but in line with London, there is an over representation of Black and Asian pupils in Richmond and Black and mixed heritage pupils in Kingston
- there being no data for youth offending but Black, mixed and other ethnicity groups are overrepresented in London and England

As a result of the findings in 2020, we identified a new objective in relation to racial equality.



Progress to date

- We are focusing on universally improving the approach to being inclusive through our Inclusion Charter and Toolkit. We also have education representatives on the disproportionality sub group for the Youth Offending Service and we have also established a racial justice working group.
- In March to April 2022, the Kingston and Richmond Youth Council elections took place in secondary schools and youth clubs. 5,500 voted in the elections. As part of the voting system all young people took part in an online poll to identify the key issues for young people and racism was identified as an issue for young people in both boroughs. Our current Youth Council has made tackling racism as one of their top priorities for their two year term of office.
- Our data shows us that we have a greater than national average proportion of Black African, Black Caribbean and mixed White and Black Caribbean pupils who are disadvantaged in the school system. Using an anti-racist lens in our school improvement work around disadvantage has helped to identify for schools where racial justice approaches are key for these pupils, looking at how they are positioned as learners and how they are included in the curriculum.
- Further achievements are set out in relation to race and ethnicity earlier in this document.



9. Workforce race equality standard

The social care workforce race equality standard (WRES) launched in 2021, with a pilot scheme involving 18 local authorities across England. In line with our business plan and equality and diversity strategy, AfC committed to participate in the WRES pilot and publish our WRES findings with the aim to identify and address any areas that will improve the workplace experience and representation at all levels for Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic staff.

This report provides a summary of the key findings and outlines progress with the action plan for the 2022-23 AfC WRES. The findings reported last year as part of the pilot were mostly based on just permanent Richmond staff. The findings this year for all metrics include all staff across AfC, including those in casual roles. We have made comparisons between the data where possible, although this is just for illustrative purposes as the differences between the data used means that it cannot be directly compared. It should also be noted that 60% of our total workforce (including casual staff) have not disclosed their ethnicity, so the figures included in this report are only based on those who have declared. Work is ongoing to improve the disclosure rate amongst staff but it does mean the actual figures may be different from what it reported below.

Background to the WRES

National context

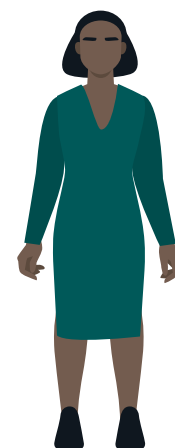
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The social care WRES pilot was commissioned by the Department of Health and Social Care (DHSC) to ensure that employees from Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic backgrounds gain equal access to career opportunities and receive fair treatment in the workplace.

A similar WRES was introduced into the NHS in July 2015 and reporting now takes place annually providing an opportunity to continually review data and reflect on workplace practices. The purpose of the social care WRES is to agree and establish standards to support and strengthen the efforts of local authorities to create processes around fairness and equality at work, with a focus on improving data collection and analysis. The WRES consists of calculating data across nine metrics of Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic representation in the workforce at all levels of seniority, and other workforce matters, such as promotions pathways, movement into leadership roles and access to non-mandatory training, experiences of bullying and harassment, and experiences of racism at work.

Local context

AfC was part of the initial WRES pilot alongside colleagues from Richmond and Wandsworth to provide a picture of workforce practices across both adults' and children's social care. Participation in the WRES pilot has provided an opportunity for us to reflect on what data we collect from our staff and how, as a result, we have implemented some new ways of gathering information. We will build on these tools in order to provide a meaningful WRES return across the whole of AfC in future years.



Overall summary

Overall, the WRES findings show that:

- a significant proportion of our total workforce (including casual staff) do not declare their ethnicity. This makes it more difficult for us to determine with certainty the findings from the data
- staff from Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic backgrounds are not well represented in the higher pay bands
- our senior leadership team is not as diverse as our workforce as a whole
- there are some differences between the experiences of Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic staff particularly in terms of disciplinary action and those leaving the organisation, which need to be further explored
- there do not appear to be differences in the experiences of Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic staff and White staff in relation to fitness to practice, those experiencing harassment or bullying from the public or from managers and colleagues, and those accessing non-mandatory CPD



The information below sets out the key findings in relation to each of the WRES metrics

Metric 1: Percentage of Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic staff in each of the council pay bands compared with the percentage of staff in the rest of the workforce

Pay band	% White	% BAME incl. White Other
1	66.67%	33.33%
2	69.57%	30.43%
3	71.21%	28.79%
4	67.06%	32.94%
5	78.13%	21.88%
6	68.33%	31.67%
7	68.25%	31.75%
8	77.78%	22.22%
9	77.42%	22.58%
10	86.49%	13.51%
11	82.86%	17.14%
12	87.50%	12.50%
13	84.00%	16.00%
14	87.50%	12.50%

- Generally the percentage of staff from a Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic background reduces from pay band 10 onwards (those earning £42,000+), indicating less Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic employees in leadership or management positions, with less Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic staff represented within the top few pay bands.
- It should be noted that the number of staff in the top pay bands decreases, therefore it is more difficult to draw any firm conclusions.

Metric 2: Comparative rate of Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic staff being appointed from shortlisting

- In 2022-23, of those who applied for roles within AfC, 43.0% of applicants were from a Black, Asian or Minority Ethnic background, 50.0% were White, and the ethnicity of 7.0% is not known.
- For those applicants who were shortlisted, 30.0% were from a Black, Asian or Minority Ethnic background, 63.0% were White, and the ethnicity of 7.0% is not known. The proportion of Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic applicants who were then offered a role was 36.0%, with 54.0% being White and the ethnicity of 10.0% not being known.

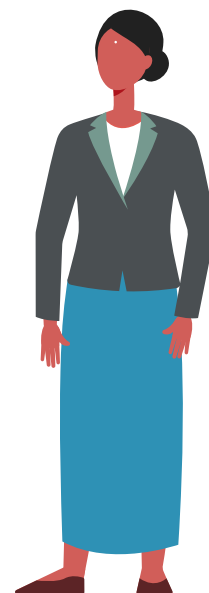
This indicates there is a positive correlation between those being shortlisted and then offered a role in terms of Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic applicants. It also indicates that the overall workforce should, in time, become more diverse as the percentage of new staff being appointed who are Black Asian and Minority Ethnic, is higher than the current workforce total.

Metric 3: Comparative rate of Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic staff entering the formal disciplinary process

- During 2022-23, of those who entered the disciplinary process (20), 35% (7) were Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic staff and 65% were White (13).
- Given that the total proportion of the workforce who are Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic is 25% this suggests that this area needs further review to better understand why there is a difference.
- In 2021-22, only five staff entered the formal disciplinary process. Due to the low numbers and the risk of staff becoming identifiable, we were not able to break this information down further by race and ethnicity.

Metric 4: Comparative rate of Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic staff entering the fitness to practice process

- During 2022-23, no Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic staff and just one White member of staff entered the fitness to practice process. This indicates equitable practice and is similar to last year.



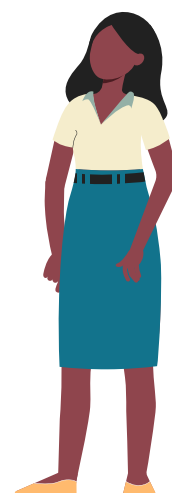
Metric 5: Comparative rate of Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic employees leaving the organisation during the last year

- The percentage of staff leaving who are Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic is slightly higher than we would expect to see based on the workforce as a whole. Black Asian and Minority Ethnic staff make up 26% of the total workforce, but 29% of leavers (as a percentage of those who have chosen to disclose ethnicity). This is relatively similar to the figure that was reported last year.
- This data does not provide us with the reason for leaving AfC and therefore we have limited knowledge of the factors that may contribute to staff leaving.
- Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic staff could be leaving for opportunities for professional development which would be a positive for the individual. However this could be a missed opportunity for AfC to retain and develop staff who are leaving if they feel they have a lack of developmental opportunities within AfC. Similarly if Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic staff are leaving due to unfair working practices, there is a missed opportunity here for AfC to drill down to understand these issues.

Ethnic grouping	%
Asian/Asian British	12.90%
Asian/Asian British - Any other	3.23%
Asian/Asian British - Indian	4.84%
Asian/Asian British - Pakistani	4.84%
Black/Black British	11.29%
Black/African/Caribbean/Black British - African	9.68%
Black/African/Caribbean/Black British - Caribbean	1.61%
Mixed	3.23%
Mixed/Multiple Ethnic Groups - White and Black African	3.23%
Other Ethnic Groups	1.61%
Other Ethnic Group - Arab	1.61%
White	70.97%
White - Any Other	8.06%
White - English/Welsh/Scottish/Northern Irish/British	61.29%
White - Irish	1.61%

Metric 6: Percentage of Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic staff experiencing harassment, bullying or abuse from patients, relatives (service users) or the public in last 12 months

- 66.3% of staff agree or strongly agree that they have not experienced any unacceptable behaviour from service users or members of the public in the last 12 months.
- This is a slight reduction when compared to last year's survey where 69.0% registered one of these responses.
- Of these 17.4% are Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic staff and 76.7% are White staff. Like last year, this is proportional to the number and breakdown of staff responding to the staff survey, indicating that the majority of staff have not experienced any unacceptable behaviour from service users or members of the public and there is no discrepancy between Black Asian and Minority Ethnic and White staff.
- 9.9% neither agreed or disagreed, which is similar to last year.
- 22.8% of staff disagree or strongly disagree that they have not experienced any unacceptable behaviour from service users or members of the public in the last 12 months. Of these 17.1% are Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic staff, compared with 79.3% for White staff. Again this is proportional to the number and breakdown of staff responding to the staff survey indicating that there is no discrepancy between Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic and White staff. It also reflects the findings from last year.
- In addition, we asked staff if they felt confident that any unacceptable behaviour from service users or a member of the public would be dealt with effectively by AfC. 70.9% agreed or strongly agreed - of these 16.5% of staff are Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic and 77.9% are White. This aligns with findings from last year and is proportional to the number and breakdown of staff responding to the staff survey.



Metric 7: Percentage of Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic staff experiencing harassment, bullying or abuse in the last 12 months from:

a) a colleague

- 77% of staff agree or strongly agree that they have not experienced any unacceptable behaviour from a colleague in the last 12 months. This is 6% lower than last year (83%) indicating more staff have experienced unacceptable behaviour from colleagues in the last 12 months.
- Of these 17% are Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic staff and 79% are White staff. Again, like last year, this is proportional to the number and breakdown of staff responding to the staff survey, indicating that the majority of staff have not experienced any unacceptable behaviour from a colleague and there is no discrepancy between BAME and White staff.
- 9% neither agreed or disagreed, this is a 3% increase from last year.
- Similar to last year, 13% of staff disagree or strongly disagree that they have not experienced any unacceptable behaviour from a colleague in the last 12 months. This is a slight increase from 11% last year. Of these, 17% are BAME staff, compared with 79% for White staff. This aligns with findings from last year.

b) a manager

- 87% of staff agree or strongly agree that they have not experienced any unacceptable behaviour from a manager in the last 12 months, this has decreased 5% when compared to last year's data. Of these 17% are Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic staff and 78% are White staff. Like last year, this is proportional to the number and breakdown of staff responding to the staff survey, indicating that the majority of staff have not experienced any unacceptable behaviour from a manager and there is no discrepancy between different staff groups.
- 7% neither agreed or disagreed which is similar to last year.
- 5% of staff disagree or strongly disagree that they have not experienced any unacceptable behaviour from a manager in the last 12 months, which is similar to the data from last year.



Metric 8: Comparative rate of Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic staff accessing funded non-mandatory continuing professional development (CPD) as compared to White staff

- At present we are unable to report on the number of staff accessing non-mandatory CPD, therefore staff were asked to respond to the following statement in our staff survey: 'I am supported to access non-mandatory continuing professional development opportunities'.
- 68% of staff agree or strongly agree that they are supported to access non-mandatory CPD opportunities and this is similar to last year's data. Of these, 19% are Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic staff and 76% are White staff. Like last year, this is proportional to the number and breakdown of staff responding to the staff survey, indicating that the majority of staff feel able to and supported to access non-mandatory CPD and there is no discrepancy between different staff groups.
- 22% neither agree or disagree, which is similar to last year.
- 9% of staff disagree or strongly disagree that they are supported to access non-mandatory CPD opportunities, which again, is similar to last year.
- Of these, 15% are Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic staff compared with 74% who are White staff. This is proportional to the number and breakdown of staff responding to the survey, indicating that amongst staff who disagree or strongly disagree they are supported to access non-mandatory CPD opportunities, there is no discrepancy between different staff groups.
- The data from last year showed a higher proportion of Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic staff felt unsupported to access non-mandatory CPD in comparison with White staff. Last year, mechanisms to promote CPD opportunities for Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic staff were included in the WRES action plan and the data suggests that this may have had a positive impact.

Metric 9: Percentage difference between organisation's senior management membership and its overall workforce

- SLT is not as representative as the workforce as a whole, with a much higher proportion of staff from White backgrounds.
- 76.9% of SLT are White and 23.1% are from a Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic background. This compares to the workforce which is 75% White and 26% who are from a Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic background.
- The number of Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic staff at Senior Leadership Team level would need to rise by approximately 3.9% to fall in line to represent the total workforce.



WRES action plan

Our action plan has been developed in collaboration with the AfC EDI Board, and peer review with colleagues from the Richmond and Wandsworth WRES project group. It has been informed by the data from the WRES submission, workforce data already collected by AfC, and data from a recent staff survey completed within AfC. The plan is monitored and reviewed by the AfC EDI Board.

The information below sets out the progress we have made with the implementation of our action plan during 2022-23. There is significant crossover between the WRES action plan and our equality objectives and equalities achievements - this has been flagged in the table.

Leadership (Metric 1 and 9)

Objective 1: To embed the WRES in AfC and Objective 2: To establish leadership and ownership of the equality, diversity and inclusion programme of work via the EDI Board

Progress to date

- As set out in section 2 above in relation to our approach to EDI in AfC, our reporting mechanisms and governance structures ensure that EDI and the WRES is fully embedded and progress is regularly reported. For example, WRES metrics are now included in the annual staff survey as a matter of course.
- Furthermore, as part of the approval of the annual equalities report for 2022-23, the EDI Board will review this document including the data and information relation to the WRES.
- The annual equalities report for 2022-23 will be published and shared with staff so they can better understand our progress with EDI and with the WRES in particular.
- Our EDI Board is now well-established and operating successfully, with agreed terms of reference, a clear plan of action and a clear means of measuring progress and impact. Our Chief Finance and Operating Officer now chairs our EDI Board, ensuring a direct line of communication to our Senior Leadership Team, and we have recently appointed a paid, part-time EDI lead as vice chair. The board includes representatives from the AfC Board of Directors, senior leaders, and representatives from across both operational areas and Business Services. Our EDI Board action plan guides the activity of the board and will shortly be reviewed and refreshed.

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Culture and staff experience (Metric 3, 4, 6 and 7), and learning and career development (Metric 5 and 8)

Objective 3: To develop equality, diversity and inclusion training and resources for staff

Progress to date

- As set out in the training section in section two of this document, we have a comprehensive EDI training offer. This includes courses relating to cultural awareness, mental health, SEND, and racial justice. Our EDI e-learning is now a mandatory course for all new members of staff and the Managing Racism in the Workplace training that we have commissioned has received outstanding feedback from attendees.

The various conferences we have held, for example, early years and for schools, and our whole service events have had focused sessions relating to EDI and these have been well-attended with positive feedback received.

- Recent attendance data does show that we need to ensure staff from across the organisation, and external partners, are taking part in EDI training as there has been a drop in those attending over the past 12 months.

Culture and staff experience (Metric 3, 4, 6 and 7)

Objective 4: To raise awareness of equality diversity and inclusion issues in AfC, particularly in relation to staff from a Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic background

Progress to date

- The profile of EDI has grown over the past 12 months. As set out previously, our Chief Operating and Finance Officer is now the chair of our EDI Board which includes representatives from the AfC Board of Directors and senior leaders from across the organisation, and we have representation from across both operational areas and Business Services.
- We have strengthened our EDI presence on Connect (our staff intranet), and through our regular EDI forums and campaigns such as Black History Month, provided a stronger spotlight on EDI activity. Our AENs are now well-established and regularly meeting and regularly communicating to colleagues about their activities.
- Our new professional development scheme and supervision framework places a greater emphasis on health and wellbeing, including prompts for contextual conversations around issues such as race and diversity.
- With the new part-time EDI lead post in place, we will be undertaking a review of the EDI Board action plan and will be using staff feedback captured throughout the year as well as data about our workforce and findings from the WRES to inform our plans for the next 12 months.

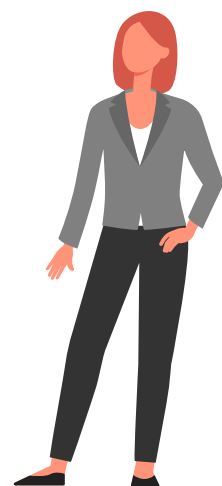


Recruitment and retention (Metric 2, 5 and 8)

Objective 5: To improve the recruitment, retention and development of staff from more diverse backgrounds including roles within senior management

Progress to date:

- Section 2 in this document sets out the range of activity that has taken place in relation to recruitment and retention. This includes establishing a paid, part-time EDI lead post to be the vice chair of our EDI Board, trialling a reverse mentoring pilot, and reviewing the potential for other initiatives such as blind recruitment and more diverse interview panels.
- We have reviewed and updated our job adverts to ensure they are welcoming to underrepresented sections of the community, and our recent recruitment campaign featured staff from diverse backgrounds. Job adverts have been updated to include new wording around equalities and they welcome applications from underrepresented sections of the community.
- We held EDI Forum sessions to discuss the experiences of staff from Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic backgrounds, including in relation to unacceptable behaviour. Based on feedback from this session, and the findings from the WRES last year, we reviewed our unacceptable behaviour policy, in consultation with staff, to ensure it is sufficiently robust. We are currently developing an animation, which will be published on our website, to explain to parents, carers and families what we consider unacceptable behaviour and the actions that will be taken should they behave in this way when in contact with AfC staff.
- Our WRES findings for this year will inform the refresh of the EDI Board action plan moving forward.



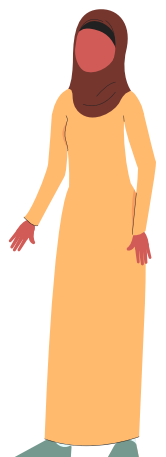
Moving forward

Participation in the WRES, in the pilot year and in 2022-23, has highlighted some interesting information on the experiences of Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic staff in comparison to White staff across AfC. It has also highlighted gaps in our data collection methods and a reluctance in some areas for staff to come forward and share their experiences of working at AfC with us.

Over the next year, we will continue to refine our data collection tools and the way we engage with staff in order to ensure we capture meaningful information for our next WRES return and encourage staff to provide full details around their experiences of working at AfC.

In 2023-24, we will report again on all operational areas of AfC, so we have a fuller and more transparent reflection of the experience of Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic staff in relation to the WRES metrics. We will also be in a position to properly compare findings between 2022-23 and 2023-24 so we can better understand our progression.

We will use the lessons learnt from the WRES this year and the year before, and the accompanying action plan to improve our working practices and implement race equality standards as per the aims of the WRES.





Registration Number 08878185

Achieving for Children Community Interest Company

Annual Report and Statement of Accounts 2022-23

1st April 2022 – 31st March 2023

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This Annual Report summarises the performance of Achieving for Children for the period between 1 April 2022 and 31 March 2023 and was authorised by the Board of Directors in July 2023.



Lucy Kourpas
Chief Operating and Finance Officer

COMPANY INFORMATION

REGISTRATION:

Achieving for Children Community Interest Company
Registered in England and Wales as a Private Limited Company
Registration Number 08878185

OWNERSHIP DETAILS:

The company is jointly owned by the Royal Borough of Kingston upon Thames, the London Borough of Richmond upon Thames, and the Royal Borough of Windsor and Maidenhead. The company is limited by guarantee.

REGISTERED OFFICE:

44 York Street
Twickenham
TW1 3BZ

INDEPENDENT AUDITORS:

Crowe UK LLP
55 Ludgate Hill,
London,
EC4M 7JW

SOLICITORS:

South London Legal Partnership
Gifford House, 67c St Helier Avenue
Morden
SM4 6HY

BANK DETAILS:

National Westminster Bank
25 King Street
Twickenham
TW1 3SU

COMPANY DIRECTORS and OFFICERS:

See page 33 of the Annual Report

WEBSITE: achievingforchildren.org.uk

Joint Statement by the Chief Operating and Finance Officer and Chair of the Board of Directors

We are pleased to present Achieving for Children's (AfC) annual report and accounts for 2022-23 which demonstrate the significant achievements we have made over the year. Our work over the past 12 months has seen us move into the 'new normal' following the global pandemic. Our workforce have proven their resilience and adaptability by going above and beyond to ensure our children, young people and families have received high quality services. We have, in partnership with our owning councils, schools and voluntary partners, worked hard to support our most vulnerable families to ensure they remain safe and supported. We have built on the innovation and creativity harnessed in the early stages of the pandemic in response to the challenges we faced, and have continued to deliver our services, albeit in different and innovative ways.

Our service offer in Kingston, Richmond and Windsor and Maidenhead (RBWM) remains strong and we are committed to continual improvement. Recent inspections have demonstrated this, we have had a positive Focused Visit in Kingston; a Joint Targeted Area Inspection in Windsor and Maidenhead that resulted in good feedback; and a Care Quality Commission (CQC) inspection of our health visiting and school nursing service in Windsor and Maidenhead in November 2022 that saw us graded as good across all areas. These ratings are a significant achievement and testament to the hard work and commitment of our staff.

Early intervention and prevention remains at the heart of our work with families so that we are able to meet the needs of children and young people at the first opportunity and well before statutory services are required. Our children's centres and family hubs have supported many families during the past 12 months, at first as they emerged from the pandemic, and then as the cost of living crisis took hold. For those families that need additional support, we are delighted at the success of our F.U.E.L: Holiday Activity and Food programme that has provided the opportunity for over 3,500 children who are eligible for Free School Meals to take part in fun activities and receive a healthy meal. In addition we have worked with schools to provide around 8,500 food vouchers to help those families most in need.

Our support for children and young people in care, and on the edge of care, is constantly developing and improving. We have just embarked on an early help and social care transformation programme across all three boroughs, that will take place over the coming years. The intention is to review current service delivery, in the context of the recently published Independent Review Of Social Care (national by Josh Mcallister) and to identify opportunities for greater efficiency in the light of increasing demand and limited resources, while retaining the strengths of our existing approach. The review will look at the whole spectrum of services from early help right the way through to leaving care. It will align resources to our most impactful interventions and best practice models. We will be looking to continue the implementation of the Families First model in Windsor and Maidenhead that began at the end of 2022-23, which will replicate the well established team in Kingston and Richmond that has already demonstrated a positive impact. We will also be moving towards a family / community hub model in Kingston and Richmond which echoes what is already embedded in Windsor and Maidenhead.

Over the coming year we will be updating our Placement Sufficiency Strategy to ensure it provides a clear strategy that balances inhouse provision and working with the market to secure quality accommodation and support for our children and young people. Our children's home, Hope House and our purpose-built

overnight short break care centre, Rainbow House, are both well-established now and providing high quality care for our most vulnerable children and young people. We continue to look for opportunities to expand our in-house provision further if it is of benefit to our children and young people, and the organisation as a whole. To this end, we are excited that we will be working with Kingston Council to develop a new children's home over the coming 18-24 months.

We recognise our support to children and young people with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND) is still an area for improvement and we continue our transformation work across all three boroughs. We are also working to address areas of weakness that are identified in Written Statements of Action in Richmond and Windsor and Maidenhead, particularly in relation to strengthening our relationships with our Parent Carer Forums so the voices of families more clearly influence our work. We were pleased that in Kingston our SEND revisit showed progress against all areas, demonstrating that the plans we have put in place are having an impact. In Kingston and Richmond we have exceeded the requirements of the safety valve agreement from the Department for Education, and so continue to receive the funding to improve services further. There has also been significant progress in terms of SEND provision, with new specialist places created across all areas. We are particularly pleased that we are progressing towards new special schools in each of the boroughs. In Windsor and Maidenhead we have been successfully admitted to the Delivering Better Value Programme and we are making good progress on our improvement journey.

During the year we have focused on further improving our employee experience. This has included establishing a Recruitment and Retention Working Group to ensure that we have a specific focus on reviewing and improving how we attract and retain talent; re-energising our Professional Development and Staff Recognition schemes; rolling out new ICT devices to enable our staff to work smartly and flexibly; introducing a new and more accessible intranet; and celebrating our staff through Staff awards and cultural events such as Black History Month and Pride Month.

Looking further ahead, the picture regarding funding for the public sector remains challenging. There is also a critical shortage of qualified and experienced children's services practitioners both nationally and locally. Achieving financial sustainability, while continuing to deliver high quality services to our children and young people is central to our current business plan, and will no doubt be central to our new business plan, which will be developed over the coming year. Based on the progress we have made in 2022-23, we are confident about the future of Achieving for Children and our ambition to reach every child and young person who needs us, so that they are able to live safe, happy, healthier and successful lives.



Lucy Kourpas
Chief Operating and Finance Officer



Siân Wicks
Chair of the AfC Board of Directors

STRATEGIC REPORT

1. Progress against our 2022-23 objectives

In 2022-23 we supported over 30,000 children and young people. Our [business plan](#) sets out our priorities and commitment to providing this support based on six strategic priorities: stronger families; positive futures; excellent workforce; financial stability; organisational success; and smarter working. We now report on the progress we have made in 2022-23 in achieving our objectives. Further detail about our achievements can be found in our Impact Report which can be found on our website:

<https://www.achievingforchildren.org.uk/pages/about-us/reports-and-documents>

Stronger families

Our early help services provide crucial support to vulnerable families to prevent issues escalating to the point at which statutory intervention is necessary. Across all our early help services we have been focused on ensuring our provision remains effective but also sustainable given the financial climate.

Over the past 12 months we have provided a range of support to our most vulnerable families. In Kingston and Richmond, through the local and household support grant, we have given out approximately 8,500 food vouchers, valued at £15 per week per eligible child, for each school holiday period for families with children who are receiving free school meals, three or four year olds who are accessing pupil premium grant or disadvantaged two year olds.

To support our families during school holidays, we successfully delivered the F.U.E.L (Feed Ur Everyday Lives) programme in Kingston, Richmond and Windsor and Maidenhead in response to the Department for Education funding for the Holiday Activities and Food Programme. This was our third year delivering the programme, which took place over the Easter, summer and Christmas holidays and offered a range of fun and enjoyable activities and food to children and young people aged 5 to 16 years who are eligible for Free School Meals (FSM). In Kingston and Richmond, the programme grew throughout each holiday period with increasing numbers of providers, locations and spaces on offer. In total, over 25 different partners worked with us to deliver the programme; with over 2,700 children and young people attending a range of fun and exciting activities. Of these, over 200 of the children and young people had additional needs. In Windsor and Maidenhead, 832 children attended the programme with almost 6,500 attendances at different activities over the course of the holidays, and we delivered our own provision through our family hubs with over 130 children attending. We were particularly pleased to offer free travel for any attendees at SEND sessions and minibus pick ups for children for offsite activities.

Our children's centres and family hubs are a central element of our early help offer. Attendance at our children's centres in Kingston and Richmond has increased over the past 12 months. We delivered over 6,000 sessions for families either in person or online; saw over 17,000 individuals either online or in person; had over 80,000 interactions with families; and we now have over 3,000 members on our Facebook page. One of the highlights of the year was our events for National Play Day which saw almost 2,500 people come together for the first time since COVID to celebrate play.

Our children's centres have worked closely with our local partners - we supported health colleagues to deliver polio and flu vaccination clinics over the weekends in the autumn; we worked with local businesses to provide families with 75 hampers and over 100 presents at Christmas; and throughout the year we have delivered rhyme time sessions for families in our libraries. As part of our response to the cost of living crisis, our children's centres have provided warm spaces twice a week as part of an eight week pilot, with activities, quiet space for homework and support for families with children aged 0 - 11 years. We also ran a Warm Coats and Shoes project during Winter and recycled and distributed 184 coats and 54 pairs of shoes to families.

We have delivered a range of high quality SEND provision at our children's centres during the year including: chat and play sessions for our families who have concerns around their children's development; Let's Nurture sessions for children showing early signs of ASD or ADHD; well-attended parenting wellbeing courses for parents for SEND children and 74 families have also benefited from the development of a new 'Little Stars' course for children with emerging speech and language needs. As part of our parent offer we have delivered English Speakers of Other Languages (ESOL) courses for families from Ukraine. In addition, along with colleagues from the Emotional Health Service, we have established nurture groups for parents and carers who have experienced trauma through bereavement or domestic abuse.

In Windsor and Maidenhead, in recent years we have established our family hubs approach, which brings together children's centres, youth centres and parenting services. Our family hubs are now fully staffed and fully functioning and demand for services has been high - we have provided one to one support to 823 children; and 3,400 children and young people have attended group sessions on topics such as digital safety, drug and alcohol awareness, and esteem. We also provide a full menu of interventions to improve parents' skills and knowledge. This includes Incredible Years, which is for parents of children who are neurodiverse; the Freedom Programme, for mothers who are experiencing domestic abuse; Supporting Parents and Carers Emotions (SPACE), for parents who need support with their own emotional wellbeing; the Positive Parenting Programme, for parents to manage the behaviour of their children in a non-punitive and positive way; specific parenting groups, for parents within the Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic community; and our baby massage group, which supports parents to improve communication with their babies through touch and eye contact.

Our health visiting service, which offers all families with a new baby a health assessment within two weeks of birth, received a 'good' Ofsted rating when inspected this year. Our universal offer to all families with a new baby includes an invitation to a nurture group which are held weekly in three venues across the borough. The sessions are an opportunity for parents to access health and parenting advice. Average monthly attendance at these sessions is 136 and feedback from parents is overwhelmingly positive.

In partnership with Thames Valley Police, the Family Hub Service have developed a project aimed at engaging with 11- 18 year olds who are believed to be in some way connected to knife crime or carrying a knife. The project, which launched in January 2023, predominantly works with the young people and their families/carers on either a 1-1 basis or as part of a group in order to safeguard them and prevent criminal activity in the future. The programme is intelligence led in order to provide the earliest intervention possible with a public health approach as opposed to waiting for a young person to be arrested for using a

knife. The main criteria is where there is insufficient evidence to pursue a knife related criminal investigation. Nine young people have been supported to date, with three closed to service having completed the intervention. In addition, five youth violence workshops have been delivered to 141 young people in local schools.

The Families First service commenced on 1 April 2022 as a two year project in Kingston and Richmond aiming to support social workers and the families they work with who present with a trio of vulnerabilities (domestic abuse, mental health, substance misuse) through the key principles of colocation, joint working and group supervision. Over 140 families have been supported and the feedback received from families has been excellent. The project has shown that proportionally, for child protection and child in need cases, where there is a Families First intervention, they are more likely to step down at the nine month review. We will continue to monitor the impact of the project during 2023-24 and are confident it will continue to benefit our families going forward.

Based on the success of this programme, we have begun to develop a similar service in Windsor and Maidenhead. The newly formed Families First team supports families in crisis who are at imminent risk of having the child(ren) taken into care. Families are fast-tracked to receive support, and are ultimately supported to keep their children at home or find a family network in order to care for their children. The team also supports children to return home (if appropriate) from care. Additional funding has recently been approved by the council to expand the team further so it can be responsive to a range of needs pre care, during care and after care, and so evening and weekend support can be given where needed. To date, 11 families have been supported and in all cases the children have remained in the family home.

During 2022-23 we established the Kingston and Richmond Targeted Support Service as a pilot to provide high quality and affordable in-house outreach services to children, young people and families who require additional one to one staffing support for a time-limited period. The aim of the pilot was to see how successful the service could be in terms of reducing the number of care leavers at risk of losing their placements; reducing the number of young people on the edge of care by helping them to stay at home for longer; supporting carers with respite; and providing AfC with the ability to achieve cost savings and work more flexibly to meet changing demands. During the year, we recruited two full time Specialist Targeted Support Workers which enabled us to accept more complex referrals and support children and young people with higher needs in the home. The two workers received 73 new referrals and provided 4,540 hours of outreach hours. Feedback from practitioners and parents and carers has been exceptional, and one of the workers received the AfC Rising Star award in recognition of impact. Findings are now being collated but as a result of the successful pilot, a business case is now in the process of being developed to request additional funding for the service to make it permanent.

Positive futures

School standards in Kingston, Richmond and Windsor and Maidenhead are amongst the highest in the country and 95% of our schools across all three boroughs are judged good or outstanding. In terms of attainment, Kingston and Richmond are now both in the top 20 performing local authorities nationally, from early years to key stage 4, while Windsor and Maidenhead are in the top performing 50 local authorities. This is an exceptional achievement, particularly in light of the challenges posed by Covid-19.

Across all three boroughs, we have supported 25 schools through their recent Ofsted inspections, with a number of these schools improving their Ofsted grade. In Kingston and Richmond, our School Performance Alliance for Richmond and Kingston, otherwise known as SPA[RK] has provided school improvement support to 92% of schools, with 100% of these schools expressing their satisfaction with the support received. Similarly, our school improvement support in Windsor and Maidenhead has received excellent feedback from those schools we have supported over the past 12 months. In addition, in Windsor and Maidenhead, our Initial Teaching Training Programme was inspected and maintained its good Ofsted judgement, and subsequently we successfully applied to be an accredited provider by the Department for Education.

We are working hard to improve the inclusive services we provide to children and young people with SEND as well as supporting the young people in our care and those that access our youth services.

We have made good progress towards our Written Statement of Action (WSOA) in both Richmond and Windsor and Maidenhead. In Richmond, in collaboration with our schools, we have amended our annual review template to ensure it reflects a more-person centred approach and supports the promotion of preparing for adulthood outcomes. We have also mapped out our continuing health pathways, making it easier for our young people aged 16-25 who have a disability, to access support with health needs. In early March 2023, we had our Windsor and Maidenhead WSOA monitoring visit, we are awaiting feedback but we expect the outcome to be positive, given the progress we have made.

Meanwhile, in Kingston in October 2022, we received a SEND reinspection to identify progress against previously identified four areas for improvement. The revisit confirmed we had made sufficient progress in addressing all four areas and the inspector noted improvements in the relationships with families in the local area, the quality of Education, Health and Care Plans (EHCPs), and our quality assurance processes.

In Kingston and Richmond, we held the SEND Futures conference in October 2022. It was attended by over 350 people, including around 55 parents and carers, and practitioners from 135 different organisations, who came together to share ideas and best practice in SEND. Speakers included two of the highest profile people in the SEND system nationally who discussed matters highlighted in the recent SEND green paper, and there were also a range of workshops delivered by both local parents and practitioners. Feedback was overwhelmingly positive and attendees have already been in contact to tell us about changes they have made to their practice as a result of feedback at the conference.

In Windsor and Maidenhead, we held our Inclusion Summit, with over 140 attendees including a mixture of parents and carers, schools and market place representatives. Attendees were introduced to the new SEND Strategy and were part of the official launch of the new Parent Carer Forum. Feedback from the event was great as stakeholders valued the opportunity to network and share learning, with 90% of the attendees stating they would recommend the event to colleagues. In February 2023, our Ambitious about Inclusion conference brought together almost 90 senior leaders and SEND and Inclusion Coordinators to listen to a number of nationally recognised keynote speakers and to come together to share information and celebrate developments in SEND across the borough. We are particularly proud that the event was co-produced between Achieving for Children, the Independent Advice and Support Service, Children and Young People's Integrated Therapy Service and schools, and supported by RBWM SEND voices.

During the year, 27 learners with EHCPs in Kingston and Richmond have completed supported internships, delivered in partnership with Mencap and Project Search, with a variety of host employers including Hounslow Council, GSK, West Middlesex Hospital and the FairShot Cafe. We have supported other young people to access specialised internship schemes - one young person is completing an internship in the hospitality sector and one is completing a theatre based programme. One of these learners has already been offered employment at West Middlesex Hospital once he completes his internship, and the other is expecting to be offered an apprenticeship within the NHS. We have also supported 12 learners with EHCPs to undertake apprenticeships within a variety of sectors including hospitality, education, administration and horticulture.

We have been responsible for delivering The Mayor of London's European Social Fund employability programmes focussing on young people aged 16-25 who are not in education, employment or training in Kingston and Richmond. This past year we supported over 50 young people through the programme. 35 of these young people had EHCPs, and of these, 14 have now progressed into employment or education.

In Windsor and Maidenhead, the Social Emotional and Mental Health (SEMH) intervention project, which was established in 2019 to reduce the risk of permanent exclusion in schools, has continued to thrive. Since it began, the project has worked in 42 schools and supported 91 individual children. Of those children, just three have been permanently excluded and they have been supported in their transition to alternative provision. As part of the project we have trained 873 school staff to help them to support children with challenging behaviours linked to SEMH difficulties, as well as delivering updated training to 140 staff and bespoke training to 115 staff. At the same time, we have established 140 SEMH leads in schools and hold three SEMH network meetings a year where leads can be signposted to early help services and share learning and feedback. We have also purchased a subscription to the Online Boxall Profile which enables schools to assess the needs of their children quickly, set targets, and monitor progress. 61 of our schools are actively using this assessment and tracking tool which will enable us to analyse data to support transitions and target areas of need.

The expansion of additional school places for children and young people with SEND to meet rising demand continues to be a priority. In Kingston, the following 28 specialist resource provision (SRP) places were created in September 2022: Malden Oaks, a further eight; Robin Hood Primary, 14; and Surbiton Hill Nursery, six. Good progress continues to be made towards establishing Spring School, the new 90-place autism-specific special free school, in September 2023. Work continues regarding the feasibility of creating a post-16 SEND campus in the borough, which would include 50 new special school sixth form and college places. In Richmond, 16 specialist places were created in September 2022: a small Strathmore centre at Darell Primary, six; and a new Social and Emotional and Mental Health (SEMH) SRP at Teddington, 10. Progress towards establishing London River Academy, the 90-place SEMH special school for children and young people with SEMH needs continues. Proposals to create additional centres for Clarendon and Strathmore special schools, to provide 80 places in Petersham and 24 places in Hampton respectively, are advanced and planning applications are due to be made for both.

In Windsor and Maidenhead, we successfully submitted a bid for a 100 place new special free school for children and young people aged seven to 16, with EHCPs for SEMH needs. The new school will be located

in a new development planned on the western edge of Windsor and we will now move forward to the next stage of planning. In addition, in September 2023, a new SEND provision is opening at South Ascot Village School, for ten pupils with Autistic Spectrum Condition. We are also planning to open an early years readiness hub in September 2024, which will provide interventions to support children who are unable to self-regulate and so are not yet ready to learn in a mainstream school setting.

The Emotionally Related School Avoidance (ERSA) project has been established to support those children who experience difficulties attending school, due to a range of factors. Through the project, which operates in Windsor and Maidenhead, 28 schools have received training, support and consultation on ERSA, have been given access to a newly created toolkit, and have been provided with additional strategies to help them to effectively support these children. A further 16 schools will be trained during Spring 2023. A multi-agency steering group oversees the project, including the development, dissemination, training and implementation of the ERSA toolkit and further refining the ERSA multi-agency graduated pathway. Feedback from pupils, parents and the schools has been extremely good.

In Kingston and Richmond our Emotional Health Service (EHS) received over 1,400 referrals during the year, with 352 referrals received on the neurodevelopmental assessment pathway in relation to Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD) and Autistic Spectrum Disorder (ASD). This is an increase of 7% from the previous year. The EHS delivered a range of online groups including low mood groups for young people aged 15-18 years, attended by 22 young people; anxiety groups for young people aged 12-18 years, attended by 29 young people; and groups for parents of anxious primary aged children, with 43 parents in attendance. We also collaborated with Art and Soul to run two art therapy groups which were accessed successfully by 12 children. We launched our sixth Mental Health Support Team (MHST) in schools, which has meant that every school in both Kingston and Richmond now has access to an MHST. Over 1,400 children accessed the MHSTs in 2022-23 for individual or group therapy, which is a 55% increase from the previous year.

AfC's Virtual School and Virtual College, which operates across all three boroughs, has provided invaluable support to the educational attainment of our looked after children. In the most recent 2022 examinations, results for Key Stage 4 improved again and are now significantly above national averages for looked after children, and our looked after young people with SEND outperformed their national peers at the same level. At the request of our looked after children, we have been focusing on educational stability, and held a well-received multi-agency 'Stability Symposium' to bring together a range of stakeholders, including keynote speakers from the Department for Education and Oxford University. As a result of the event, our children and young people have launched their Education Stability Charter which sets out clearly what they expect from the organisations that support them. Similarly, during the year we were delighted that a number of local businesses signed up to our Care Leavers' Covenant and our Attachment Aware Community Charter at our Better Futures Business Event, which was organised in collaboration with John Lewis.

With the expansion of Virtual Schools nationally to support all children with a social worker, we have grown our Attachment Aware Schools Award, which involves a year-long programme of training and support for schools so they are better able to meet the specific needs of these children and young people. We are now working with 69 schools as part of the award and as a result of this work, we have seen a reduction in the number of exclusions. To further strengthen our support for children with a social worker, we have extended the work of the AfC Virtual School Transition Hub which provides direct support for the children,

their families and their school. In addition, we have developed a new data collection system for capturing absence and exclusion data for 847 of our children in need daily. The data is shared with social workers, who have been attending our Virtual School Clinics to receive advice and guidance, to help them provide the best possible support to the children and young people they work with. We have also been able to use the data to identify and then visit a number of targeted schools who have benefited from strategic support.

Participation and engagement with children and young people is incredibly important to us. Over the past 12 months we have established regular meetings between the Youth Council and the AfC Board of Directors to ensure the Board directly hears the voices of children and young people. Board members are also attending other groups such as the Windsor Girls Forum and Esteem. With funding from Public Health, we have supported the creation of the Covid Vaccine Youth Champions who led an engagement exercise with 600 young people to better understand young people's view on the vaccine which then informed future health service communications and following the success of the sexual harassment survey for girls, we helped our Youth Council to develop a survey for boys, which was completed by over 300 respondents and is being used as a way of exploring boys and males understanding of sexual harassment in their schools and local communities. The findings will be fed back to schools and will help inform their approach to tackling the issue.

We are also pleased that by being part of our Youth Councils we have supported many young people to develop their knowledge and skills. For example, members have undertaken accredited training in a number of areas including: racial literacy, to enable them to explore young people's experiences of racism which will be used to update how racist incidents are recorded at schools and youth clubs; and mental health so they can become youth ambassadors and which has seen them take responsibility for organising the annual mental health event for young people which takes place as part of Mental Health Awareness Week. 30 members of the Youth Council have also received an accreditation award for their work through the AQA accreditation examination board, and individual members have been recognised through the Kingston Mayoral Community Award, the Richmond Community Heroes Award, and the Jack Petchey Environmental Award.

We have also worked with our Children in Care Councils to support their peers who are being looked after by our social care services. Over the last year, they have been incredibly busy and have contributed to the development of the care leavers' enhanced local offer; assisted in the launch of the HaveMySay app, which enables children in care to provide feedback whenever they want to; and created baby packs for care leavers who become parents for the first time. They have also established their own initiatives such as GetConnected which includes a summer fun day and football camp, and organised the celebration of achievement awards and the annual residential.

Excellent workforce

Our workforce are now successfully working in line with AfC's Future Space Strategy, maximising the benefits of remote working at home as well as within community settings and in an office environment with colleagues. A major new office refurbishment has taken place in the Civic Centre in Twickenham which AfC will be moving into in April 2023. As well as traditional working space, the new office offers more meeting space, collaboration zones, social areas and a dedicated client area. Plans for a new office base are being

developed in Kingston with a view to maximising the building assets of the council. As part of the future workplace programme, we are feeding into the owning Council's asset strategy ensuring that our business needs are captured and that we can oversee any accommodation moves which affect our staff. All AfC staff will be part of a roll out of new devices to help our staff to work smartly and flexibly. AfC is part of the new softphone roll out, removing the need for landlines and reducing the demand for smartphones.

Our new in-house People and Payroll (HR) service is now well established and driving improvements in HR processes. This includes supporting the workforce to embrace digital solutions such as recruitment applicant tracking system, a temporary agency management systems, and a new HR and payroll system, which is enabling us to improve processing, monitoring, decision making and auditing of HR and payroll activities. To improve our efficiency, we have reviewed, updated and, where necessary, clarified our recruitment processes, employee engagement, retention, and ongoing people support. During the year, we have advertised 421 jobs, with 299 starters, and with a headcount of just over 1,800 we only have a 3.96% absence rate. Across the year we have also undertaken 1,122 DBS checks across our workforce, enabling us to meet our ongoing safeguarding responsibilities.

There has been considerable work undertaken to improve the Professional Development Scheme which will launch in Spring 2023, and we have completed a thorough review of employee recognition within AfC, with a revised offer also due to launch in Spring 2023. We delivered 12 induction welcome events to a total of 299 new starters and supported 42 newly qualified social workers through the Assessed and Supported Year in Employment programme. The average satisfaction rate for the induction welcome events across the year was 4.69 on a scale of 1-5, with 5 being extremely satisfied. The wellbeing offer has continued to grow, with in person Wellbeing Fairs delivered for the first time since pre-Covid, and an evaluation of the wellbeing offer for 2023-24 currently underway.

We were delighted to re-launch our annual Staff Awards during 2022-23. The new scheme proved incredibly popular, with over 250 nominations across the whole organisation, in 11 different categories, including champion for children, inspirational leader, rising star and outstanding contribution. We had 30 individuals or team winners, and we came together in person in both operational areas to celebrate their achievements.

This year has been extremely busy for our Learning and Development service which has delivered 942 live events with 15,696 attendees from both AfC and our partners. Within AfC we have enabled our staff to attend 19,565 hours of face to face events, which averages out as 16.5 hours per person against the AfC head count. We are currently considering different approaches to the delivery of learning and development provision, with a move away from the more traditional methods of face to face training and a shift towards desk-top learning opportunities, led by the employee. Our e-learning provision continues to develop and our offer has increased 56% since last year. Pleasingly, overall evaluation of the learning and development opportunities that we provide remains high, with 92% of our courses rated good or excellent and 96.7% of delegates stating they would recommend their course to colleagues.

For a second time in three years, AfC has been approved to be on the Register of Apprenticeship Training Providers as a main training provider. This enables AfC to continue to develop the apprenticeship scheme and align it as part of our strategic work on equality and inclusion, maximising its potential to diversify the

workforce in these areas over the coming years. AfC currently has 78 apprentices and 91% of apprentices progress into an additional apprenticeship, employment or further education or higher education.

We were delighted to have two winners in the national Social Worker of the Year Awards announced in November 2022. Annmarie Nero, who works in our adolescent safeguarding team won the Children's Social Worker of the Year Gold Award, and Mi-gyung Kim, who works in our safeguarding team, won the Newly Qualified Children's Social Worker of the Year Silver Award. This is a fantastic achievement, in recognition of their hard work and commitment in their roles.

As an organisation, we continue to be impacted by recruitment and retention challenges driven by national shortages of qualified and experienced social workers. To address this, in September 2022, we established a project group to lead an organisational wide programme with a priority to target the recruitment of permanent social workers in order to stabilise the social care workforce and reduce the high costs associated with the use of agency staff. So far we have: held focus groups with staff to identify improvements in our current recruitment and retention offer; established a recruitment lead partner post to work specifically with social work teams to fill posts; refreshed our staff benefits to provide staff with increased annual leave and new parking options; introduced recruitment and retention incentives including welcome payments and market supplements for social care teams; received approval for a licence for overseas recruitment; and piloted new recruitment platforms with sponsored job listings and headhunting functionality to widen our talent pool. Over the coming year, we will continue to focus in this area and will be evaluating the impact of the actions we have taken to better understand what to continue with going forward.

To support our recruitment and retention activity, we launched Alive, a digital marketing campaign targeted at social workers, utilising refreshed adverts, graphics and videos. So far, it has allowed us a reach of 186,000 people, has resulted in 54,000 clicks through to more information on our roles, and has led to 148 expressions of interest being submitted. End of year evaluations are currently underway to review the success of the campaign and pilots of new recruitment platforms. Recommendations from this work will inform next steps and project delivery over the coming year.

Our focus on equality, diversity and inclusion (EDI) has remained during 2022-23. Our staff led EDI Board has continued to be instrumental in driving forward EDI improvements across the organisation. Key activity has included launching our employee networks- we are delighted to have three fully established networks, led by staff, that focus on menopause, leaders of all colours and LBGTQI+ and allies. We have successfully celebrated a number of cultural events, such as Black History Month (BHM) and LBGTQI+ Month. We put on an extensive programme for BHM in 2022. This included special guest speakers, spotlights on staff from Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic backgrounds, blogs from senior leaders relating to BHM topics, and a considerable bank of BHM resources for staff to consider. As one of only 18 local authorities taking part in the Workforce Race Equality Standard (WRES) pilot in social care, which was led by the Department for Health and Social Care, we reported for the first time about the experiences of our Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic staff based on a number of specific metrics. The WRES aims to gather data and information about staff to identify any areas of best practice, or any areas for improvement in relation to race and ethnicity. We will incorporate reporting on the WRES into our annual equalities reporting going forward.

Financial stability

As an organisation we aim to deliver services that provide excellent value for money and we are trusted by our commissioning councils to deliver the best possible services within an agreed funding envelope. This year has been an exceptional year and AfC has worked closely with the councils to discuss and explain financial pressures and agree the correct balance between affordability and impact on services. During the last 12 months we have delivered £2.571m in savings / cost mitigations and as part of the owning councils' budget setting processes we have planned £6.481m of future efficiencies / cost mitigations in 2023-24. In addition we have made good progress in improved value for money and cost mitigation on all of the DSG funds. Our services continue to benchmark as average or low cost when compared to comparative boroughs and we continue to explore new ways of improving value for money.

We have begun work to strengthen our business partnering model across the organisation. This includes a restructure of the finance team in Windsor and Maidenhead, the beginning of a journey towards more standardised finance processes to improve consistency, and the introduction of divisional review meetings in Windsor and Maidenhead to improve financial ownership. We have also introduced finance training for non finance managers and published a series of online resources.

Over the medium term we aim to improve our value for money and control costs by developing our procurement approach as well as by moving to a more mixed model of commissioned and directly delivered provision. The opening of Hope House Children's Home and Rainbow House overnight short break care centre in recent years and Greenleas five years ago, is beginning to assist us in managing costs in the medium term and reducing our reliance on the placement market where demand is far outstripping supply. Given the success of this approach, we are delighted that we have recently had approval to develop a new children's home with Kingston Council which will be match funded by the Department for Education, following a successful bid. The home will sit alongside Hope House and give us more options for our difficult to place young people with complex needs.

Funding of SEND services has been a significant challenge in recent years across all three of our boroughs and in particular, in Kingston and Richmond. During 2022-23 we have continued to meet and exceed the requirements of our safety valve funding which was first received in 2021, and which was agreed by the Department for Education as a result of a concerted effort over recent years to get a fairer funding settlement from the Government. As a result of the safety value funding, we have established a number of workstreams to focus on improving the quality of the services provided to children and young people with SEND whilst ensuring that the service is more financially sustainable.

During the year, the Social Work Teaching Partnership, of which AfC is lead partner, successfully bid for sustainability funding from the Department for Education (DfE) and also won funding for three additional continuous improvement projects in 2022-23, totalling over £100,000. The Social Work Teaching Partnership is also responsible for management of the Step Up to Social Work programme that covers south west London and Surrey and recently won a new contract from the DfE to deliver this for the second time in 2024, with the majority of preparatory work taking place during 2023.

Achieving for Children's Medium Term Financial Strategy is available on the following [link](#)

Organisational success

Following on from our success as a Partner in Practice for the Department for Education, we are now a Sector Led Improvement Partner (SLIP). In this role, we provide support to other local authorities through collaborative working, by sharing good practice and by providing constructive challenge. Since September 2022, we have been providing support to Reading Borough Council to identify and understand whether their social care thresholds are efficient and how the function of their Single Point of Access can help them in timely decision making and overall effectiveness of proceedings. This work has involved seven of our Heads of Service and Associate Directors and feedback from Reading has been extremely positive. This is the first time in three years that we have done a deep dive into other Local Authorities processes and we have learnt a lot on the way that we can bring back into our own services.

As part of our digital offer, during 2022-23, we have provided audio recording support to Lewisham Council's children's services to enable them to audio record their Child Protection Conferences, which will enable them to deliver conferences more efficiently and effectively.

Our partnership with Richmond Parish Lands Charity has gone from strength to strength during the year. They now fund a youth engagement project which runs on a Friday and Saturday night from Powerstation youth club and a perpetrator domestic abuse programme which sits within the strengthening families programme and our hub model. We have administered over 30 crisis grants and seven education grants as well as over 50 academic awards to give young people and families the support they need to get through the cost of living crisis.

We have successfully recommissioned both our short breaks service and our Special Educational Needs and Disabilities Information, Advice and Advocacy Service (SENDIASS). For short breaks, a successful tender exercise was completed in the summer of 2022 and the new offer came into effect 1 September 2022. We have contracted five providers to deliver our provision, both from partners we have previously worked with but also some new organisations. For SENDIASS, we recently completed a successful procurement exercise and the new contact has now been awarded and will be implemented from April 2023. This was a real team effort from colleagues across AfC and our partners, especially Richmond and Kingston Parent Carer Forums.

In September 2022, we bid to the Department for Education's Capital Fund for match funding for a new children's home in Kingston. We were delighted to find out in early 2023 that we had been successful and the project has now been approved by the council. The intention is to build a children's home to accommodate between three and five children and young people at any time who may be difficult to place elsewhere due to their complex needs. The home will be a safe and welcoming space for them where they can be supported to grow and develop into adulthood. The home will give us more affordable and higher quality placements for young people in Richmond and Kingston. We expect the project to take between 18 - 24 months to complete.

Smarter working

This year, significant progress has been made in the digital transformation of several key areas within the organisation. Robotic process automation has been implemented in the Single Point of Access, resulting in the successful recording of over 3,500 contacts in the last year. In addition, a new automated process has been developed for the verification of addresses on school place applications, which will streamline the admissions process for the over 11,000 applications received annually. Digital payment points have been deployed to nine children's centres in Kingston and Richmond, and digital disbursements have been introduced to enhance the accessibility of targeted support for service users. A new digital customer platform has also been introduced, providing an online, self-service option for people who want to evaluate services, book appointments, send feedback, submit referrals, upload documents, complete questionnaires and request callbacks. Seventeen processes have been set up so far, with many more in the pipeline for the coming year including secure online payments and personalised digital experiences. The platform is already reducing the use of paper forms and saving time by removing the need to download, print, scan and email forms, enabling a much more convenient way to interact with services. These digital initiatives are expected to increase efficiency, reduce errors, and improve the overall experience for both staff and service users.

During 2022-23 we have continued our focus on improving our interfaces with our workforce and our external stakeholders. We have experienced a fantastic response and usage of our new intranet - Connect - which was named by one of our staff. It provides a new digital workspace that enables staff to work more collaboratively and to access key information and documents more easily. The most used function is the People Directory, enabling our teams to find colleagues' contact details across the entire organisation.

In January 2023 we launched our brand new company website which has already had over 7,000 views. The website has a fresh new look and makes it easier to find information such as fostering and apprenticeships or links to access services by Council area. We continually work hard to ensure our websites are accessible and aim to ensure all visitors to the site are able to access our information easily and have the ability to use a range of digital accessibility tools such as language translators, text mode, audio readers, and changeable colour themes and fonts.

In the last year we have implemented a new business systems improvement framework which has helped us to work more closely with operational teams and prioritise the system improvement work which has the most impact. Funding has been agreed in Kingston and Richmond to improve and support our SEND case management system and in Windsor and Maidenhead, significant funding has been made available to implement a new social care and early help system. In order to support our colleagues more effectively and to minimise the impact of system issues, we are increasing the use of our service desk portal. The portal enables staff to fix common systems issues themselves and enables complex problems to be resolved more quickly as all key information is made collected in the initial stages, therefore removing the need to constantly refer back to the staff member who logged the problem.

We have undertaken a significant amount of work to review and improve our data and intelligence across the organisation, which has enabled us to undertake more in depth analysis and make more evidence based decisions. This includes developing new reports for the Early Help Strategic Board, the Families First service, Family Hubs, Mental Health Schools Team and School Nursing teams.

As well as implementing smart data and digital solutions, we are committed to work smarter by reducing our environmental impact. During 2022-23 we have been implementing our environment strategy which was created in 2021-22 based on feedback from children and young people. It sets out our commitment to reducing our carbon footprint and to identify more ways that we can be environmentally aware. We use our environment pages on our intranet to communicate to staff about our activity and to share environmental resources. Recently, we marked 'no disposable cup day' by linking to the 'Refill' campaign which aims to connect people to places they can eat, drink and shop with less plastic. We have now launched our cycle to work scheme across all operational areas for our staff, promoting the benefits of cycling to work, both in terms of health and wellbeing and the environment, for which takeup has been strong so far. We have donated over 250 smartphones with our equipment recycling partner. Devices are reused locally or repurposed into new equipment, meaning less waste goes to landfill and repurposed devices can be shared with charities or schools, therefore ensuring wider social impact. Our mobile phone provider has committed to planting trees for each handset we purchase. During the year we have purchased 485 phones meaning almost 5,000 trees will be planted. Our Youth Councils have led on a climate change campaign and have been responsible for distributing the £20,000 climate change fund to 18 young people in Kingston and Richmond to develop their own climate change projects.

2. Risks and risk management

Our risk management framework helps to ensure we identify and manage those risks that could affect our ability to deliver the company's objectives. The management of risk is embedded in our day-to-day business activities, and well-established processes and policies are in place. All of our employees have a role in reducing risk through our internal control framework. Our principal risks are recorded in our Board Assurance Framework which is regularly reviewed by the Leadership Team and reported to the Board of Directors. The Audit and Risk Committee looks in detail at the risks, mitigations that are in place and the level of assurance available from the Executive. Strategic risks are the direct responsibility of the Leadership Team and concern the overall direction of the company and its sustainability. Operational risks concern day-to-day activities which need to be managed in order for services to be delivered. They are managed and monitored by individual service managers.

Details of the Company's financial instrument risks are set out in Note 23 of our accounts. These are not regarded as material to an understanding of the assets, liabilities, financial position and profit or loss of the Company. The following table details the high level strategic risks that are not related to financial instruments:

POTENTIAL RISK DESCRIPTION	IMPACT OF RISK IF IT MATERIALISED	RISK MITIGATION
Potential risk that we do not keep children, young people and families safe and supported	A child is not safeguarded and experiences harm, failure to deliver statutory duty, reputational damage, needs of children and families escalate	Employment of experienced and qualified staff, appointment of Directors of Children's Services with statutory oversight and responsibility, internal audit of processes and policies, external inspections of services, quality assurance processes, clear reporting mechanisms and lessons learned
Potential risk that we do not deliver services that align with our councils' priorities	Children, young people and families do not receive a consistent offer from all borough services, councils lose confidence in the AFC delivery model and do not renew contracts	Senior leaders part of council leadership teams, DCSs are seconded from the councils, joint work on key strategies and approval via council committees and Joint Ownership Board, regular contract monitoring meetings, annual review of priorities and budgets
138 Potential risk that we do not have a skilled workforce that is safe, happy and healthy.	Quality of services falls below required standards, children and young people do not have consistency of key professionals which impacts outcomes, insufficient knowledge and experience to meet statutory duties, services are more expensive as AfC becomes reliant on more expensive agency staff	Workforce strategies to support coordinated approach to recruitment and retention, ongoing recruitment activity, periodic review of AfC staff offer, experienced HR professionals, targeted recruitment campaigns, well established workforce development offer, recruitment checks
Potential risk that services become unaffordable and do not represent value for money	Services are no longer affordable for our commissioning councils and contracts are not renewed, preventative services are reduced to support statutory services, reputational damage	Budget agreed annually with each council including growth, savings and inflation, monthly monitoring and reporting of budgets internally and externally, periodic benchmarking of services, ongoing review of how money is prioritised

<p>Potential risk that we do not comply with corporate statutory responsibilities</p>	<p>AfC is not statutorily compliant leading to fines and reputational damage</p>	<p>Statutory compliance register held by Chief Operating Officer and reviewed quarterly by the Audit and Risk Committee, Employment of suitable qualified staff, Board Assurance Framework</p>
<p>Potential risk that we are not known to or trusted to deliver quality services and advice</p>	<p>Children, young people and other key stakeholders lose confidence in our ability to support them / deliver good quality children's services, councils do not renew contracts, we are unable to bid for grant funding, reputational damage, increased complaints</p>	<p>Established Quality Assurance Framework with quarterly reporting on quality of services and associated improvement plans, surveys to assess service user satisfaction, improvement plans where issues identified, oversight of services by experienced leadership teams and professionals, established Communications Team.</p>
<p>Potential risk that external threats compromise the deliverability of our objectives</p>	<p>Failure to provide safe, effective, responsible and affordable services. The commissioning councils revise their commissioning services due to inconsistent statistical priorities or financial difficulties.</p>	<p>An established hybrid working regime with the ability for staff to work from home. Increased focus on cybersecurity with a prioritised programme plan for ICT, business system development and digital improvement. Clear protocol for delivery of children's services detailing critical tasks that need to be delivered against the key elements of the Children's Act. Monthly budget monitoring to regularly look at spend compared to budget. The Commissioning Board meets monthly to discuss high risk procurement and plan re-procurement.</p>

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3. Our Finances

The Company was incorporated on 5 February 2014 and commenced trading on 1 April 2014. The majority of its revenue comes from its contract with the three owning Councils for the provision of children's services. This income totalled £196 million in 2022/23 (£181m in 2021/22) which represents 90% (91% in 2021/22) of total income (on a management accounts rather than financial accounts basis).

Management Accounts Position

The Company has spent £218 million (£200 million in 2021/22) in the delivery of services. Needs led and Social Care staffing budgets remain the biggest financial pressure for the Company and have been the subject of significant contract price adjustment during the year. The Commissioning Councils agreed to all requests for contract price change controls during the year. The increased contract funding relates to Social Care staff and placements, SEN Transport, SEN legal costs and high needs education services (funded by the ringfenced Dedicated Schools Grant) as follows:

	General Fund	Dedicated Schools Grant Fund	Total
	£000	£000	£000
Richmond Contract	2,501	1,730	4,231
Kingston Contract	2,173	4,844	7,017
Windsor and Maidenhead Contract	769	459	1,228
Total	5,443	7,033	12,476

The final outturn after change controls was as follows:

	Expenditure	Income	Overspend/(underspend) after EOY change controls
	£000	£000	£000
Operational Strategic Management	2,020	1,818	(202)
Social Care and Early Help	87,592	87,245	(347)
Special Educational Needs and Children with Disabilities	94,257	94,957	700
Education	12,606	12,474	(133)
Public Health	1,580	1,598	18
Business Services	20,141	20,104	(37)
Total	218,196	218,196	0

Financial Statements

For the reporting period the Company made a trading loss of £11.741m (2021/22 loss £12.445m) and reported a total comprehensive income of £73.142m (2021/22 income £14.6m) which is attributable to its parent Councils in accordance with their share of ownership (Richmond 40%, Kingston 40%, Windsor & Maidenhead 20%). The loss comprises:

	2022/23 £000	2021/22 £000
Trading Profit / (loss)	(11,741)	(12,445)
Other comprehensive income/expense (re-measure of net defined benefit liability)	84,883	27,045
Total comprehensive (expense)/income	73,142	14,600

For the reporting period, the main differences between the Company's outturn in its management accounts report and its trading loss reported in the Statement of Comprehensive Income are related to pension adjustments under IAS 19. The difference between the loss from continuing operations and the position for total comprehensive income of £73.142 million is due to re-measurement of the pension liability under IAS 19. A full reconciliation between the management accounts position and the financial accounts position is detailed in Note 9 to the Accounts.

The Statement of Financial Position, or Balance Sheet, includes a net pension liability of £1.577 million (£76.082 million at 31 March 2022). The significant decrease is predominantly due to the combination of a higher discount rate, higher CPI/pension increases and an increase in longevity for current and future pensioners. The majority of the Company's employees are members of the Local Government Pension Scheme (LGPS) which is a defined benefit scheme. When the Company started trading on 1 April 2014, the majority of its staff transferred their employment from the Councils into the Company under TUPE, which included transferring their membership of the LGPS to the Company. The Company is an employer in the LGPS scheme, within the two pension funds administered by Wandsworth (Richmond) and Kingston Councils.

The net pension liability at 31 March 2022 is calculated under the provisions of IAS 19 whereas the employer's pension contributions that the Company actually makes to the pension funds are based on an actuarial valuation undertaken under the rules of the LGPS. The Company's contributions are re-assessed at each triennial valuation for pension funds in the LGPS. The most recent valuation was carried out as at March 2022 and has resulted in an increase in employer contribution rates from 19% to 19.9% (effective 1st April 2023). The next triennial valuation will be undertaken in 2025/26 with new employer contribution rates effective from 1st April 2026.

The Company holds assets (trade and other receivables, cash and cash equivalents, non-current assets) totalling £56.154 million at 31 March 2023 (£58.193 million at 31 March 2022). The assets relate to Trade and Other Receivables, Cash and Cash Equivalents and Non current assets. A significant value of 'Right of Use' assets were written on to the Balance Sheet in 2019/20 to reflect the accounting requirements of IFRS 16. The majority of assets are leased from the company's three owning councils and relate to buildings and vehicles used in the delivery of contractual services.

Financial Support from the Company's Owners

The Councils are contracted with the Company for a minimum period of seven years from 1st April 2014 (Richmond and Kingston) and 1st August 2017 (Windsor and Maidenhead). Richmond and Kingston agreed to utilise the option to extend the contract period by another five years to the end of March 2026. The contract prices are agreed annually to take into account changes in service requirements, inflationary and other cost pressures on the Company, and the need for cost reductions to be identified so that the Company can deliver value for money and contribute to the Councils' overall financial targets.

In addition to the annual review of the contract prices, the Company can request additional funding under a 'change control' provision in the contract when the Company is faced with additional costs, for example from increases in the number of children requiring services.

In terms of its liquidity, the Company can borrow from the Councils under the Revolving Credit Facility of £45 million. This provides funding to the Company to cover cash flow, losses and any investment requirements.

Future Financial Plans

The Company has prepared a Medium Term Financial Strategy (MTFS) which forecasts its income and expenditure and financial risks over the next three years. The emphasis of the MTFS is on maintaining financial sustainability given the challenging funding context for children's and education services nationally. The Plan includes details of how the Company intends to meet the Councils' cost reduction targets in the medium term, continue to provide value for money and links directly to the Company's Business Plan.

Going Concern

Achieving for Children CIC has been assessed by the Directors as a Going Concern. Despite the negative equity position reported in these Accounts, the Board and Leadership Team have made significant progress in identifying how these financial challenges will be met and continue to develop these plans. The Board's Medium Term Financial Strategy outlines these financial plans in more detail and addresses what actions are being taken to reduce the Company's cost base to accommodate proposed reductions in the owners' contract prices over the next three years. As with the parent Councils, the Company will revise pension contributions in line with the most up to date actuarial assessment and guidance. The increased cost is fully funded under the contracts with the Councils as they represent an unavoidable cost of delivering children's services. The Company is wholly owned by three Councils who are determined to be Going Concerns. The Company is able to borrow from the councils under a Revolving Credit Facility to support short term cash flow and the councils are contractually committed to procuring children's services from AfC until 31 March 2026 in Richmond and Kingston, and until August 2024 in Windsor and Maidenhead.

The contracts with the three owning councils represent 90% of revenue, whilst the remaining income is generated through work with schools and other Local Authorities. Due to the funding nature of local authorities and schools, the risk of permanent default of payment for current and future commitments is low.

4. Looking Forward

During 2022-23 we refreshed our business plan for 2020-24 - Achieving more for Children - which sets out how we will deliver excellent services, meet growing and changing local needs, operate our business more efficiently and commercially, and secure our long-term financial sustainability. It can be found via this [link](#).

The priorities in our business plan are based on a sound understanding of the local needs in each of the three local authority areas. A strong evidence base for the plan was developed using demographic trends, performance data and the needs analyses alongside more qualitative feedback about the effectiveness and impact of our services.

To make sense of all of this information we held a Big Conversation which involved a series of listening events with children, young people, parents, carers, partner organisations in the statutory and voluntary sectors, the councils and our own employees. These enabled us to ensure that our plan is aligned with the strategic priorities of our owning councils in their corporate plans and with our strategic partners.

Our focus over the coming years will be on continuing the delivery of safe and high quality services for children, young people and families. We will ensure our early help and health services remain strong, our children's social care services effectively safeguard and care for children and young people, and we meet the needs of those with special educational needs and disabilities. We will maintain our reputation as an excellent provider of educational support services, including working with our commissioning Councils to provide sufficient school places.

Based on our vision and ambitions, we have identified six strategic priorities for our business plan for the next four years.

Strategic priority	What we will achieve for children and young people?	Why is this important?
Stronger families	We will have a relentless focus on safeguarding children and young people across all our services. The services we deliver will be high quality and will protect and promote the wellbeing of children and young people by promoting family resilience. We will work collaboratively with our key partners to ensure we are able to realise the benefits of joint working to support our children, young people and families.	<i>Ensuring children and young people are safe from harm is our core business. We want to build resilience in our families and communities so that they are better able to help, support and protect children without the need for statutory intervention. As part of this, we want to ensure our relationships with key partners are strong and that our families really benefit from collaboration and joined-up working.</i>
Positive futures	We will invest and work collaboratively to improve our local education, health and care offer to children and young people so that they have	<i>It is crucial that we provide the right support at the right time. This will enable us to help children and young people to develop their independence and prepare for adulthood. Putting in place local</i>

	access to high quality services, are able to stay close to their families and friends, achieve well, and develop their skills for independence.	<i>provision means children and young people can stay close to their families and essential support networks and they can benefit from our integrated services giving them the best chance for a positive future.</i>
Excellent workforce	Our workforce will be experienced, talented, empowered and motivated to deliver the best possible services and outcomes for children and young people. We will invest in the recruitment, retention and development of our workforce and reward their achievements.	<i>Feedback from children, young people and families always emphasises the importance of a consistent, skilled and motivated workforce. We want to make AfC a place where people want to come and work and a company that they are proud to tell their family and friends that they work for.</i>
Financial stability	The services we deliver will provide excellent value for money and we are trusted by our commissioning councils to deliver the best possible services within the agreed contract price, including the efficient delivery of our financial savings plans.	<i>Given the financial context, nationally and locally, it is essential that we are focused on delivering efficient, cost-effective and financially sustainable services so we are able to support those most in need.</i>
Successful organisation	We will secure the sustainability of the community interest company through contract renewal, business development, fundraising and good growth, so that we are able to reinvest in the services we deliver directly to children and their families.	<i>As the needs of young people and our owning councils change we will develop and adapt our business and delivery models to ensure we continue to meet their needs and offer value for money.</i>
Smarter working	Our business processes will be efficient, cost-effective and supportive to frontline practitioners so that they are able to spend as much time as possible working directly with children, young people and their families to improve outcomes for them.	<i>Better business processes and effective use of new digital technologies will allow our workforce to reduce the amount of time they spend on unnecessary paperwork and bureaucracy, freeing them up to spend more time with the children, young people and families we support.</i>

Signed on behalf of the Board:



Siân Wicks
Chair of the AfC Board of Directors

DIRECTORS' REPORT

6. Our governance arrangements

6.1 Achieving for Children as a Company

We deliver education and children's services to children and families in Kingston and Richmond upon Thames and the Royal Borough of Windsor and Maidenhead. Our services fall into six areas shown in the diagram below. Taken together, these services describe how we will deliver our ambition to ensure that all children and young people live safe, happy and successful lives.

<p>Early Help</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Childcare ● Early years education ● Children's centres ● Family support ● Targeted youth support ● School attendance ● Education welfare ● Youth services ● Substance misuse services ● Health visiting ● School nursing 	<p>Social Care</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Statutory assessments and care planning ● Services for looked-after children ● Services for care leavers ● Fostering ● Adoption ● Placement brokerage and commissioning
<p>Education</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● School place planning ● School admissions ● Student services ● School improvement ● School leadership development ● Alternative education provision ● Governor support ● Apprenticeships and access to employment ● School nurses (in Windsor and Maidenhead) 	<p>Special Educational Needs, Disabilities and Health Services</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Educational psychology ● Special educational needs ● Integrated services for children with disabilities ● Emotional health and wellbeing ● Home to school transport
<p>Business Services</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Risk management and business continuity planning ● Safety and premises management ● ICT and business systems ● Information Governance ● Business intelligence and improvement ● Business systems support ● Strategy, policy and transformation ● Workforce development and Human Resources ● Marketing, communications and business development ● Financial planning and monitoring ● Accountancy services ● Schools' finance ● Procurement and strategic commissioning 	

Our workforce

As at 31 March 2023, Achieving for Children has 1,842 employees (equating to 1,190 actual full time equivalent employees and 1,119 budgeted full time equivalent employees), excluding agency workers. Our employees come from a broad range of professional disciplines including social work, teaching, health services and public sector management. We work hard to ensure that our workforce represents the diversity of the children and young people we work with. We are committed to the recruitment, training, development and promotion of people with disabilities.

Please note that the following information covers a snapshot of workforce data as at 31st March 2023. Figures include all permanent, casual and temporary staff but excludes agency workers. Percentages in the sections below show the proportion of employees for which equalities data is known and recorded and therefore, percentages reflect the known numbers. The unknown numbers are excluded when calculating percentages (unknown = no information is held about an employee's protected characteristics and no assumptions have been made. This includes those who prefer not to say).

- 80.6% of our employees are female, an increase of 1.6% from March 2021.
- 25% of our employees who declare their ethnicity are from a Black, Asian or Minority Ethnic (BAME) background
- 7% of our employees reported that they had a disability, an increase on the previous year.
- The largest faith group within our workforce is Christian at 27.8%. Employees with no faith or religion or who did not declare their religion account for 64.6% of the workforce.
- The majority of employees are aged between 30 and 50, which equates to 34% of the organisation.
- 30.2% of our employees are married or in a civil partnership; 25.8% are single; and of the data we hold, 6.6% have a partner.
- Of the data we hold, over 2.0% of our employees are gay, lesbian, bi-sexual or other.

To ensure our employees are kept informed, consulted and involved in the development of the company, Achieving for Children uses a wide range of communication channels. This includes a weekly e-news bulletin to all employees, regular video blogs by the Directors of Children's Services and directorate based all staff briefings. Informal drop-in sessions are held by Senior Leaders across AfC, which allow an opportunity for employees to raise issues and concerns. There is an annual leadership summit and regular management meetings. Managers are responsible for feeding back information to employees through regular team meetings and supervision sessions. The work of the Board of Directors is shared with employees through meeting summaries which are produced after each Board meeting. The Non-Executive Independent Directors visit services to meet and speak with employees so that they have a rounded understanding of the services provided to children and their families.

Gender Pay Gap

Under the Equality Act 2010 (Specific Duties and Public Authorities) Regulations 2017, public sector employers with 250 or more employees are required to publish a snapshot of their workforce data.

The following paragraphs summarise the latest findings from the 2021 published report:

- 79.0% of our workforce are women;
- 80.0% of the top quartile of earners are women;
- The average hourly pay for women is -2.82% lower than for men. This means women have a higher average hourly pay; and
- The median hourly pay for women is -2.49% lower than for men. This means women have a higher median hourly rate of pay.

The gender pay gap is not about equal pay for men and women. It is the difference between the average and median pay of men and women. It does not measure equal pay, which relates to what women and men are paid for the same jobs or work of equal value. In Achieving for Children equal pay is addressed through our job evaluation scheme.

The data required by the Government is a fairly simplistic indicator of a complex set of issues. Our ambition is to ensure equality of opportunity for women.

Our partners

We know that excellent children's services cannot be delivered in isolation. We have worked with health services, the police, schools and organisations in the voluntary sector to make sure our services are relevant and responsive to the needs of local children and families. Senior leaders from the company represent the interests of children's services on a number of statutory partnership bodies, including the Health and Wellbeing Boards, Community Safety Partnerships and the Children's Safeguarding Partnerships.

We work closely with our owning councils to ensure our plans align with their strategic planning. This is demonstrated by our involvement in the development of corporate plans in both Kingston and Richmond, and the drafting of the new children and young people's plan (CYPP) in Richmond.

Our commitment to partnership working is evident in the way in which we engage with children and young people and their families. We know that children and young people and their parents and carers are best supported if they are able to shape and determine the services they receive. For example, during the past 12 months we were pleased to establish regular meetings between the Achieving for Children Board and our Youth Council to ensure our Board Directors can directly hear from children and young people.

Looking ahead, we will be undertaking significant consultation with our key stakeholders as we develop our new AfC business plan, and look to review and refresh our SEND Futures plans in Kingston and Richmond.

Streamlined Energy and Carbon Reporting (SECR)

Under changes introduced by the 2018 Regulations, large unquoted companies and large LLPs are obliged to report their UK energy use and associated greenhouse gas emissions as a minimum relating to gas, electricity and transport fuel, as well as an intensity ratio and information relating to energy efficiency action, through their annual reports.

The data included is based in the GHG Protocol Corporate Standards, described below:

- **Scope 1 (Direct emissions):** Emissions from activities owned or controlled by your organisation that release emissions into the atmosphere. They are direct emissions. Examples of scope 1 emissions include emissions from combustion in owned or controlled boilers, furnaces, vehicles; emissions from chemical production in owned or controlled process equipment.
- **Scope 2 (Energy indirect):** Emissions released into the atmosphere associated with your consumption of purchased electricity, heat, steam and cooling. These are indirect emissions that are a consequence of your organisation’s activities but which occur at sources you do not own or control.
- **Scope 3 (Other indirect):** Emissions that are a consequence of your actions, which occur at sources which you do not own or control and which are not classed as scope 2 emissions. Examples of scope 3 emissions are business travel by means not owned or controlled by your organisation, waste disposal which is not owned or controlled, or purchased materials or fuels.

UK Greenhouse gas emissions and energy use data for the period 1 April 2022 to 31 March 2023

CO2e
2022 - 2023

Scope 1 emissions in metric tonnes CO2e

There is no data to report under scope 1

0

Scope 2 emissions in metric tonnes CO2e

Business travel in passenger vehicles - SEND Transport Taxis

910

Business travel in employee owned vehicles

299

Scope 3 emissions in metric tonnes CO2e

Electricity consumed within the buildings which AfC occupy that is purchased and controlled by our owning Councils. AfC are recharged based on usage. (see note 1)

1,001

UK Greenhouse gas emissions and energy use data for the period 1 April 2022 to 31 March 2023 **CO2e
2022 - 2023**

SEND Transport Fleet	356
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Zipcar contract	30
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Total gross emissions in metric tonnes CO2e	2,596
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Intensity ratio Tonnes CO2e per employee	1:2.3
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***Note 1:** AfC provides services from 70 buildings across three local authorities. All buildings are Council owned and the utilities are managed by the owning Councils (our landlord). AfC has different lease agreements per building and we have been unable to extract the exact data for some of its buildings due to how we are recharged. We have made the assumption of electricity used for the whole company based on buildings where we know the electricity used for the year (KWh), and total AfC occupancy within the building. We have taken an average of Kwh per employee and scaled up to provide an estimate for the company as a whole.*

Quantification and reporting methodology

We have followed the 2019 HM Government Environmental Reporting Guidelines. We have also used the GHG Reporting Protocol – Corporate Standard and have used the 2020 UK Government's Conversion Factors for Company Reporting. [Government conversion factors for company reporting of greenhouse gas emissions - GOV.UK](#)

Measures taken to improve energy efficiency

Achieving for Children has developed and published its own [Environment Strategy](#). The aim of the strategy is to highlight areas where Achieving for Children can reduce its carbon footprint and improve reporting mechanisms to demonstrate impact.

The Covid-19 pandemic has provided an opportunity to look at how we can deliver services more flexibly, enabling staff to work from home more frequently. Achieving for Children, in collaboration with its owning Councils are reducing office space by up to 50% which will reduce the requirement for high consumptions of electricity, gas and water.

By enabling a more virtual workforce, we hope to reduce travel to and from the workplace as well as between sites. As a relationship based organisation, delivering statutory services, face to face to support is unavoidable and we recognise that travel will remain an essential part of our business. Travel through means such as cycling or by public transport are encouraged where possible. As part of AfC's and the Council's climate change action plans, we will endeavour to look at alternatives which are more favourable, for example electric fleet cars and continue to promote initiatives such as the cycle to work scheme.

AfC's Digital Board are an integral part of AfC's Environment Strategy, providing digital solutions which in turn will reduce our carbon footprint. For example, through the use of online meetings and providing staff with appropriate devices, AfC has managed to drastically reduce the amount of paper we print.

AfC is responsible for delivering a transport service for children with special educational needs and disabilities, to and from their education provider. Over the coming years AfC will be renewing its current fleet contract to ensure that the vehicles provided as part of the contract are Euro 6 compliant. The ambition is to transition to electric vehicles as soon as a suitable replacement which matches the current specification is available.

6.2 Governance

Ownership

The Royal Borough of Kingston upon Thames (40%), London Borough of Richmond upon Thames (40%) and Royal Borough of Windsor and Maidenhead (20%) are the joint owners of Achieving for Children, which is a community interest company limited by guarantee. The responsibilities and decisions they retain as owners are set out in an inter-authority agreement. The Councils fulfil their ownership role through a Joint Ownership Board and also through their established Committee/Cabinet structures. There is also a Joint Committee which meets as a dispute resolution mechanism if required. The Committees are responsible for ensuring that ownership decisions are made in the best interests of Achieving for Children and that there is strategic alignment with the three owning councils. To ensure the role of company owners in the governance of the company is explicit there is a clear scheme of delegated authority. The Reserved Matters are structured according to bands as set out below along with the associated decision making arrangements:

- Band 1- reserved to the founding members and require both Kingston and Richmond to unanimously agree to pass. These are matters that relate to the company size and form. These decisions are taken by the Full Council of each relevant owning council.
- Band 2- matters that require 75% of the votes of all members (special resolution) to be cast in favour to pass. These are matters that are required in law to be a special resolution and are taken by the Chief Executive in consultation with the Leader of each Council.
- Band 3 – matters require the majority of votes by the members to be cast in favour to pass. These decisions are taken by each council's established Committee / Cabinet.

More information about Achieving for Childrens governance arrangements is available on the following links:

[2020 Governance Review](#)

[Governance Summary](#)

Operational commissioning decisions and performance review is delegated to a number of specialised officer boards that meet regularly throughout the year with membership including strategic finance leads

from each commissioning council and AfC, the Director of Children’s Services for each borough, Lead Commissioners from each borough and other relevant officers.

Financial Governance Arrangements

The Council owners exert a degree of financial control over the Company. In particular the owners have to approve:

- The Company’s Business Plan, including its budget
- The Company’s Treasury Plan
- Any contract for revenue expenditure that has a total value of more than £10 million or any capital investment of more than £10,000

The Councils provide funding to the Company through a Revolving Credit Facility. This is a short-term loan facility that provides working capital, investment finance and funds any losses for the Company. The Councils closely monitor the Company’s financial performance through the Operational Commissioning Group.

In addition to the requirements of the Companies Act 2006, as a community interest company Achieving for Children is governed by the Companies (Audit, Investigations and Community Enterprise) Act 2004 and the Community Interest Company Regulations 2005. The Company is established as a not-for-profit organisation and seeks to provide value for money services to the Councils – any surplus that is made is earmarked for investment in children’s services. The Company trades primarily with its parent Councils and other entities involved in providing children’s services within the UK. The company is domiciled in the UK for tax purposes. The Company does not make any donations or provide any support to political parties.

Board of Directors

The AfC Board of Directors is the body appointed by the councils to oversee the activity of the Company. The councils, as owners of the company, reserve the power to appoint all directors.

The composition of the Board when there are no director vacancies is as follows:

Board Composition
1 x Executive Directors
6 x Council Appointed Directors (max 2 x per member)
3 x Non-Executive Independent Directors
11 TOTAL

The governance arrangements for the company are set out in its Articles of Association. Board Directors are appointed for the skills and experience that they bring, and have responsibility for overseeing the management of the company and for providing advice to the owners on its future direction and strategy.

Each of the Non-Executive Independent Directors leads on a particular service area or priority and regularly visits services to meet with employees and service-users in order to maintain an overview of performance.

Directors of the Company in 2022/23 were:

DIRECTOR	MEMBERSHIP OF BOARD	
	From	To
Executive Directors		
Lucy Kourpas	01/01/2020	-
Council Appointed Directors		
Kevin McDaniel	20/08/2018	-
Nikki Craig	20/08/2018	-
Charlotte Rohan	01/04/2019	-
Jeremy Desouza	04/01/2022	-
Anna Sadler	14/06/2021	-
Samantha Morrison	24/11/2021	-
Non Executive Independent Directors		
Sian Wicks	11/09/2017	-
Martin Spencer	14/06/2021	-
Nathan Nagaiah	01/06/2021	-

Board Committee Meetings and Attendance

The Board has established an Audit and Risk Committee to liaise with the company's internal and external auditors and advise the Board on audit and risk matters. The Committee has reviewed risk management and assurance and the company's risk register and has received regular updates on progress of the internal audit plan that provides assurance against any significant control weaknesses.

Meetings of the Board and Committees were held during 2022/23 as follows:

BOARD OF DIRECTORS	AUDIT AND RISK COMMITTEE
23rd May 2022	27th June 2022
25th July 2022	10th October 2022
24th October 2022	16th January 2023
19th December 2022	13th March 2023
30th January 2023	

The following table shows the attendance at meetings in 2022/23:

DIRECTOR	ATTENDANCE AT BOARD OF DIRECTORS		ATTENDANCE AT AUDIT AND RISK COMMITTEE		MEMBERSHIP OF BOARD (IN YEAR)	
	POTENTIAL	ACTUAL	POTENTIAL	ACTUAL	From	To
Sian Wicks (Chair)	5	4	4	0	01/04/2022	31/03/2023
Martin Spencer	5	4	4	4	01/04/2022	31/03/2023
Nathan Nagaiah	5	5	4	3	01/04/2022	31/03/2023
Lucy Kourpas	5	5	4	4	01/04/2022	31/03/2023
Jeremy Desouza	5	3	4	2	01/04/2022	31/03/2023
Anna Sadler	5	4	4	4	01/04/2022	31/03/2023
Kevin McDaniel	5	2	4	3	01/04/2022	31/03/2023
Nikki Craig	5	4	4	2	01/04/2022	31/03/2023
Charlotte Rohan	5	5	4	4	01/04/2022	31/03/2023
Sam Morrison	5	4	4	3	01/04/2022	31/03/2023

Remuneration of Directors

There are different arrangements for setting the remuneration of Board Directors:

- a) Executive Directors employed by AfC have their terms and conditions determined by the Company.
- b) Council Appointed Directors are employed by the three Councils and have substantive roles within their employing council. Their terms of employment are determined by the employing Council and relate to their service to the Council. Their service on the Board of Achieving for Children is not remunerated and no costs are charged to the company for their services.
- c) Non-Executive Independent Directors are part time directors of Achieving for Children and their remuneration is based on a daily rate that includes attendance at Board and Committee meetings and associated work. Their appointment and terms are determined by the Councils.

Non-Executive Independent Directors (NEID) are appointed by the Councils acting as the owners of the Company in a general meeting. Their remuneration is based on a daily rate of £495 and covers all meetings and preparation work. An enhanced rate of £550 per day was introduced for the Chair of the Board from February 2021.

Executive Directors receive remuneration as part of their executive role in the Company and do not receive an additional allowance for being a Board Director.

The remuneration for Directors of the Company (where they are paid directly by AfC) is set out below:

			SALARY	NATIONAL INSURANCE	PENSION BENEFITS	OTHER EXPENSES	TOTAL
			£	£	£	£	£
Sian Wicks	NEID	2022/23	8,529	523	505	0	9,557
		2021/22	17,848	1,041	2,085	0	20,973
Martin Spencer	NEID	2022/23	5,156	322	0	0	5,478
		2021/22	7,207	491	0	0	7,698
Nathan Nagaiah	NEID	2022/23	4,534	216	0	0	4,750
		2021/22	6,113	442	0	0	6,555
Catherine Jervis	NEID	2022/23	0	0	0	0	0
	part year	2021/22	2,085	271	0	0	2,356
Lucy Kourpas	Exec Director	2022/23	138,305	19,631	27,418	0	185,354
		2021/22	133,222	17,164	25,312	0	175,699
TOTAL		2022/23	156,524	20,692	27,923	0	205,139
		2021/22	166,475	19,409	27,397	0	213,281

Remuneration of Council appointed directors

Council appointed directors serve as part of their duties to their Councils, and they receive no additional remuneration in respect of these appointments. They are not remunerated by Achieving for Children nor does the Company bear any charge for their services as directors. Their remuneration is published in the accounts of their respective Councils and is available on their websites:

[Royal Borough of Kingston upon Thames](#)

[London Borough of Richmond upon Thames](#)

[Royal Borough of Windsor and Maidenhead](#)

Remuneration of Senior Management of the Company

The Board of Directors has delegated the responsibility for the day to day running of Achieving for Children to the Company Leadership Team. These delegations are detailed in a Scheme of Delegation. The organisation's directors are responsible for ensuring the company achieves the ambitions and strategy set by the Board of Directors, and delivers the best possible services for children and their families in line with our contract with the commissioning Councils.

The following table provides details of the 2022/23 Extended Company Leadership Team membership. Officers are only members of the Board of Directors if they appear in the table summarising Board membership above.

Company Senior Leadership Team (extended)		Start date	End Date
Lucy Kourpas	Chief Operating Officer and Finance Officer (all contracts)	January 2020	current
Ian Dodds	Director of Children's Services (Richmond and Kingston contract)	January 2020	current
Kevin McDaniel	Director of Children's Services (Windsor and Maidenhead contract)	August 2017	June 2022
Alison Twynam	Director of Social Care (Richmond and Kingston contract)	April 2014	current
Lin Ferguson	Director of Social Care (Windsor and Maidenhead contract)	August 2017	June 2022
Lin Ferguson	Director of Children's Services (Windsor and Maidenhead contract)	June 2022	current
Charis Penfold	Director of Education Services (Richmond and Kingston contract)	April 2014	current
Clive Haines	Deputy Director of Education (Windsor and Maidenhead contract)	January 2020	July 2022
Sarah Moran	Deputy Director of Social Care (Windsor and Maidenhead contract)	July 2022	current

The remuneration of each member of the Extended Company Senior Leadership Team in 2022/23 was:

			SALARY	NATIONAL INSURANCE	PENSION BENEFITS	OTHER EXPENSES	TOTAL
			£	£	£	£	£
Kevin McDaniel	Part Year	2022/23	21,080	2,944	3,183	0	27,207
		2021/22	124,000	15,892	18,724	0	158,616
Ian Dodds		2022/23	159,100	21,780	38,507	0	219,387
		2021/22	147,175	19,090	35,911	0	202,176
Alison Twynam		2022/23	127,510	18,659	42,560	95	188,824
		2021/22	114,650	14,601	27,975	103	157,329
Lin Ferguson		2022/23	116,828	15,641	17,641	0	150,110

		2021/22	104,873	13,252	15,836	0	133,961
Charis Penfold		2022/23	115,026	15,374	21,855	402	152,657
		2021/22	111,273	14,135	21,142	295	146,845
Clive Haines		2022/23	75,475	9,640	14,340	0	99,455
		2021/22	67,441	8,086	12,814	199	88,540
Sarah Moran	Part Year	2022/23	32,667	4,090	6,207	0	42,964
		2021/22	0	0	0	0	0
Jessica Thom		2022/23	0	0	0	0	0
	Part Year	2021/22	22,443	2,792	0	0	25,235
Lucy Kourpas		2022/23	138,305	19,631	27,418	0	185,354
		2021/22	133,222	17,164	25,312	0	175,698

Review of Governance and Internal Control

The Audit and Risk Committee is responsible for advising the Board on the adequacy and effectiveness of the Company's governance, risk management, internal control, treasury management and value for money systems and frameworks.

The governance review arrangements require that the Chief Operating and Finance Officer and each Director of Children Services carry out a review of the effectiveness of internal control for their respective areas of responsibility. The arrangements are reviewed by the Chief Operating Officer into an overarching Statement of Internal Control and reported to the Audit and Risk Committee. The Audit and Risk Committee agreed the Statement of Internal Control at its meeting in March 2023 and advised the Board that the Company had adequate and effective arrangements in place in relation to Company's governance, risk management, internal control, treasury management and value for money systems and frameworks.

6.3 Directors' Responsibilities

The directors are responsible for preparing the Annual Report that includes the Strategic Report and Directors' Report, and the financial statements in accordance with applicable law and regulations. Company law requires the directors to prepare financial statements for each financial year. Accordingly, the directors have elected to prepare the financial statements in accordance with International Financial Reporting Standards (IFRSs) as adopted by the United Kingdom. Under company law, the directors must not approve the financial statements unless they are satisfied that they give a true and fair view of the state of affairs and profit or loss of the Company for that period. In preparing these financial statements, the directors are required to:

- select suitable accounting policies and then apply them consistently;

- make judgements and accounting estimates that are reasonable and prudent;
- state whether IFRSs as adopted by the UK have been followed, subject to any material departures disclosed and explained in the Group and Parent Company Financial Statements respectively; and
- prepare the financial statements on the going concern basis unless it is inappropriate to presume that the Company will continue in business.

The directors are responsible for keeping adequate accounting records that are sufficient to show and explain the Company's transactions and disclose with reasonable accuracy at any time the financial position of the Company and enable them to ensure that the financial statements comply with the Companies Act 2006. They are also responsible for safeguarding the assets of the Company and hence for taking reasonable steps for the prevention and detection of fraud and other irregularities.

Furthermore, the Directors are responsible for the maintenance and integrity of the corporate and financial information included on the Company's website. Legislation in the UK governing the preparation and dissemination of financial statements may differ from legislation in other jurisdictions.

The directors are responsible for preparing the annual report in accordance with applicable law and regulations. The directors consider that the annual report and financial statements, when taken as a whole, is fair, balanced and understandable.

Each of the Directors, who are identified in this report, is responsible for preparing the annual report and financial statements. In particular, each of the Directors confirms that to the best of their knowledge:

- The statement of accounts, which have been prepared in accordance with IFRSs, give a true and fair view of the assets, liabilities, financial position and loss of the Company;
- The Strategic Report, contained in pages 6 to 25 and the Directors' Report, contained in pages 26 to 39, together set out a fair review of the development and performance of the business and position of the Company and describe the principal risks that it faces;
- So far as each Director is aware, there is no relevant audit information of which Crowe UK LLP, as the Company's auditors, are unaware; and
- They have taken all steps they ought to have taken as a Director in order to make themselves aware of any relevant audit information and to establish that Crowe UK LLP are aware of that information.

Signed on behalf of the Board:



Siân Wicks
Chair of the AfC Board of Directors
27th July 2023

These accounts have been compiled in line with International Financial Reporting Standards (IFRSs) and cover the period from 1 April 2022 to 31 March 2023. The accounts have been audited by Crowe UK LLP. For transparency purposes the following table details the fees payable to Crowe UK LLP for the 2022/23 audit and those paid for the 2021/22 audit.

Description	2022/23	2021/22
	£000	£000
Annual audit fee	69	69
Total estimated fees payable to the auditor for the audit of the Company's annual accounts	69	69
Certification of Teachers Pension Returns	1	2
Total fees payable to the auditor for other services	1	2

Crowe UK LLP is constituted as a limited liability partnership in accordance with the Limited Liability Partnership Act 2000.

The financial accounts and disclosures are set out in the Company's Statement of Accounts that follows the Auditor's Report.

Auditor's Report

The report by Achieving for Children's independent auditor on the financial statements for the period ending 31 March 2023 is set out on the following page.

Independent Auditor's Report to the Members of Achieving for Children Community Interest Company

Opinion

We have audited the financial statements of Achieving for Children Community Interest Company for the year ended 31 March 2023 which comprise the Statement of Comprehensive Income, the Statement of Changes in Equity, the Statement of Financial Position, the Statement of Cashflows, and notes to the financial statements, including a summary of significant accounting policies. The financial reporting framework that has been applied in their preparation is applicable law and international accounting standards in conformity with the requirements of the Companies Act 2006.

In our opinion, the financial statements:

- give a true and fair view of the state of the company's affairs as at 31 March 2023 and of its profit for the year then ended;
- have been properly prepared in accordance with international accounting standards in conformity with the requirements of the Companies Act 2006;
- have been prepared in accordance with the requirements of the Companies Act 2006.

Basis for opinion

We conducted our audit in accordance with International Standards on Auditing (UK) (ISAs (UK)) and applicable law. Our responsibilities under those standards are further described in the Auditor's responsibilities for the audit of the financial statements section of our report. We are independent of the company in accordance with the ethical requirements that are relevant to our audit of the financial statements in the UK, including the FRC's Ethical Standard, and we have fulfilled our other ethical responsibilities in accordance with these requirements. We believe that the audit evidence we have obtained is sufficient and appropriate to provide a basis for our opinion.

Conclusions relating to going concern

In auditing the financial statements, we have concluded that the directors' use of the going concern basis of accounting in the preparation of the financial statements is appropriate.

Based on the work we have performed, we have not identified any material uncertainties relating to events or conditions that, individually or collectively, may cast significant doubt on the company's ability to continue as a going concern for a period of at least twelve months from when the financial statements are authorised for issue.

Our responsibilities and the responsibilities of the directors with respect to going concern are described in the relevant sections of this report.

Other information

The directors are responsible for the other information contained within the annual report. The other information comprises the information included in the annual report, other than the financial statements and our auditor's report thereon. Our opinion on the financial statements does not cover the other information and, except to the extent otherwise explicitly stated in our report, we do not express any form of assurance conclusion thereon.

Our responsibility is to read the other information and, in doing so, consider whether the other information is materially inconsistent with the financial statements or our knowledge obtained in the audit or otherwise appears to be materially misstated. If we identify such material inconsistencies or apparent material misstatements, we are required to determine whether this gives rise to a material misstatement in the financial statements themselves. If,

based on the work we have performed, we conclude that there is a material misstatement of this other information, we are required to report that fact.

We have nothing to report in this regard.

Opinion on other matter prescribed by the Companies Act 2006

In our opinion based on the work undertaken in the course of our audit

- the information given in the strategic report and the directors' report for the financial year for which the financial statements are prepared is consistent with the financial statements; and
- the strategic report and the directors' report have been prepared in accordance with applicable legal requirements.

Matters on which we are required to report by exception

In the light of the knowledge and understanding of the company and its environment obtained in the course of the audit, we have not identified material misstatements in the strategic report or the directors' report.

We have nothing to report in respect of the following matters in relation to which the Companies Act 2006 requires us to report to you if, in our opinion:

- adequate accounting records have not been kept by the company, or returns adequate for our audit have not been received from branches not visited by us; or
- the financial statements are not in agreement with the accounting records and returns; or
- certain disclosures of directors' remuneration specified by law are not made; or
- we have not received all the information and explanations we require for our audit.

Responsibilities of directors

As explained more fully in the directors' responsibilities statement set out on page X, the directors are responsible for the preparation of the financial statements and for being satisfied that they give a true and fair view, and for such internal control as the directors determine is necessary to enable the preparation of financial statements that are free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error.

In preparing the financial statements, the directors are responsible for assessing the company's ability to continue as a going concern, disclosing, as applicable, matters related to going concern and using the going concern basis of accounting unless the directors either intend to liquidate the company or to cease operations, or have no realistic alternative but to do so.

Auditor's responsibilities for the audit of the financial statements

Our objectives are to obtain reasonable assurance about whether the financial statements as a whole are free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error, and to issue an auditor's report that includes our opinion. Reasonable assurance is a high level of assurance, but is not a guarantee that an audit conducted in accordance with ISAs (UK) will always detect a material misstatement when it exists.

Misstatements can arise from fraud or error and are considered material if, individually or in the aggregate, they could reasonably be expected to influence the economic decisions of users taken on the basis of these financial statements.

Irregularities, including fraud, are instances of non-compliance with laws and regulations. We design procedures in line with our responsibilities, outlined above, to detect material misstatements in respect of irregularities, including fraud. The extent to which our procedures are capable of detecting irregularities, including fraud is detailed below:

We obtained an understanding of the legal and regulatory frameworks within which the company operates, focusing on those laws and regulations that have a direct effect on the determination of material amounts and disclosures in the financial statements. The laws and regulations we considered in this context were the Companies Act 2006 and Taxation legislation.

We identified the greatest risk of material impact on the financial statements from irregularities, including fraud, to be the override of controls by management, revenue recognition in relation to other income and judgements relating to the pension liability. Our audit procedures to respond to these risks included enquiries of management about their own identification and assessment of the risks of irregularities, sample testing on the posting of journals, reviewing accounting estimates for biases, testing on a sample basis other income and testing the assumptions and information used to generate the pension liability figure.

Owing to the inherent limitations of an audit, there is an unavoidable risk that we may not have detected some material misstatements in the financial statements, even though we have properly planned and performed our audit in accordance with auditing standards. We are not responsible for preventing non-compliance and cannot be expected to detect non-compliance with all laws and regulations.

These inherent limitations are particularly significant in the case of misstatement resulting from fraud as this may involve sophisticated schemes designed to avoid detection, including deliberate failure to record transactions, collusion or the provision of intentional misrepresentations.

A further description of our responsibilities for the audit of the financial statements is available on the Financial Reporting Council's website at: www.frc.org.uk/auditorsresponsibilities. This description forms part of our auditor's report.

Use of our report

This report is made solely to the company's members, as a body, in accordance with Chapter 3 of Part 16 of the Companies Act 2006. Our audit work has been undertaken so that we might state to the company's members those matters we are required to state to them in an auditor's report and for no other purpose. To the fullest extent

permitted by law, we do not accept or assume responsibility to anyone other than the company and the company's members as a body, for our audit work, for this report, or for the opinions we have formed.

Alastair Lyon

Senior Statutory Auditor

For and on behalf of

Crowe U.K. LLP

Statutory Auditor

Reading

COMMUNITY INTEREST COMPANY

STATEMENT OF ACCOUNTS

**1st April 2022 – 31st MARCH
2023**

Audited May 2023

<http://www.achievingforchildren.org.uk/>

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THE CORE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

STATEMENT OF COMPREHENSIVE INCOME FOR THE PERIOD ENDED 31 MARCH 2023

This statement measures the Company's performance for the period and shows the accounting profit or loss in accordance with UK adopted International Financial Reporting Standards (IFRS).

	Not e ref	Trading 2022/23 £000	Trading 2021/22 Before Exceptional Item £000	Exceptional Item Covid-19 £000	Trading 2021/22 After Exceptional Item £000
Revenue	7	206,995	188,533	1,472	190,005
Other income	7	10,124	9,129	(15)	9,115
Employee benefits	5	(70,364)	(65,116)	(386)	(65,502)
Depreciation	10	(3,074)	(3,441)	0	(3,441)
Other expenses	8	(151,882)	(139,282)	(1,071)	(140,353)
Operating Profit / (Loss)		(8,201)	(10,177)	0	(10,177)
Finance income	18	8	1	0	1
Finance costs	18	(3,549)	(2,269)	0	(2,269)
Profit / (Loss) before tax		(11,741)	(12,445)	0	(12,445)
Tax expense	19	0	0	0	
Profit / (Loss) from continuing operations		(11,741)	(12,445)	0	(12,445)

Other comprehensive income:				
Items that will not be reclassified subsequently to profit or loss		0	0	0
- Re-measurement of net defined benefit liability	5	84,883	27,045	0
Items that will be reclassified subsequently to profit of loss		0	0	0
Other comprehensive income for the period net of tax		84,883	27,045	0
TOTAL COMPREHENSIVE INCOME/(EXPENSE) FOR THE YEAR		73,142	14,600	0
Total Comprehensive Income/(Expense) for the year attributable to parent companies:				
LB Richmond upon Thames (40%)		29,257	5,840	0
RB Kingston upon Thames (40%)		29,257	5,840	0
RB Windsor and Maidenhead (20%)		14,628	2,920	0
Total		73,142	14,600	0

STATEMENT OF CHANGES IN EQUITY FOR THE PERIOD ENDED 31 MARCH 2023

This statement shows the movement or change in value of net equity from the beginning of the reporting period to the 31st March. The Company's equity is currently showing as a negative balance.

The Board and owning Councils have committed to offering the Local Government Pension Scheme to ensure compliance with the offer of equivalent terms and conditions for TUPE staff and it is a key part of the Company's recruitment and retention strategy. The LGPS is a funded defined benefit scheme and as a result AfC often reports a pension deficit on the Statement of Financial Position. This deficit represents the shortfall in assets set aside to pay for pension rights earned to date. This pension will not be paid out until the current members retire and does not represent an immediate cashflow issue. The fund is subject to a triennial valuation and employer contribution rates will be adjusted to ensure that the fund is adequately resourced to pay out retirement benefits due, when they are due. The combination of these two factors means that AfC's Equity is likely to remain in a negative position for the foreseeable future but does not mean that the Company is not a Going Concern. The reasons for a positive Going Concern assessment are detailed in Note 2 to these Accounts.

	Note ref	Pensions Reserve £000	Retained Earnings £000	Total Attributable to Owners £000
Balance at 31 March 2021		(35,306)	(57,745)	(93,051)
Profit/(Loss) for the year	SCI		(12,445)	(12,445)
Other Comprehensive Income				
- Re-measurement of net defined benefit liability	5	27,045		27,045
Total comprehensive income for the year		27,045	(12,445)	14,600
Balance at 31 March 2022		(8,261)	(70,190)	(78,451)
Profit/(Loss) for the year	SCI		(11,741)	(11,741)
Other Comprehensive Income				
- Re-measurement of net defined benefit liability	5	84,883		84,883
Total comprehensive income for the year		84,883	(11,741)	73,142
Balance at 31 March 2023		76,622	(81,932)	(5,310)

The annual balance will be carried forward within the Company's Statement of Financial Position

There were no non-controlling entities for the 2021/22 and 2022/23 periods.

Pensions Reserve – This reserve represents the cumulative amount that has been recognised via Other Comprehensive Income in relation to re-measurement of the net defined benefit liability due to changes in actuarial assumptions. Examples include changes in demographic assumptions, changes in financial assumptions, changes in the asset ceiling and return on assets that are not included in net interest.

Retained Earnings – This represents the net cumulative carrying amount of the Profit / (Loss) from continuing operations.

STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL POSITION AS AT 31 MARCH 2023

The Statement of Financial Position or Balance Sheet shows the net worth of the Company as at the 31st March in accordance with IFRS. It shows what the Company owes and owns and the equity within the Company that is attributable to Achieving for Children's (AfC) parent Councils.

Company Registration Number 08878185	Note ref	31 March 2023 £000	31 March 2022 £000
ASSETS			
Property, Plant and Equipment	10	8,431	12,059
Payment in Advance		0	26
Non Current Assets		8,431	12,085
Trade and Other Receivables	13	39,276	38,592
Cash and Cash Equivalents	14	8,447	7,516
Current Assets		47,723	46,108
TOTAL ASSETS		56,154	58,193
EQUITY AND LIABILITIES			
Equity		(5,310)	(78,451)
Long Term Lease Liabilities	11	5,672	8,761
Pension and other employee obligations	5	1,576	76,081
Non-current liabilities		7,248	84,842
Short Term Lease Liabilities	11	3,269	3,485
Borrowings	17	33,400	31,100
Trade and other payables	15	17,448	17,196
Provisions	16	100	21
Current liabilities		54,216	51,802
Total Liabilities		61,464	136,644
TOTAL EQUITY AND LIABILITIES		56,154	58,193



Siân Wicks, Chair of the AfC Board

27th July 2023

STATEMENT OF CASHFLOWS FOR THE PERIOD ENDING 31 MARCH 2023

The Statement of Cashflows shows the changes in cash and cash equivalents of the Company during the reporting period and how cash movements relate to the profit and loss for the period.

	Note ref	2022/23 £000	2021/22 £000
<u>Operating Activities</u>			
Loss before tax	CIS	(11,741)	(12,445)
Non cash flow adjustments	20	21,826	22,831
Contributions to defined benefit plans	5	(8,295)	(7,060)
Net changes in working capital	20	(407)	1,442
Net cash from operating activities		1,382	4,769
<u>Investing Activities</u>			
Purchase of tangible ICT equipment	10	(230)	(117)
<u>Financing Activities</u>			
Lease principal		(2,521)	(3,267)
Proceeds from borrowings		26,656	13,700
Repayment of borrowings		(24,356)	(17,000)
Net cash from / used in financing activities		(221)	(6,567)
Net movement in cash and cash equivalents		931	(1,915)
Cash and cash equivalents at the beginning of the year	14	7,516	9,431
Cash and cash equivalents at the end of the year		8,447	7,516

AfC borrows money from its parent Councils via a revolving credit facility for ongoing operations. The amount owed to the Councils under this arrangement is detailed in Note 17 to the accounts.

NOTES TO THE CORE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

NOTE 1 GENERAL INFORMATION AND STATEMENT OF COMPLIANCE WITH IFRS

Achieving for Children (AfC) was registered as a Community Interest Company on 5th February 2014. The Company is jointly owned by the LB Richmond upon Thames (40%), RB Kingston upon Thames (40%) and RB Windsor and Maidenhead (20%). The Company began trading on 1st April 2014. This statement of accounts reports on the eighth year of trading and covers the period from 1st April 2022 to 31st March 2023.

AfC was established to provide children's social care and education services to children, families and young people across the boroughs of Richmond and Kingston as well as other areas. In August 2017 Windsor and Maidenhead joined the Company and services now extend to this third borough. The main contracts during the accounting period to which this statement relates are with the London Borough of Richmond upon Thames, Royal Borough of Kingston upon Thames and Royal Borough of Windsor and Maidenhead. The Company also supports other local authorities and public sector partners through the provision of services and advice. This has included continuing work as a Department for Education 'Partner in Practice' during 2022/23.

This Statement of Accounts has been prepared in accordance with UK adopted International Financial Reporting Standards as required by the Companies Act 2006. The Accounts summarise the Company's financial performance (Statement of Comprehensive Income), equity (Statement of Equity), financial position (Statement of Financial Position) and cash flow (Statement of Cashflows) for the period. The financial statements have been prepared under the historical cost convention. Pension assets and liabilities are measured in line with the requirements of IAS19, further details are included in Note 5.

NOTE 2 SIGNIFICANT ACCOUNTING POLICIES, ESTIMATES AND JUDGEMENTS

The Company has followed a detailed set of IFRS compliant accounting policies in the production of these accounts. The full policies are contained in Note 28 to these Accounts. The Accounting policies are reviewed annually to ensure they remain appropriate and relevant. The most significant policies to note are:

- **Recognition of Income and Expenditure**

Activity is accounted for in the period that it takes place, not simply when cash payments are made or received. In particular:

Income – Revenue from the sale of goods and services is recognised when (or as) the Company transfers control of goods or services to a customer at the amount to which the Company expects to be entitled, and all obligations have been fulfilled in relation to the revenue and/or contract. Depending on whether certain criteria are met, revenue is recognised either over time, in a manner that best reflects the company's performance, or at a point in time, when control of the goods or services is transferred to the customer.

Expenditure - Supplies are recorded as expenditure when they are consumed. Expenses in relation to services received (including services provided by employees) are recorded as expenditure when the services are received rather than when payments are made.

The de-minimis limit for adjusting the accounts for income and expenditure not physically received or paid (accruals) but relating to the reporting year is £5,000.

- **Post-Employment Benefits**

The following pension schemes are available to employees of AfC:

- Teachers' Pension Scheme is available to teachers
- National Health Service Pension Scheme is available to staff carrying out health functions
- Local Government Pensions Scheme (LB Wandsworth (formerly Richmond) and RB Kingston schemes) are available to all staff

These are all Defined Benefit Schemes, but the first two are accounted for as Defined Contribution Schemes due to their nature. For Defined Contributions Schemes, the payments are accounted for on an accruals basis with no adjustment under IAS 19. Further details are provided on page 98.

The LGPS is accounted for as required by IAS 19 to show the cost of benefits earned in the period of account against the relevant service. This uses figures provided by the Actuary in assessing the current value of benefits earned during the period, the impact of decisions or changes made during the period, interest and re-measurement costs. Further details are provided in Note 5.

The value (on an IAS19 basis) of the net liability associated with staff transferring in from the RB Windsor and Maidenhead has been estimated at a mid-point between the two actuarial estimates that are available at the time of producing these accounts. The amount has been recognised through the Comprehensive Income and Expenditure Account. The Council's pension teams are currently in negotiation about the exact value of the transfer and therefore the mid-point is the most materially correct value to recognise given the information known at the time of producing these accounts.

- **Recognition of Lease Assets**

For any new contracts entered into on or after 1 April 2019, the company considers whether a contract is, or contains a lease. A lease is defined as 'a contract, or part of a contract, that conveys the right to use an asset (the underlying asset) for a period of time in exchange for consideration'. If there is a right to direct 'how and for what purpose' the asset is used throughout the period of use then a 'right of use' asset and lease liability is recognised on the Statement of financial position. Leases are not recognised where they are for less than 12 months and where they have a total market value at inception of less than £5,000 (de-minimis).

The right-of-use asset is measured at cost, which is made up of the initial measurement of the lease liability, any initial direct costs incurred by the Company, an estimate of any costs to dismantle and remove the asset at the end of the lease, and any lease payments made in advance of the lease commencement date (net of any incentives received).

The Company depreciates the right-of-use assets on a straight-line basis from the lease commencement date to the earlier of the end of the useful life of the right-of-use asset or the end of the lease term.

At the commencement date, the Company measures the lease liability at the present value of the lease payments unpaid at that date, discounted using the interest rate implicit in the lease if that rate is readily available or the Company's incremental borrowing rate. The liability is reduced for payments made each year.

The following Critical Judgements and assumptions have been made in applying Accounting Policies:

- Agency relationship – It has been assessed that the passporting of some transactions in the Dedicated Schools Grant on behalf of the parent Councils to various education establishments is an agency relationship and has therefore been excluded from AfC's Accounts. Further details are available in Note 6.
- Going Concern – Achieving for Children CIC has been assessed by the Directors as a Going Concern. Despite the negative equity position reported in these Accounts the Board and Leadership Team have made significant progress in identifying how these financial challenges will be met and continue to develop these plans. The Board's Medium Term Financial Strategy outlines these financial plans in more detail and addresses what actions are being taken to reduce the Company's cost base to accommodate proposed reductions in the three main contract prices over the next three years. As with the parent Councils, the Company will revise pension contributions in line with the most up to date actuarial assessment and guidance. An assessment was carried out as at 31st March 2022 and an increased employer contribution rate (19% to 19.9%) was applied from 1st April 2023. The fund is reviewed every three years to determine an appropriate employer contribution rate to ensure that funding is available to meet pension obligations as they become due. The Company is wholly owned by three Councils who are determined to be Going Concerns. The Company is able to borrow from the Councils under a contractual Revolving Credit Facility to ensure short term cash flow and the Councils are contractually committed to procuring children's services from AfC until March 2026 (Richmond and Kingston) and August 2024 (Windsor and Maidenhead).
- Deferred Tax Asset – The Company has assessed that the deferred tax asset should be recognised as a contingent asset rather than as an asset within the Statement of Financial Position. It is not probable that the Company will make significant taxable profits in the short to medium term. If the Company does make taxable profits in the coming years it will be able to reduce its initial tax liability by offsetting taxable losses incurred.
- Leases – In assessing the substance of lease arrangements the organisation has determined that the leases with the councils for the rental of buildings amount to a 'right of use' because the company is able to substantially direct 'how and for what use' the buildings are used. This has resulted in the significant recognition of these properties as 'right of use' assets and liabilities in the company Statement of financial position and has led to a reduction in lease payments recognised through the Comprehensive Income Statement.

The Statement of Accounts contains estimated figures that are based on assumptions made by the Company about the future or that are otherwise uncertain. Estimates are made taking into account historic experience, current trends and other relevant factors. The items in the accounts that have a more significant associated estimation risk are:

- Actuarial valuation of pension liabilities and assets – Pension assets and liabilities and associated costs have been presented based upon an actuarial estimate that has been calculated in line with methodologies prescribed in IAS19. The actuary makes assumptions based on indicators of future trends. Full details and a sensitivity analysis is provided in note 5 to the accounts.
- Valuation of 'right of use assets' and lease liabilities – The value of these assets has been estimated based on the present value of the lease payments unpaid at the Balance Sheet date, discounted using the interest rate implicit in the lease if that rate is readily available or the Company's incremental borrowing rate.

NOTE 3 MATERIAL AND EXCEPTIONAL ITEMS OF INCOME AND EXPENSE**Exceptional Items:**

There were no exceptional items to note within 2022/23.

Material Items:

A material item is an item of expenditure or income that is unusual in scale and non-recurring. The following material items are reported as part of the accounts:

Change Controls – The contract prices for the Councils changed throughout the reporting year. Under the contracts, AfC can bid for more contract income if it is needed to ensure that service standards are maintained or if there are significant fluctuations in demand for services (e.g. more children requiring care). The Company was granted additional income as follows:

	General Fund	Dedicated Schools Grant Fund	Total
	£000	£000	£000
Richmond Contract	2,501	1,730	4,231
Kingston Contract	2,173	4,844	7,017
Windsor and Maidenhead Contract	769	459	1,228
Total	5,443	7,033	12,476

This additional income is included in the Statement of Comprehensive Income under Revenue.

NOTE 4 NEW OR REVISED STANDARDS

At the date of authorisation of these financial statements, several new, but not yet effective, Standards and amendments to existing Standards, and Interpretations have been published by the International Accounting Standards Board. None of these Standards or amendments to existing Standards have been adopted early by the Company.

- IFRS 17 Insurance Contracts (Amendments)
- Disclosure of Accounting Policies (Amendments to IAS 1)
- Definition of Accounting Estimates (Amendments to IAS 8)
- IFRS 16 Leases (Amendments)

Management anticipates that all relevant pronouncements will be adopted for the first period beginning on or after the effective date of the pronouncement. Impact of implementing these standards has not been assessed.

NOTE 5 EMPLOYEE BENEFITS

Expenses recognised within Statement of Comprehensive Income as employee benefits are analysed below:

	Trading 2022/23 £000	Trading 2021/22 Before Exceptional Item £000	Exceptional Item Covid-19 £000	Trading 2021/22 After Exceptional Item £000
Salaries	(47,280)	(42,463)	(386)	(42,849)
Employee absence liability	(934)	3	0	3
National Insurance	(5,083)	(4,355)	0	(4,355)
Pension Fund Contributions - LGPS	(16,246)	(17,508)	0	(17,508)
Pension Fund Contributions - Other schemes	(667)	(631)	0	(631)
Other (redundancy, compensation etc.)	(155)	(162)	0	(162)
	(70,364)	(65,116)	(386)	(65,502)

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Salaries

The table below shows the average number of full time equivalent employees and the average count of employees paid during 2022/23. The figures exclude casual and agency workers. The level of salary spend has increased due to the staff pay award, contractual increments and other factors.

Service Area	Average FTE	Average Employee Count
Business Services	195.91	229.69
Education	82.33	102.63
Strategic Management	4.79	5.86
Public Health	30.67	42.03
Social Care and Early Help	560.11	861.11
Special Educational Needs and Children with Disabilities	267.64	559.09
Total	1141.46	1800.42

Defined Benefit Pension Plans (LGPS)

As part of the terms and conditions of employment of its officers, the Company makes contributions towards the cost of post-employment benefits. Although these benefits will not actually be payable until employees retire, AfC has a commitment to make the payments (for those benefits) and to recognise the expense at the time that employees earn their future entitlement.

Staff can be members of either the LB Wandsworth (Richmond) or RB Kingston upon Thames funds. Staff that transferred into the Company in the first period remain on their original plan and new employees, including RB Windsor and Maidenhead staff, are admitted to the plans on an alternate basis to ensure that membership numbers between the two funds remain relatively equal.

The Company participates in the following post-employment arrangements:

- The Local Government Pension Scheme, administered by the LB Wandsworth and the Local Government Pension Scheme, administered by the RB Kingston – this is a funded defined benefit salary scheme, meaning that the Company and employees pay contributions into a fund, calculated at a level intended to balance the pensions liabilities with investment assets. The Company is responsible for any deficit on its share of the Fund.
- Arrangements for the award of discretionary post-retirement benefits upon early retirement – this is an unfunded defined benefit arrangement, under which liabilities are recognised when awards are made. However, there are no investment assets built up to meet these pension liabilities, and cash has to be generated to meet actual pension payments as they eventually fall due.

The principal risks to the Company are the longevity assumptions, statutory changes to the scheme, structural changes to the scheme (i.e. large-scale withdrawals from the scheme), changes to inflation, bond yields and the performance of the equity investments held by the scheme. These risks are managed by the Fund over the long term, via the independent actuarial valuation process setting appropriate contribution rates.

Transactions Relating to Post-employment Benefits

The Company recognises the cost of retirement benefits in the Statement of Comprehensive Income when they are earned by employees, rather than when the benefits are eventually paid as pensions.

The following table shows the impact of LGPS post-employment benefits on Statement of Comprehensive Income:

	2022/23	2021/22
	£000	£000
Current service costs	(16,448)	(17,388)
Past service costs	0	(36)
Total recognised in operating profit / (loss)	(16,448)	(17,424)
Finance costs	(5,943)	(4,403)
Finance income	3,718	2,437
Total post-employment benefit charged to the profit / (loss) from continuing operations	(18,673)	(19,390)
Re-measurement of the Net defined Benefit Liability:		
Change in demographic assumptions	(5,510)	1,497
Change in financial assumptions	101,760	20,147
Other experience	(2,567)	(513)
Return on plan assets (excluding amounts already included in the net interest expense)	(8,800)	5,914
Total recognised in Other Comprehensive Income	84,883	27,045
Total recognised in Total Comprehensive Income for the period	66,210	7,655

Pensions Assets and Liabilities Recognised in the Statement of Financial Position

The amount included in the Statement of Financial Position arising from the Company's obligation in respect of its defined benefit plans is as follows:

	2022/23	2021/22
	£000	£000
Present Value of the Defined Benefit Obligation	(140,186)	(207,319)
Fair Value of Plan Assets	138,609	131,237
Net Liability arising from Defined Benefit Obligations	(1,577)	(76,082)

Reconciliation of Present Value of the Scheme Assets and Liabilities

	2022/23			2021/22		
	Assets	Liabilities	Total	Assets	Liabilities	Total
	£000	£000	£000	£000	£000	£000
<i>Adjustment to opening balance (McLoud judgement)</i>	0	0	0	0	0	0
Opening Present Value of Scheme Liabilities	131,237	(207,319)	(76,082)	115,074	(205,871)	(90,797)
Current Service Cost	0	(16,448)	(16,448)	0	(17,388)	(17,388)
Past Service Cost	0	0	0	0	(36)	(36)
Interest (Cost) / Income	3,718	(5,943)	(2,225)	2,437	(4,403)	(1,966)
Contributions from the employer	8,295	0	8,295	7,060	0	7,060
Contributions from employees	2,958	(2,958)	0	2,565	(2,565)	0
Gains / (Losses) on Curtailment	0	0	0	0	0	0
Benefits paid	(1,773)	1,773	0	(1,813)	1,813	0
Remeasurement Gains / (Losses) :						
- Actuarial Gains / (Losses) arising from change in demographic assumptions	0	(5,510)	(5,510)	0	1,497	1,497
- Actuarial Gains / (Losses) arising from changes in financial assumptions	0	101,760	101,760	0	20,147	20,147
- Other experience	2,974	(5,541)	(2,567)	0	(513)	(513)
- Return on assets (excluding the amount included in the net interest expense)	(8,800)	0	(8,800)	5,914	0	5,914
Closing Fair Value of Scheme Assets at 31 March	138,609	(140,186)	(1,577)	131,237	(207,319)	(76,082)

The employer contribution rate increased from 16% to 19% for 2020/21 to 2022/23. In line with the most recent triennial valuation, a new rate of 19.9% will be effective from 2023/24.

The fund accounts include estimated asset valuations at 31 March 2023. The annual actuarial assessment of the value of assets and liabilities involves a number of complex assumptions and estimation uncertainty. All disclosures and certificates have been reviewed by the fund managers to ensure valuations included in the accounts have, in the opinion of the fund managers, been prepared and issued on a reasonable basis. No adjustment has been made to figures provided by fund managers. The sensitivity analysis below shows a potential impact of £0.68m if property and infrastructure assets were to reduce by 5%, or £1.37m in the event of a 10% reduction in value.

Asset Sensitivity Analysis as at 31 March 2023	Value as at 31 March 2023 £000	5% reduction in value £000	10% reduction in value £000
LBW Property Assets	4,068	(203)	(407)
LBW Private Debt and Infrastructure	5,278	(264)	(528)
RBK Property Assets	4,313	(216)	(431)

Local Government Pension Scheme assets comprised:

	31-Mar-23				31-Mar-22			
	£000	%	£000	%	£000	%	£000	%
	LB WANDSWORTH (RICHMOND)		RB KINGSTON		LB WANDSWORTH (RICHMOND)		RB KINGSTON	
Equity Securities								
- Consumer	0	0%	1,567	2%	0	0%	1,689	2%
- Manufacturing	0	0%	889	1%	0	0%	1,115	2%
- Energy and Utilities	0	0%	931	1%	0	0%	574	1%
- Financial Institutions	0	0%	1,469	2%	0	0%	1,377	2%
- Health Care	0	0%	1,473	2%	0	0%	1,280	2%
- Information Technology	0	0%	2,223	3%	0	0%	2,606	4%
- Other	40,161	61%	1,508	2%	35,309	60%	1,582	2%
Bonds								
- Corporate Bonds (investment grade)	6,467	10%	0	0%	5,460	9%	0	0%
- Corporate Bonds (non-investment grade)	7,824	12%	0	0%	9,487	16%	0	0%
- UK Government	0	0%	0	0%	825	1%	0	0%
Property (UK)	4,068	6%	4,313	6%	3,664	6%	4,372	6%
Investment Funds and Trusts								
- Equities	0	0%	26,799	39%	0	0%	30,252	43%
- Bonds	0	0%	12,536	18%	0	0%	13,775	20%
- Infrastructure	5,278	8%	0	0%	3,258	5%	0	0%
- Other	0	0%	13,230	19%	0	0%	10,595	15%
Cash and Cash Equivalents	1,767	3%	1,208	2%	1,290	2%	1049.7	1%
	65,566	100%	68,146	100%	59,292	100%	70,266	100%

Basis for Estimating Assets and Liabilities

Liabilities have been assessed on an actuarial basis using the projected unit credit method, an estimate of the pensions that will be payable in future years dependent on assumptions about mortality rates, salary levels, etc.

Both the Local Government Pension Scheme and discretionary benefits liabilities have been estimated by Hymans Robertson LLP and Barnett Waddingham LLP, independent firms of actuaries. Estimates for Statements of the Fund are based on the latest full valuation of the schemes available at the time of producing the calculations.

The significant assumptions used by the actuary have been:

	2022/23		2021/22	
	LB WANDSWORTH (RICHMOND)	RB KINGSTON	LB WANDSWORTH (RICHMOND)	RB KINGSTON
Long term expected rate of return on assets in the scheme	1.50%	1.50%	1.50%	1.50%
Mortality assumptions				
Longevity at 65 for current pensioners:				
Men	21.3 years	22.6 years	21.4 years	21.7 years
Women	23.8 years	25.0 years	24.1 years	24.1 years
Longevity at 65 for future pensioners:				
Men	22.9 years	22.9 years	22.9 years	22.8 years
Women	25.5 years	26.2 years	25.8 years	26 years

	2022/23	2022/23	2021/22	2021/22
	LB WANDSWORTH (RICHMOND)	RB KINGSTON	LB WANDSWORTH (RICHMOND)	RB KINGSTON
Take up option to convert annual position into retirement lump sum				
- Pre April 2008 Service	50%	45%	50%	50%
- Post April 2008 Service	50%	45%	50%	75%

	31-Mar-23	31-Mar-22
	% pa	% pa
Financial Assumptions		
Medium Term RPI	3.20%	3.65%
Medium Term CPI	2.95%	3.20%
Rate of increase in pensions - Wandsworth (Richmond)	2.95%	3.15%
Rate of increase in pensions - Kingston	2.95%	3.15%
Rate of increase in salaries - Wandsworth (Richmond)	3.95%	3.55%
Rate of increase in salaries - Kingston	3.45%	3.55%
Discount Rate - Wandsworth	4.75%	2.75%
Discount Rate - Kingston	4.75%	2.75%

The estimation of the defined benefit obligations is sensitive to the actuarial assumptions set out in the table above. The sensitivity analysis below has been determined based on reasonably possible changes of the assumptions occurring at the end of the reporting period and assumes for each change that only the assumption analysed changes, while all the other assumptions remain constant. The assumptions in longevity, for example, assume that life expectancy increases or decreases for men and women. In practice, this is unlikely to occur, and changes in some of the assumptions may be interrelated. The estimations in the sensitivity analysis have followed the accounting policies for the scheme, i.e. on an actuarial basis using the projected unit credit method.

Change in Assumptions at 31 March	31-Mar-23		31-Mar-22	
	Approximate monetary amount £000	Approximate % increase to employer	Approximate monetary amount £000	Approximate % increase to employer
0.5% decrease in Real Discount Rate	17,350	10%	27,330	15%
1 year increase in member life expectancy	5,608	4%	8,293	4%
0.5% increase in the salary increase rate	1,515	0%	2,420	1%
0.5% increase in the pension increase rate	16,090	10%	24,740	10%

Defined benefit pension schemes accounted for as defined contribution schemes

The Company participates in two defined benefit pension schemes which are accounted for as defined contribution schemes:

Teacher's Pension Scheme (TPS)

Staff employed by the Company on teacher's terms and conditions are members of the Teachers' Pension Scheme, administered by Capita Teachers' Pensions on behalf of the Department for Education (DfE). The Scheme provides teachers with specified benefits upon their retirement, and the Company contributes towards the costs by making contributions based on a percentage of members' pensionable salaries. The scheme is a multi-employer defined benefit scheme. The scheme is unfunded and the Department for Education uses a notional fund as the basis for calculating the employers' contribution rate paid by local

authorities. Valuations of the notional fund are undertaken every four years. The Company is not able to identify its share of the underlying financial position and performance of the scheme with sufficient reliability for accounting purposes and it is therefore accounted for on the same basis as a defined contribution scheme. AfC is responsible for the costs of any additional benefits awarded upon early retirement outside of the terms of the teachers’ scheme. There were no such costs in 2022/23. The Company is not liable to the scheme for any other entity's obligations under the plan.

National Health Service (NHS) Pension Scheme

The Company employs some staff who undertake medical procedures and therefore qualify for membership to the NHS Pension Scheme. The NHS pension scheme is an unfunded, multi-employer, defined benefit scheme that covers NHS employers. In the NHS, the scheme is accounted for as if it were a defined contribution scheme: “NHS bodies shall account for the NHS Superannuation Scheme as a defined contribution plan” (NHS Manual full reference). The Company is not able to identify its share of the underlying financial position and performance of the scheme with sufficient reliability for accounting purposes. For the purposes of these Accounts, it is therefore accounted for on the same basis as a defined contribution scheme. The Company is not liable to the scheme for any other entity's obligations under the plan.

	Teachers’ Pension Scheme	NHS Pension Scheme	Teachers’ Pension Scheme	NHS Pension Scheme
	2022/23	2022/23	2021/22	2021/22
	£000	£000	£000	£000
Total Contributions	(560)	(107)	(508)	(123)
Employer's Contribution Rate	23.7%	20.7%	23.7%	20.7%
Anticipated Employer's Contributions next year *rates applicable from 1st September each year and include admin	23.7%	20.7%	23.7%	20.7%

NOTE 6 AGENCY TRANSACTIONS

During the period, AfC acted as agent for the LB Richmond upon Thames and RB of Kingston upon Thames with regard to a number of payments of Dedicated School Grant to schools and other educational organisations. AfC calculates the grant allocations in line with prescribed methodologies and arranges payment of the money to the relevant organisations. The agency calculations disclosed are formulaic and therefore the Company does not directly control the value of the transactions. The Company is fully reimbursed by the Councils for all payments made. These agency transactions have been excluded from the Accounts and will instead be reported within the Council’s Accounts. The net impact of the difference in cash received and amounts paid out on behalf of the Councils is recognised as a net debtor on the Statement of Financial Position. There were no agency transactions in RB Windsor and Maidenhead for 2022/23. The key figures and impact on the primary statements are summarised on the next page:

	Income	Expenditure	Total	Income	Expenditure	Total
	2022/23	2022/23	2022/23	2021/22	2021/22	2021/22
	£000	£000	£000	£000	£000	£000
Net impact on Statement of Comprehensive Income:						
Contract Income:						
- LB Richmond upon Thames	(613)	0	(613)	(680)	0	(680)
- RB Kingston upon Thames	(233)	0	(233)	5	0	5
	(846)	0	(846)	(675)	0	(675)
Transactions with schools / nurseries:						
- LB Richmond upon Thames	(222)	835	613	(193)	873	680
- RB Kingston upon Thames	0	233	233	(111)	106	(5)
	(222)	1,068	846	(304)	979	675
Impact on Profit and Loss Account	(1,068)	1,068	0	(979)	979	0
Net impact on Statement of Financial Position:						
	Debtors	Creditors	Total	Debtors	Creditors	Total
Contract Income:						
- LB Richmond upon Thames	(60)	0	(60)	(181)	0	(181)
- RB Kingston upon Thames	0	0	0	0	0	0
	(60)	0	(60)	(181)	0	(181)
Transactions with schools / nurseries:						
- LB Richmond upon Thames	0	0	0	0	0	0
- RB Kingston upon Thames	0	0	0	0	0	0
	0	0	0	0	0	0
Total	(60)	0	(60)	(181)	0	(181)
Net Debtor	60	0	60	181	0	181
Impact on Statement of Financial Position	0	0	0	0	0	0

NOTE 7 REVENUE AND OTHER INCOME

Since 2018/19, a new requirement, IFRS 15 Recognition of Revenue from Contracts with Customers, has been adopted. An entity must recognise revenue to depict the transfer of promised goods or services to the customer in an amount that reflects the consideration to which the entity expects to be entitled in exchange for those goods or services. Revenue will only be recognised when all obligations have been fulfilled.

The following tables show the Company's revenue streams by type and service area. All material contract performance obligations have been fulfilled in year.

	Trading 2022/23 £000	Trading 2021/22 Before Exceptional Item £000	Exceptio nal Item Covid-19 £000	Trading 2021/22 After Exceptional Item £000
Contract income LB Richmond Upon Thames	75,841	67,726	569	68,294
Contract income RB of Kingston Upon Thames	75,253	68,065	556	68,621
Contract income RB of Windsor and Maidenhead	44,250	42,265	720	42,985
Fees & charges for services	5,619	6,477	(300)	6,177
Lettings	144	189	(16)	174
Client contributions	664	358	0	358
Income from local authorities	5,226	3,453	(57)	3,396
Turnover reported within operating loss	206,995	188,533	1,472	190,005
Government Grants	952	636	0	636
Grants and contributions	8,544	7,845	(14)	7,831
Donations	628	648	0	648
Other	0	0	0	0
Other income reported within operating loss	10,124	9,129	(14)	9,115
Total income reported in operating loss	217,119	197,662	1,458	199,120

The revenue by service area is shown in note 9 – Departmental Analysis.

The Company derives 90% of its revenue from two contracts with the owning Councils. There is one contract with both Kingston and Richmond Councils and one with Windsor and Maidenhead Council and there are separate contract prices for all three Councils. The contractual terms are the same for each contract and Council with minor differences in the specification of services provided. Under these contracts the Company provides a comprehensive range of children’s services to each Council including both statutory and discretionary services.

The principal commercial risks are the same for each contract and are mainly associated with changes in demand for services both in terms of volume and complexity of services required that lead to increased costs. These risks are mitigated through contractual provisions for changes in the contract price through a change control process, which are subject to agreement by the relevant Council. The Councils are invoiced monthly for services provided as one-twelfth of that year's contract price and invoices settled within 30 days. Given the nature of the services provided the Company has determined that the performance obligations in the contracts should be combined to a single performance obligation for each contract and these obligations are satisfied over time. Progress towards satisfaction of the obligations is measured quarterly, which matches the period that the Councils measure. Whilst the contracts with the Councils provide for reductions in the contract price in respect of poor performance (both quality and quantity) through a default notification process, no such default notices have been served during the life of the contracts including the year to which these accounts relate.

NOTE 8 OTHER EXPENSES

The following table provides a breakdown of other expenses reported in the Statement of Comprehensive Income:

	2022/23 £000	2021/22 £000	Exceptional Item Covid-19 2021/22 £'000	2021/22 £000
Indirect employee costs	(9,188)	(7,605)	0	(7,605)
Premises	(1,816)	(1,722)	(70)	(1,792)
Transport	(8,097)	(6,555)	3	(6,552)
Supplies and services	(13,600)	(12,048)	(85)	(12,133)
Third party (contract) payments and transfer payments	(114,463)	(106,691)	(799)	(107,489)
Support services	(4,718)	(4,661)	(121)	(4,782)
Other expenses	(151,882)	(139,282)	(1,072)	(140,353)

NOTE 9 RECONCILIATION TO MANAGEMENT ACCOUNTS

Management reports on seven key segments or divisions throughout the period. Each division is managed by a member of the Senior Leadership Team and there are regular finance updates to the Board and parent Councils during the period. The following tables show the outturn position that was reported to management.

Management Outturn 2022/23	Operational		Special	Business		Grand Total £000	
	Strategic Management £000	Social Care and Early Help £000	Educational Needs and Children with Disabilities £000	Education £000	Public Health £000		Services £000
Income							
LB Richmond Contract	0	0	0	0	0	76,454	76,454
RB Kingston Contract	0	0	0	0	0	75,485	75,485
RB Windsor & Maidenhead	0	0	0	0	0	44,250	44,250
Customer and Client Receipts	0	2,115	1,261	2,985	1	915	7,277
Other Grants and Contributions	16	4,456	6,755	799	1,634	111	13,770
Government Grants	0	231	0	0	0	721	952
Interest Receivable	0	0	0	0	0	8	8
	16	6,802	8,016	3,784	1,634	197,943	218,196
Expenditure							
Employees	528	37,555	14,919	6,561	1,522	9,416	70,500
Premises	0	462	5	12	0	3,609	4,088
Transport	0	829	4,582	3,144	12	24	8,591
Supplies and Services	83	4,399	5,295	2,180	36	2,030	14,022
Third Party Payments	29	40,501	44,284	80	0	1,016	85,909
Transfer Payments	1,345	1,808	24,928	614	0	920	29,615
Support Services	34	2,039	245	16	11	2,373	4,718
Interest Paid	0	0	0	0	0	753	753
Tax							0

	2,020	87,592	94,257	12,606	1,580	20,141	218,196
Outturn	(2,004)	(80,791)	(86,240)	(8,822)	54	177,803	0
Re-Allocate contract price	1,802	80,444	86,940	8,690	(36)	(177,839)	0
Underspend/ (overspend)	(202)	(347)	700	(133)	18	(37)	0

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	Operational Strategic Management	Social Care and Early Help	Special Educational Needs and Children with Disabilities	Education	Public Health	Business Services	Partners in Practice	Grand Total
Management Outturn 2021/22	£000	£000	£000	£000	£000	£000	£000	£000
Income								
LB Richmond Contract	0	0	0	0	0	68,974	0	68,974
RB Kingston Contract	0	0	0	0	0	68,616	0	68,616
RB Windsor & Maidenhead	0	0	0	0	0	42,985	0	42,985
Customer and Client Receipts	576	2,635	1,174	2,147	0	825	0	7,357
Other Grants and Contributions	0	2,764	7,677	735	0	355	0	11,531
Government Grants	0	98	0	0	0	466	72	636
Interest Receivable	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	1
	576	5,497	8,851	2,882	0	182,222	72	200,100
Expenditure								
Employees	562	32,485	13,453	4,494	1,498	10,165	79	62,736
Premises	9	403	3	10	0	3,966	0	4,391
Transport	0	615	5,591	654	15	16	0	6,891
Supplies and Services	172	4,218	4,489	1,790	47	1,947	0	12,663
Third Party Payments*	7	34,761	42,058	199	0	623	0	77,648

Transfer Payments	1,614	4,513	23,719	142	0	831	0	30,819
Support Services	9	1,810	156	14	0	2,793	0	4,782
Interest Paid	0	0	0	0	0	170	0	170
	2,373	78,805	89,469	7,303	1,560	20,511	79	200,100
Outturn	(1,797)	(73,308)	(80,618)	(4,421)	(1,560)	161,711	(7)	0
Re-Allocate contract price	2,367	72,059	81,119	4,636	1,584	(161,772)	7	0
Underspend/ (overspend)	570	(1,249)	501	215	24	(61)	0	0

*Contract payments to third parties e.g. payments for independent child placements, payments for SEN placements, general contract payments etc.
 Management Accounts Reporting is prescaled before agency transactions

The basis on which the Company reports during the period is different to the IFRS compliant reporting required for this Statement of Accounts. The following table provides a reconciliation between the outturn reported to management and the Statement of Comprehensive Income:

	2022/23			2021/22		
	Reallocated in SOCI	Amounts not reported to management for decision making (IFRS adjustments)	Cumulative total including management accounts	Reallocated in SOCI	Amounts not reported to management for decision making (IFRS adjustments)	Cumulative total including management accounts
Management Outturn			0			0
Interest Receivable	(8)			(1)		
Interest Payable	753			170		
Tax expense	0			0		
Recognition of annual leave owing to employees		(934)			3	
Pension Adjustments:						
Employer contributions		(8,153)			(10,363)	
Recognition of non current assets		230			117	
Recognition of leases except interest		3,092			3,410	
Recognition of provisions		(107)			(72)	
Depreciation		(3,074)	(8,201)		(3,441)	(10,177)
Operating profit			(8,201)			(10,177)
Tax expense	0			0		
Interest Receivable	8			1		
Interest Payable	(753)	(571)		(170)	(132)	
Net Interest Payable		(2,225)	(3,541)		(1,966)	(2,267)
Profit / (Loss) from continuing operations			(11,741)			(12,445)
Pension Adjustments:						
Remeasurements		84,883	84,883		27,045	27,045
Total comprehensive income / (expenditure) for the year			73,142			14,600

NOTE 10 NON CURRENT ASSETS

Details of movement in non-current assets are included in the table below:

	2022/23				
	Buildings	Vehicles	Tangible ICT Equipment	Other ICT (Systems and Software)	Total 2021/22
	£000	£000	£000	£000	£000
Gross carrying amount:					
Opening balance	24,794	1,636	1,065	3,510	31,005
Revaluation					0
Additions	623	476	230	0	1,330
Disposals	(3,515)	(147)	0	(1,186)	(4,848)
Balance 31 March	21,903	1,966	1,295	2,323	27,487
Depreciation, Amortisation and impairment:					
Opening balance	(15,724)	(490)	(899)	(1,833)	(18,946)
Disposals	2,344	44		576	2,964
Depreciation / Amortisation in year	(2,155)	(484)	(118)	(317)	(3,074)
Balance 31 March	(15,535)	(930)	(1,017)	(1,575)	(19,056)
Carrying amount 31 March	6,369	1,036	278	749	8,431

	2021/22				
	Buildings	Vehicles	Tangible ICT Equipment	Other ICT (Systems and Software)	Total 2021/22
	£000	£000	£000	£000	£000
Gross carrying amount:					
Opening balance	25,055	1,871	948	3,230	31,104
Remeasurement	23	(6)	0	(77)	(60)
Additions	933	479	117	553	2,082
Disposals	(1,217)	(708)	0	(196)	(2,121)
Balance 31 March	24,794	1,636	1,065	3,510	31,005
Depreciation, Amortisation and impairment:					
Opening balance	(13,916)	(827)	(674)	(1,524)	(16,941)
Disposals	655	671	0	110	1,436
Depreciation / Amortisation in year	(2,463)	(334)	(225)	(419)	(3,441)
Balance 31 March	(15,724)	(490)	(899)	(1,833)	(18,946)
Carrying amount 31 March	9,070	1,146	166	1,677	12,059
Payment in advance - software licences					26

On the transition to IFRS 16 the Company applied an incremental borrowing rate of 0.5% plus bank rate at the time of entering into the lease arrangement. The 0.5% borrowing rate is in line with its Revolving Credit Facility arrangement with the owning councils, and represents the interest the Company is likely to have paid to purchase the leased asset outright. Further details of lease arrangements, including in-year remeasurements are given in Note 11.

The Company owns ICT equipment comprising Chromebooks, iPads and mobile phones which are depreciated over five, four and three years respectively. Additional purchases of Chromebooks (£179,050) and mobile phones (£51,050) were made in year.

The following table summarises the Right-of-Use Assets included in the Property, Plant and Equipment figures:

	Gross Amount £000	Depreciation £000	Carrying Amount £000
Buildings	21,903	(15,535)	6,369
Vehicles	1,966	(930)	1,036
Other ICT (Systems and Software)	2,235	(1,487)	750

NOTE 11 LEASES

Lease liabilities are presented in the statement of financial position as follows:

	31/03/2023	31/03/2022
	£'000	£'000
Current Lease Liabilities	3,269	3,485
Non-Current Lease Liabilities	5,672	8,761
Total lease liabilities recognised under IFRS 16	8,940	12,246

The Company has leases for the property (office and operations buildings), vehicles and ICT systems. The Company leases offices and operational buildings from RB Kingston, LB Richmond and RB Windsor and Maidenhead which, with one exception, can be terminated on 12 months' notice. However, in line with IFRS 16 guidance, the property leases have been assumed until the end of the owners' respective contract arrangements due to the likelihood that these lease arrangements will be continued. With the exception of short-term leases and leases of low-value, each lease is reflected on the balance sheet as a right-of-use asset and a relational lease liability. The lease arrangements were fully assessed under the new IFRS 16 Standard, with likely extensions and potential terminations or retendering taken into consideration. The right-of-use assets can only be used by the Company and are not sub-let.

The table below describes the nature of the Company's leasing activities by type of right-of-use asset recognised on the balance sheet:

Right-of-use-asset	No of right-of-use assets leased	Range of remaining terms	Average remaining terms	Number of leases with extension options	Number of leases with option to purchase
Property	50	1.34-3 years	2.50 years	50	0
Vehicles	46	5 - 36 months	2.04 years	46	0
ICT (Systems and Software)	5	1.33-3 years	2.33 years	5	0

The lease liabilities are secured by the related underlying assets. Future minimum lease payments as 31 March 2023 are as follows:

Right-of-use-asset	Within 1 year £000	1-2 years £000	2-3 years £000	3-4 years £000	4-5 years £000	After 5 years £000	Total £000
31 March 2023							
Lease Payments	3,269	2,886	2,431	0	0	0	8,586
Finance Charges	-97	-61	-29	0	0	0	-187
Net Present Value	3,172	2,825	2,402	0	0	0	8,399

Remeasurement

The company did not remeasure any of our leases this year.

Lease payments not recognised as a liability

The Company has elected not to recognise a lease liability for short term leases (leases with an expected term of 12 months or less) or for leases of low value (less than £5,000 total cost). Payments under such leases are

expensed on a straight-line basis. The expense relating to payments not included in the measurement of the lease liability is as follows:

Operating Leases	2022/23 £000	2021/22 £000
Leases of low value	25	28
Leases with remaining lease term of less than 12 months	0	3
Payments not included in lease liability	25	31

Finance and operating leases as lessor

The Company has no leases as lessor.

NOTE 12 FINANCE ASSETS AND LIABILITIES

The carrying amounts of financial assets and financial liabilities are as follows:

	31 Mar 2023 £000	31 Mar 2022 £000
Financial assets / Loans and Receivables		
Trade and other receivables categorised as Financial Instruments	37,303	35,921
Trade and other receivables not categorised as Financial Instruments	1,973	2,697
Cash and cash equivalents categorised as a Financial Instrument	8,447	7,516
	47,723	46,134

	31 Mar 2023 £000	31 Mar 2022 £000
Financial liabilities at amortised cost		
Current borrowings	33,400	31,100
Short term finance lease liabilities (IFRS 16)	3,269	3,485
Trade and other payables categorised as Financial Instruments	9,477	10,346
Trade and other payables not categorised as Financial Instruments	7,971	6,850
Provisions not categorised as a Financial Instrument	100	21
Total Current Financial Liabilities	54,216	51,802
Non-current financial lease liabilities (IFRS 16)	5,672	8,761
TOTAL Financial Liabilities	59,888	60,563

A description of the Company's financial instrument risk, including risk management objectives and policies is given in Note 23.

NOTE 13 TRADE AND OTHER RECEIVABLES

Trade and other receivables are made up as follows:

	31-Mar-23	31-Mar-22
	£000	£000
Trade receivables, gross	37,420	36,042
Allowance for credit losses	(117)	(121)
Trade receivables	37,303	35,921
Employee leave	126	240
Prepayments	1,847	2,431
Total current trade and other receivables	39,276	38,592
Non current prepayments	0	26
Total trade and other receivables	39,276	38,618

The net carrying value of trade receivables is considered a reasonable approximation of fair value. All of the Company's trade and other receivables have been reviewed for indicators of impairment.

The Company has made allowances against specific balances for impairment of receivables. The movement in allowance for credit losses and write offs are presented below:

	31-Mar-23	31-Mar-22
	£000	£000
Balance 1 April	(122)	(67)
Amounts written off (uncollectable)	32	7
Impairment loss/gain	(27)	(62)
Balance 31 March	(117)	(122)

NOTE 14 CASH AND CASH EQUIVALENTS

Cash and cash equivalents consist of the following:

	31-Mar-23	31-Mar-22
	£000	£000
Current Account (includes impact of transactions in transit)	1,417	2,494
Instant Access Deposit Account	7,013	5,005
Imprest Accounts (cash in hand and in bank)	17	17
	8,447	7,516

NOTE 15 TRADE AND OTHER PAYABLES

Trade and other payables consist of the following:

	31-Mar-23	31-Mar-22
	£000	£000
Trade payables	9,477	10,346
Employee leave	1,546	726
Receipts in advance	978	1,448
Taxes (e.g. VAT, National Insurance)	5,446	4,676
	17,448	17,196

NOTE 16 PROVISIONS

Short term provisions consist of the following:

	Redundancy	Legal	Total
	£000	£000	£000
Balance at 31 March 2022	21	0	21
Additional provisions made in 2022/23	0	100	100
Amounts used in 2022/23	(21)	0	(21)
Unused amounts reversed in 2022/23	0	0	0
Balance at 31 March 2023	0	100	100

NOTE 17 OTHER LIABILITIES

The following table contains a breakdown of other current and non-current liabilities (excluding trade receivables and payables):

	31-Mar-23	31-Mar-22
	£000	£000
Lease Liabilities	3,269	3,485
Short term loans from parent councils	33,400	31,100
Provisions	100	21
Other liabilities - current	36,769	34,606
Lease liabilities	5,672	8,761
Pension fund defined benefit liability (see note 5)	1,576	76,081
Other liabilities - non-current	7,248	84,842

Details of the terms of the short term loans are set out in Note 24.

NOTE 18 FINANCE COSTS AND FINANCE INCOME

Finance costs for the reporting period consist of the following:

	2022/23	2021/22
	£000	£000
Interest receivable on short term cash deposits	8	1
Total interest receivable	8	1
Interest on short term borrowings from parent councils	(753)	(171)
Lease interest	(571)	(131)
Net interest expense on defined benefit liability	(2,225)	(1,966)
Total interest payable	(3,549)	(2,269)

NOTE 19 CORPORATION TAX

The following table shows the tax reconciliation based on IAS12.

	2022/23		2021/22	
	Accounts £000	%	Accounts £000	%
Profit/(Loss) on ordinary activities before tax	(11,742)		(12,445)	
Tax on loss on ordinary activities at standard CT rate	(2,231)	19.00%	(2,365)	19.00%
<i>Effects of:</i>				
Expenses not deductible for tax purposes	0	0.00%	0	0.00%
Income not taxable	(14)	0.00%	0	0.00%
Adjustments to brought forward values	0	0.00%	0	0.00%
Amounts charged directly to equity or otherwise transferred	16,128	(137.35%)	5,139	(41.29%)
Capital Allowances in excess of depreciation	0	0.00%	0	0.00%
Other short term differences	0	0.00%	0	0.00%
Defined benefit scheme timing differences	0	0.00%	0	0.00%
Adjust closing deferred tax to average rate	0	0.00%	0	0.00%
Utilisation of tax losses and other deductions	0	0.00%	0	0.00%
Deferred tax not recognised	(13,883)	118.23%	(2,774)	22.29%
Unexplained difference	0	0.00%	0	0.00%
Current tax charge/credit for the period	0	0.00%	0	0.00%

Deferred Tax Asset

As a Community Interest Company AfC must pay Corporation Tax on all taxable profits at the domestic effective tax rate. The Company has reported a loss before tax for the 2022/23 and 2021/22 financial period of £12m and £12m respectively. There was no corporation tax amount that is payable for the 2022/23 (£nil in 2021/22) financial year. It is not probable that the Company will make significant taxable profits in the short to medium term and therefore it has not recognised a deferred tax asset in the Accounts. If the Company does make taxable profits in the coming years it will be able to reduce its initial tax liability by offsetting taxable losses incurred. The amount recognised as a contingent asset at 31 March 2023 is £1.488m (£19.746m at 31 March 2022).

NOTE 20 NON CASH FLOW ADJUSTMENTS AND CHANGES IN WORKING CAPITAL

The following tables provide a breakdown of the non-cash transactions recognised in the Statement of Comprehensive Income and Statement of Financial Position.

	2022/23 £000	2021/22 £000
Net changes in working capital:		
Change in trade and other receivables (increase)	(658)	(1,869)
Change in trade and other payables (decrease)	251	3,311
Total changes in working capital	(407)	1,442

	2022/23 £000	2021/22 £000
Non Cash Flow Adjustments:		
Current and past service costs	16,448	17,424
Net interest on defined benefit liability	2,225	1,966
Provision	79	
Depreciation	3,074	3,441
	21,826	22,831

AfC borrows money from the parent Councils via a revolving credit facility for ongoing operations. The amount still owed to the Councils under this arrangement is detailed in note 17 to the accounts.

NOTE 21 RELATED PARTY TRANSACTIONS

The Company's related parties include its owners (LB Richmond, RB Kingston and RB Windsor), company directors, senior managers with strategic decision making powers, post-employment benefit plans and others as stated below.

Transactions with the Company's owners

Achieving for Children is jointly owned by the London Borough of Richmond upon Thames, the Royal Borough of Kingston upon Thames and the Royal Borough of Windsor and Maidenhead (RBWM). The boroughs have influence over major policy decisions and funding. The Company is contracted jointly by the three Councils to provide their children's services. The Councils also provide support services and accommodation to the Company and a loan facility of up to £45m. The table below summarises the key transactions:

	LB			LB Richmond 2021/22 £000	RB Kingston 2021/22 £000	RB Windsor 2021/22 £000
	Richmond 2022/23 £000	RB Kingston 2022/23 £000	RB Windsor 2022/23 £000			
Receipts	91,292	90,858	56,792	85,015	80,950	55,979
Accrued income	10,717	12,866	4,721	9,754	13,010	5,535
Payments	1,350	4,403	2,338	1,494	5,015	1,507
Accrued Expenditure	539	60	82	662	356	552
Total Value	103,898	108,186	63,933	96,926	99,332	63,572
Other Balances						
Borrowing	12,799	12,114	8,487	12,073	11,131	7,896

Transactions with schools maintained by the Councils have been excluded as the contract price captures the value of these transactions. Individual schools are not deemed to have control over the Company.

Transactions with Key Management Personnel

Directors (including non-executive) and senior management have direct control over the Company's finance and operating policies and make up Key Management Personnel. The table below summarises the remuneration received by these individuals. As a result of legislative requirements relating to the employment of statutory officers, some members of the Company Leadership Team are employed by the parent Councils and seconded to Achieving for Children. The total remuneration paid has been captured in the table below and includes total remuneration paid by AfC and the parent Councils. Further details on the remuneration of individual Directors are included in the Director's Report.

	2022/23	2021/22
	£	£
Short Term Benefits:		
Salary	804,210	858,330
National Insurance	108,820	107,256
Expenses	497	597
Post-Employment Benefits:		
Defined benefit pension plans	172,216	159,798
Total Remuneration	1,085,743	1,125,981

During the period directors, senior management or members of their immediate families had relationships / influence over the organisations detailed in the table overleaf. Organisations have been detailed regardless of whether transactions occurred with AfC. Where transactions have occurred, the relevant officer or director was not involved in decision making.

	Transactions in the period		Amounts owed at period-end		Total value of transactions	Transactions in the period		Amounts owed at period-end		Total value of transactions
	Payments	Receipts	Owed to	Owed by		Payments	Receipts	Owed to	Owed by	
	2022/23	2022/23	2022/23	2022/23	2022/23	2012/22	2021/22	2021/22	2021/22	2021/22
	£000	£000	£000	£000	£000	£000	£000	£000	£000	£000
Ofsted	20	-	-	-	20	9	0	0	0	9
National Autistic Society	14	-	-	-	14	406	0	11	0	417
South Thames College Group	403	-	(11)	-	392	10	0	0	0	10
Dedworth Green First School	-	(1)	-	-	(1)	-	-	-	-	-
Dedworth Green Middle School	1	(1)	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
SWL ICB's Richmond Place based Partnership Committee	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Haven House Children's Hospice	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Integrated Governance Solutions (IGS) LTD	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
SWL Integrated Care Board (ICB)	-	(3,459)	-	(501)	(3,960)	-	-	-	-	-

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All transactions include VAT

The Chair of the Board (Sian Wicks) is the Chief Executive at Haven House Children's Hospice and the Managing Director of Integrated Governance Solutions Ltd . There were no transactions between AfC and these organisations during 2022/23 or 2021/22.

One of the Company's Non Executive Independent Directors (Nicki Craig) is a School Governor at Dedworth Green First School, and Dedworth Middle School in Windsor in 2022/23. The transactions related to income from the schools are for attendance at training and assessment sessions throughout the financial year.

One of the Company's Non Executive Independent Directors (Martin Spencer) was an Non Executive Director at Ofsted in 21/22. Ofsted is an inspector of schools and regulator of social care. Transactions in 2021/22 relate to annual fees paid for Social Care. He is a Non-Executive Director for the South West London Integrated Care Board. In 2022/23 we received income from SWL ICB for joint funded placements, therapies and other funding.

One of the Company's Non Executive Directors (Jeremy DeSouza) is a member of the South West London Integrated Care Board's Richmond Place-based Partnership Committee. Income from the SWL ICB is outlined in the paragraph above.

One of the Company's Non Executive Independent Directors (Nathan Nagaiah) was the Principal at South Thames Colleges Group in 2021/22, where expenditure relates to Special Educational Needs. He was also Chair of Finance with the National Autistic Society, where expenditure relates to Early Bird licences purchased.

Transactions with post-employment benefit plans

Employees of AfC are members of a number of pension plans. The defined benefit plans (the LGPS) are separately administered by the LB Wandsworth (Richmond) and RB Kingston who are also owners of the Company. The pension funds are treated as separate financial entities and the terms of the benefit plans are prescribed by regulation. Note 5 to these accounts contains further details of the specific plans and associated figures.

NOTE 22 CONTINGENT ASSETS AND LIABILITIES

Contingent Liabilities

Contingent liabilities relate to possible expenditure arising from a past event that has not been recognised in the Statement of Accounts due to the probability that a transfer of economic benefits will not arise, or cannot be reliably estimated. The possible liability is dependent on the outcome of something happening in the future. A review is undertaken annually to identify any potential liabilities.

- **Legal Cases / Tribunals / Insurance Claims**

As at the 31st March there were a number of tribunals and claims outstanding against the Company. None of these claims are expected to materially impact the accounts but some could lead to non-trivial damages / costs in future years should the tribunal rule against AfC. If claims do arise then these will be met by the Company's insurance policy (£50k excess) or via in year budgets.

- **Termination Benefits**

The Company must make significant reductions in its cost base over the next three years to achieve contract price reduction targets set by the contracting Councils. Plans continue to be developed to address these cost pressures and it is probable that some termination benefits will be paid out to staff as part of these plans. The Company is not able to estimate these at

present but any future liabilities will be met through in year budgets, contract change control mechanisms and the phasing of reductions in the Company's cost base.

Deferred Tax Asset

As a Community Interest Company AfC must pay Corporation Tax on all taxable profits at the domestic effective tax rate. The Company has reported a loss before tax for the 2022/23 and 2021/22 financial period of £12m and £12m respectively. There was no corporation tax amount that is payable for the 2022/23 (£nil in 2021/22) financial year. It is not probable that the Company will make significant taxable profits in the short to medium term and therefore it has not recognised a deferred tax asset in the Accounts. If the Company does make taxable profits in the coming years it will be able to reduce its initial tax liability by offsetting taxable losses incurred. The amount recognised as a contingent asset at 31 March 2023 is £1.488m (£19.746m at 31 March 2022).

NOTE 23 FINANCIAL INSTRUMENTS RISK

Risk management objectives and policies

The Company is exposed to various risks in relation to financial instruments. The Company's financial assets and liabilities are summarised in Note 12. The main types of risks are market risk, credit risk and liquidity risk.

The Company's risk management procedures are focused on the unpredictability of financial markets and are structured to implement suitable controls to minimise these risks.

Market risk analysis

The principal risk that the Company is exposed to is fluctuations in interest rates that can impact on its operating costs. The Company has seen the interest rate on our revolving credit facility increase by 3.5% through the year. The Company only has exposure to short term borrowing and deposits that are on variable interest rate terms with no currency exposure.

As an indication of the sensitivity to interest rates, a change in interest rates of 1% would change finance costs by +/- £334k (£239k for 2021/22).

Outstanding loans at 31 March 2023 were £33.4 million.

Credit risk analysis

Credit risk arises if a counterparty fails to discharge an obligation to the Company. The Company is exposed to credit risk in respect of short term deposits, cash and cash equivalents and trade and other receivables. The maximum exposure to credit risk is limited to the carrying amounts of financial assets recognised at 31 March 2023, as shown in the following table:

	31 March 2023	31 March 2022
	£000	£000
Financial assets / Loans and Receivables		
Trade and other receivables categorised as Financial Instruments	37,303	35,921
Trade and other receivables not categorised as Financial Instruments	1,973	2,697
Cash and cash equivalents	8,447	7,516
	47,723	46,134

A significant proportion of trade and other receivables are in respect of public sector entities, which mitigates the overall risk. Allowance for credit losses in 2022/23 was £117k (£122k for 2021/22).

The Company only deals with financial institutions that have high credit ratings and monitors these to avoid risk.

Liquidity risk analysis

Liquidity risk arises if the Company is unable to meet its obligations. The Company is able to borrow from its owners (the London Borough of Richmond upon Thames, Royal Borough of Kingston upon Thames and Royal Borough of Windsor and Maidenhead) under a revolving credit facility agreement. This agreement provides a loan facility of £45 million which the Company can draw down on to meet its liquidity requirements and also has up to £14m on same-day withdrawal deposit/current accounts to manage day-to-day cash requirements.

The Company manages its liquidity needs through monitoring forecast cash inflows and outflows arising from its business on a daily and weekly basis and also monitors longer term impacts on its cash flow arising from changes to its business plan.

The Company is required to submit a Treasury Plan at least annually to its owners for their approval that sets out the Company's treasury management plans and procedures.

The revolving credit arrangement in place with its owners is regarded as sufficient mitigation against liquidity risk for the company.

NOTE 24 FAIR VALUE MEASUREMENT

Financial assets and financial liabilities measured at fair value in the statement of financial position are grouped into Levels of fair value hierarchy. The three Levels are defined based on the observability of significant inputs to the measurement, as follows:

- Level 1: quoted prices (unadjusted) in active markets for identical assets or liabilities
- Level 2: inputs other than quoted prices included within level 1 that are observable for the asset or liability, either directly or indirectly
- Level 3: unobservable inputs for the asset or liability

The Company holds only the following financial assets and liabilities:

- Cash and cash equivalents
- Current borrowings
- Trade and other receivables and payables

There are no quoted prices that can be used to measure fair value of these assets and liabilities.

Cash, cash equivalents, trade and other payables are all very short term assets and are assessed as being at fair value.

Current borrowings are in respect of one loan facility, provided by the owners of the Company (RB Kingston, LB Richmond and RB Windsor and Maidenhead) – the amount borrowed at 31 March is shown in the following table in Note 25. This is a revolving short term loan agreement which is repayable on 31 September and 31 March each year, or earlier if the company gives the Councils notice. Interest is 0.5% (one half percent) above Bank of England Base Rate. The terms of the loan are judged to reflect current market rates and the actual value of the loan is taken as fair value.

Trade payables are discharged within 30 days and are deemed to be at fair value.

Trade receivables are due within 30 days and are deemed to be at fair value. Receivables not settled within 30 days are amortised in respect of assumed credit losses based on the age of debt

NOTE 25 CAPITAL MANAGEMENT POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

The Company is jointly owned by LB Richmond, RB Kingston and RB Windsor and Maidenhead as a company limited by guarantee and is a 'not for profit' organisation registered as a Community Interest Company. It provides benefit to its owners by providing services to them under contract at economic cost. The Company is not required to provide a financial return to its owners and has no target for its capital-to-overall financing ratio. The owners of the Company provide funding for the Company through a short-term loan facility and the Company does not have any other borrowings or equity.

The amounts managed as capital by the Company for the reporting period under review are summarised as follows:

	31 March 2023	31 March 2022
	£000	£000
Cash and cash equivalents	8,447	7,516
Capital	8,447	7,516
Borrowings	33,400	31,100
Overall financing	33,400	31,100
Capital-to-overall financing ratio	0.25	0.24

NOTE 26 POST REPORTING DATE EVENTS

No significant events have occurred between the 31st March reporting date and the date these accounts were authorised.

NOTE 27 AUTHORISATION OF FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

These Financial Statements were approved for submission to audit by the Chief Operating and Finance Officer on 27th July 2023:



Lucy Kourpas (CPFA)
Chief Operating and Finance Officer

NOTE 28 ACCOUNTING POLICIES

General principles

Basis of preparation - accounting practices

These financial statements have been prepared in accordance with UK adopted International Financial Reporting Standards as required by the Companies Act 2006. The Accounts summarise the Company's financial performance (Statement of Comprehensive Income), equity (Statement of Changes in Equity), financial position (Statement of Financial Position) and cash flow (Statement of Cashflows) for the period. The Accounts have been prepared on the historical cost basis.

Changes in accounting policies and prior period adjustments

Except for the changes detailed below, the Company has consistently applied the accountancy policy to all periods presented in these consolidated financial statements.

Prior period adjustments arise either as a result of a change in accounting policies or to correct a material error. Changes in accounting estimates are accounted for in the current financial period and future periods affected by the change, and do not result in a prior period adjustment.

Changes in accounting policies are only made when required by proper accounting practices or where the change provides more reliable or relevant information about the effect of transactions, other events and economic conditions on the Company's financial position or financial performance. Where a change is made, it is applied retrospectively (unless stated otherwise) by adjusting opening balances and comparative amounts for the prior period as if the new policy had always been applied. This was not required when adopting IFRS 16 due to the selection of the adoption of the modified retrospective approach.

Material errors discovered in prior period figures are corrected retrospectively by amending opening balances and comparative amounts for the prior period. No material errors were discovered in year.

Exceptional Items

Exceptional items are those which are separately identified by virtue of their size or incidence to enable a full understanding of the Company's financial performance. The nature and amount of these items is disclosed separately, either on the face of the Statement of Comprehensive Income or in the notes to the accounts, depending on how significant the items are. The company has shown the financial impact of Covid-19 as an exceptional item on the face of the Statement of Comprehensive Income.

Items Re-classifiable to the Operating Profit or Loss

Where there are items in the Statement of Comprehensive Income that are re-classifiable to the Operating Profit / Loss from Other Comprehensive Income and Expenditure, when certain conditions are met, these will be disclosed separately on the face of the Statement of Comprehensive Income (within Other Comprehensive Income). At present the Company has no such transactions.

Accruals of Income and Expenditure

Activity is accounted for in the period that it takes place, not simply when cash payments are

made or received. In particular:

Income (Revenue Recognition IFRS 15)

- Revenue from the sale of goods and services is recognised when (or as) the Company transfers control of goods or services to a customer at the amount to which the Company expects to be entitled, and all obligations have been fulfilled in relation to the revenue and/or contract.
- Depending on whether certain criteria are met, revenue is recognised either over time, in a manner that best reflects the company's performance, or at a point in time, when control of the goods or services is transferred to the customer.
- Contract income, fees and charges, lettings, grants, donations and other income arise from the provision of services or the sale of goods or services.

Expenditure

- Supplies are recorded as expenditure when they are consumed. Where there is a gap between the date supplies are received and their consumption (and the values are material) they are carried as inventories on the Statement of Financial Position.
- Expenses in relation to services received (including services provided by employees) are recorded as expenditure when the services are received rather than when payments are made.
- Revenue income and expenditure for the year is reported in the Statement of Comprehensive Income.

Interest

- Interest receivable on investments and payable on borrowings is accounted for respectively as income and expenditure on the basis of the effective interest rate for the relevant financial instrument rather than the cash flows fixed or determined by the contract.

Debtor and creditor balances (accruals policy)

Where income and expenditure have been recognised but cash has not been received or paid, a debtor or creditor for the relevant amount is recorded in the Statement of Financial Position. Where debts may not be settled (i.e. collection is doubtful), the balance of receivables is written down and a charge made to revenue for the income that might not be collected.

Exceptions to this accruals policy are made where it would be impractical in terms of time and cost required and where the effect of not accruing has no material effect on the Company's accounts. The Company has set a general de-minimis level for accruals of creditors that are calculated manually at period-end. This level is reviewed annually and is currently set at £5,000. Two exceptions to this de-minimis rule apply:

- Qualifying expenditure upon which income from third parties is dependent and associated income.
- Invoices for substantially the same supply or service that are chargeable to the same service area are aggregated where their total is over £5,000.

Third Party and Government Grants / Contributions

Whether paid on account, by instalments or in arrears, Government Grants, third party contributions and donations are recognised as due when there is reasonable assurance that:

- the Company will comply with the conditions attached to the payments, and
- the grants or contributions will be received.

Amounts recognised as due are not credited to the Statement of Comprehensive Income until conditions attached to the grant or contribution have been satisfied. Conditions are stipulations that specify that the future economic benefits or service potential embodied in the asset acquired using the grant or contribution are required to be consumed by the recipient as specified, or future economic benefits or service potential must be returned to the transferor.

Monies advanced as grants and contributions for which conditions have not been satisfied are carried in the Statement of Financial Position as creditors / receipts in advance. When conditions are satisfied, the grant or contribution is credited to the Statement of Comprehensive Income.

Agency Relationship

Where the Company acts as an agent of the Parent Councils, in paying grant monies to schools, these transactions are excluded from the Accounts on the basis that the Company is not making decisions about how the money is spent. The Company is just passporting money based on pre-set criteria, on behalf of a third party. These transactions are reported in the Accounts of the party who ultimately controls the money (i.e. the Councils).

Inventories

The Company recognises all inventories (stock) that have a value over £10,000 as at 31 March. The Company initially recognises inventory when it has control of it and when it expects to have a right to the future economic benefits / service potential. All inventories are measured at the lower of cost or net realisable value. Where there are large numbers of items of inventory that are ordinarily interchangeable, the Company uses the weighted average cost method of stock measurement. The Company held no material inventories at 31st March 2023.

Cash and cash equivalents

Cash is represented by cash in hand and deposits with financial institutions repayable without penalty on notice of not more than 24 hours. Cash equivalents are investments that are readily convertible to known amounts of cash with insignificant risk of change in value (this will exclude fixed term deposits as they are not highly liquid and not readily convertible to cash). In the Statement of Cashflows, cash and cash equivalents are shown net of bank overdrafts that are repayable on demand.

Employee Benefits

Benefits payable during employment

Short-term employee benefits are those due to be settled within 12 months of the period-end.

They include such benefits as wages and salaries, paid annual leave and paid sick leave, bonuses and non-monetary benefits for current employees and are recognised as an expense for services in the period in which employees render service to the Company. An

accrual is made for the cost of holiday entitlements (or any form of leave, e.g. time off in lieu) earned by employees but not taken before the period-end which employees can carry forward into the next financial period. The accrual is made at the salary rates applicable in the following accounting year, being the period in which the employee takes the benefit. The accrual is charged to the Statement of Comprehensive Income so that holiday benefits are charged to revenue in the financial period to which they relate.

Termination Benefits

Termination benefits are amounts payable as a result of a decision by the Company to terminate an officer's employment before the normal retirement date or an officer's decision to accept voluntary redundancy. These are charged on an accruals basis to the Statement of Comprehensive Income when the Company is demonstrably committed to the termination of the employment of an officer or group of officers or making an offer to encourage voluntary redundancy.

Where termination benefits involve the enhancement of pensions, the amount is recognised on an IAS19 basis in the Statement of Comprehensive Income.

Post Employment Benefits (IAS19)

Employees of the Company can be members of four separate pension funds:

- The Teachers' Pension Scheme, administered by Capita Teachers' Pensions on behalf of the Department for Education (DfE).
- The National Health Service Pension Scheme, administered by the Department of Health and Social Care (DoHSC)
- The Local Government Pensions Scheme, administered by the London Borough of Wandsworth
- The Local Government Pensions Scheme, administered by the Royal Borough of Kingston upon Thames

All schemes provide defined benefits to members, earned as employees who have worked for the Company.

However, the arrangements for the teachers' and NHS scheme mean that liabilities for these benefits cannot ordinarily be identified specifically to the Company. The scheme is therefore accounted for as if it was a defined contribution scheme and no liability for future payments of benefits is recognised in the Statement of Financial Position. The employer's contributions are charged to the Statement of Comprehensive Income for the period.

The Local Government Pension Scheme

The Local Government Scheme is accounted for as a defined benefits scheme:

- The liabilities of the LB Wandsworth (Richmond) and RB Kingston Pension Fund attributable to the Company are included in the Statement of Financial Position on an actuarial IAS19 basis using the projected unit method – i.e. an assessment of the future payments that will be made in relation to retirement benefits earned to date by employees, based on assumptions about mortality rates, employee turnover rates, etc., and projections of projected earnings for current employees.
- Liabilities are discounted to their value at current prices, using a discount rate (based on the indicative rate of return on 20 year gilts adjusted for credit spread).
- The assets of each Pension Fund attributable to the Company are included in the Statement of Financial Position at their fair value:
 - quoted securities – current bid price
 - unquoted securities – professional estimate

- unitised securities – current bid price
- property – market value
- The change in the net pensions liability is analysed into the following components:
 - Service cost comprising:
 - current service cost – the increase in the present value of a defined benefit obligation (liabilities) resulting from employee service in the current period. – allocated to the Statement of Comprehensive Income
 - past service cost – the change in the present value of the defined benefit obligation for employee service in prior periods, resulting from a plan amendment (the introduction or withdrawal of, or changes to, a defined benefit plan) or a curtailment (a significant reduction by the authority in the number of employees covered by a plan). – debited to the Statement of Comprehensive Income
 - Any gain or loss on settlement – arising when the Company enters into a transaction that eliminates all further legal or constructive obligations for part or all of the benefits provided under a defined benefit plan – debited to the Statement of Comprehensive Income
 - Net interest on the net defined benefit liability (asset) - the change during the period in the net defined benefit liability (asset) that arises from the passage of time - charged to the Statement of Comprehensive Income
 - Re-measurements of the net defined benefit liability (asset) comprising:
 - actuarial gains and losses – changes in the present value of the defined benefit obligation resulting from: a) experience adjustments (the effects of differences between the previous actuarial assumptions and what has actually occurred) and b) the effects of changes in actuarial assumptions charged to Other Comprehensive Income for the period
 - the return on plan assets – excluding amounts included in net interest on the net defined benefit liability (asset) – charged to Other Comprehensive Income for the period

Discretionary Benefits

The Company has restricted powers to make discretionary awards of retirement benefits in the event of early retirements. Any liabilities estimated to arise as a result of an award to any member of staff, including teachers, are accrued in the period of the decision to make the award and accounted for using the same policies as are applied to the Local Government Pension Scheme.

Financial Instruments

Financial Liabilities

Financial liabilities are recognised on the Statement of Financial Position when the Company becomes a party to the contractual provisions of a financial instrument and are initially measured at fair value and are carried at their amortised cost. Annual charges to the Statement of Comprehensive Income for interest payable are based on the carrying amount of the liability, multiplied by the effective rate of interest for the instrument. The effective interest rate is the rate that exactly discounts estimated future cash payments over the life of the instrument to the amount at which it was originally recognised.

Financial Assets

Financial assets are classified into two types:

- loans and receivables – assets that have fixed or determinable payments but are not quoted in an active market

- available-for-sale assets – assets that have a quoted market price and/or do not have fixed or determinable payments. AfC had no available for sale financial instruments in 2021/22.

Loans and Receivables

Loans and receivables are recognised when the Company becomes a party to the contractual provisions of a financial instrument and are initially measured at fair value. They are subsequently measured at their amortised cost. Annual credits to the Statement of Comprehensive Income for interest receivable are based on the carrying amount of the asset multiplied by the effective rate of interest for the instrument. For most of the loans that the Company has made, this means that the amount presented in the Statement of Financial Position is the outstanding principal receivable (plus accrued interest) and interest credited to the Statement of Comprehensive Income is the amount receivable for the period in the loan agreement.

Where assets are identified as impaired because of a likelihood arising from a past event that payments due under the contract will not be made, the asset is written down and a charge made to the Statement of Comprehensive Income. The impairment loss is measured as the difference between the carrying amount and the present value of the revised future cash flows discounted at the asset's original effective interest rate.

Any gains and losses that arise on the de-recognition of an asset are credited or debited to the Statement of Comprehensive Income.

Foreign Currency Translation

Where the Company enters into a transaction denominated in a foreign currency, the transaction is converted into sterling at the exchange rate applicable on the date the transaction was effective. Where amounts in foreign currency are outstanding at the period-end, they are reconverted at the spot exchange rate at 31 March. Resulting gains or losses are recognised in the Statement of Comprehensive Income.

Relationships and Interests in Companies and Other Entities

Achieving for Children is jointly owned by the LB Richmond upon Thames, RB Kingston upon Thames and RB Windsor and Maidenhead. The Company will disclose the proportion of profit / loss and net assets that is attributable to each Council. The parent Councils will in turn consolidate their interest in the Company as part of their group accounts.

Where the Company assesses that its relationship with another entity is classified as a subsidiary, associate, or joint venture it will present its accounts to reflect these interests as follows:

Subsidiary	Associates	Joint Ventures
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Company controls the financial and operating activities of that entity and benefits from this control. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Company has significant influence over the operations of another entity. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Company has joint control over another entity
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Line by Line consolidation - Where material, the Company will consolidate 100% of 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Equity Method – The interest is presented as an investment and adjusted each period for the current share of the net assets and the relevant share of profit or loss will be 	

all transactions and balances into the Company's Accounts and the Company will present both single entity and group entity accounts.	recognised in the Statement of Comprehensive Income
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Non Current Assets

The Company recognises two categories of non-current asset:

- Tangible - Assets that have physical substance and are held for use in the production or supply of goods or services, or for administrative purposes and that are expected to be used during more than one financial period
- Intangible - Expenditure on non-monetary assets that do not have physical substance but are controlled by the Company as a result of past events (e.g. software licences) are capitalised when it is expected that future economic benefits or service potential will flow to the Company

The Company has set the following de-minimis limits for the recognition of non-current assets:

- Land and buildings - £50,000
- Vehicles, plant and equipment - £10,000
- Intangible assets - £10,000

	Tangible	Intangible
Recognition	Expenditure on the acquisition, creation or enhancement is capitalised on an accruals basis, provided that it is probable that the future economic benefits or service potential associated with the item will flow to the Company and the cost of the item can be measured reliably. Expenditure that maintains but does not add to an asset's potential to deliver future economic benefits or service potential (i.e. repairs and maintenance) is charged as an expense when it is incurred. Where an asset consists of various components with different useful lives these are recognised separately.	
Measurement	Assets are initially measured at cost, comprising the purchase price and any costs attributable to bringing the asset to the location and condition necessary for it to be capable of operating in the manner intended by management. Assets are then carried in the Statement of Financial Position at fair value, determined as the amount that	Intangible assets are measured initially at cost. Amounts are only revalued where the fair value of the assets held can be determined by reference to an active market. Increases in valuations are matched by credits to the Revaluation Reserve to recognise unrealised gains. Reductions in value are written off against

	would be paid for the asset in its existing condition. For non-property assets that have short useful lives or low values (or both), depreciated historical cost basis is used as a proxy for fair value.	relevant balances in the revaluation reserve and then to the Statement of Comprehensive Income.
Depreciation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Depreciation is provided for on all tangible assets by the systematic allocation of their depreciable amounts over their useful lives. The Company applies the straight line method of depreciation and the useful life is determined by a relevant expert. Depreciation is charged to the Statement of Comprehensive Income each period and writes down the value of the asset on the Statement of Financial Position. A full years depreciation is charged in the period of acquisition. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The depreciable amount of an intangible asset is amortised over its useful life to the Statement of Comprehensive Income. A full years depreciation is charged in the period of acquisition

Leases IFRS 16

Company as a lessee

For any new contracts entered into the Company considers whether a contract is, or contains, a lease. A lease is defined as ‘a contract, or part of a contract, that conveys the right to use an asset (the underlying asset) for a period of time in exchange for consideration’. To apply this definition the Company assesses whether the contract meets three key evaluations which are whether:

- The contract contains an identified asset, which is either explicitly identified in the contract or implicitly specified by being identified at the time the asset is made available to the Company
- The Company has the right to obtain substantially all of the economic benefits from use of the identified asset throughout the period of use, considering its rights within the defined scope of the contract
- The Company has the right to direct the use of the identified asset throughout the period of use.

The Company assesses whether it has the right to direct ‘how and for what purpose’ the asset is used throughout the period of use. Previous de-minimis levels for recognising Finance Leases are now redundant under the new standard. There are only two exemptions for recognising a lease right-of-use asset. These are:

- If the lease is short-term (12 months or less); and

- Leases of low-value assets (those less than £5,000 in total cost over the lease term). This exemption also applies to individual leases within a similar group. When using these exemptions, instead of recognising a right-of-use asset and lease liability, the payments in relation to these leases are recognised as an expense in profit or loss on a straight-line basis over the lease term.

Measurement and recognition of leases as a lessee

At lease commencement date, the Company recognises a right-of-use asset and a lease liability on the balance sheet. Any arrangements prior to 1 April 2019 have been assessed and represented using the modified retrospective approach under IFRS 16. The right-of-use asset is measured at cost, which is made up of the initial measurement of the lease liability, any initial direct costs incurred by the Company, an estimate of any costs to dismantle and remove the asset at the end of the lease, and any lease payments made in advance of the lease commencement date (net of any incentives received).

The Company depreciates the right-of-use assets on a straight-line basis from the lease commencement date to the earlier of the end of the useful life of the right-of-use asset or the end of the lease term. The Company, through the owning Council's, also assesses the right-of-use asset for impairment when such indicators exist.

At the commencement date, the Company measures the lease liability at the present value of the lease payments unpaid at that date, discounted using the interest rate implicit in the lease if that rate is readily available or the Company's incremental borrowing rate. The liability will be reduced for payments made each year.

On the statement of financial position, right-of-use assets have been included in property, plant and equipment and lease liabilities have been included in trade and other payables.

The Company as a lessor

The Company's accounting policy under IFRS 16 has not changed from the comparative period. Achieving for Children does not have legal title to any non-current assets and as such would not partake in the leasing out of non-current assets.

Operating Leases

Rentals paid under operating leases, and therefore outside of IFRS 16, are charged to the Statement of Comprehensive Income as an expense in the period.

Provisions, Contingent Liabilities and Contingent Assets

Provisions

Provisions are made where an event has taken place that gives the Company a legal or constructive obligation that probably requires settlement by a transfer of economic benefits or service potential, and a reliable estimate can be made of the amount of the obligation. For instance, the Company may be involved in a court case that could eventually result in the making of a settlement or the payment of compensation. Provisions are charged as an expense to the Statement of Comprehensive Income in the period that the Company becomes aware of the obligation, and are measured at the best estimate at the Statement of Financial Position date of the expenditure required to settle the obligation, taking into account relevant risks and uncertainties. When payments are eventually made, they are charged to the provision carried in the Statement of Financial Position. Estimated settlements are reviewed at the end of each financial period – where it becomes less than probable that a transfer of economic benefits will now be required (or a lower settlement than anticipated is made), the provision is reversed and credited back to the relevant service.

Redundancy Costs

The Company provides for redundancy costs at the point that it is demonstrably committed (cannot retract the offer). If a notification of redundancy has been issued before 31 March but the amount has not yet been paid, a liability is recognised in the accounts.

Contingent Liabilities

A contingent liability arises where an event has taken place that gives the Company a possible obligation whose existence will only be confirmed by the occurrence or otherwise of uncertain future events not wholly within the control of the Company. Contingent liabilities also arise in circumstances where a provision would otherwise be made but either it is not probable that an outflow of resources will be required or the amount of the obligation cannot be measured reliably. Contingent liabilities are not recognised in the Statement of Financial Position but disclosed in a note to the Accounts.

Contingent Assets

A contingent asset arises where an event has taken place that gives the Company a possible asset whose existence will only be confirmed by the occurrence or otherwise of uncertain future events not wholly within the control of the Company. Contingent assets are not recognised in the Statement of Financial Position but disclosed in a note to the accounts where it is probable that there will be an inflow of economic benefits or service potential.

Taxation

Corporation Taxation

The Company is liable to pay Corporation Tax on all taxable profits. Where this applies, the tax will be separately identified on the face of the Statement of Comprehensive Income and profits / losses will be shown gross and net of taxation. Any amounts owed to the HMRC at the period-end will be recognised as a creditor / debtor on the Statement of Financial Position.

Where the Company makes taxable losses / has temporary differences, it will recognise a deferred tax asset on the Statement of Financial Position only where it is probable that the Company will make taxable profits and pay Corporation Tax in the foreseeable future. If taxable profits are not probable the potential deferred tax asset will be recognised as a contingent asset and disclosed within the notes to the Accounts.

Value Added Taxation

VAT payable is included as an expense only to the extent that it is not recoverable from Her Majesty's Revenue and Customs. VAT receivable is excluded from income. The net amount owed or owing to the HMRC at the Statement of Financial Position Date will be recognised as a net creditor / debtor on the Statement of Financial Position.

Post Reporting Date Events

Events after the Statement of Financial Position date are those events, both favourable and unfavourable, that occur between the end of the reporting period and the date when the Financial Statements is authorised for issue. Two types of events can be identified:

- those that provide evidence of conditions that existed at the end of the reporting period – the Financial Statements are adjusted to reflect such events (an adjusting event).
- those that are indicative of conditions that arose after the reporting period

The Financial Statements are not adjusted to reflect such events, but where a category of

events would have a material effect, disclosure is made in the notes of the nature of the events and their estimated financial effect (a non-adjusting event).
Events taking place after the date of authorisation for issue are not reflected in the Financial Statements.

GLOSSARY OF TERMS

ACCRUALS

Amounts charged to the accounts for goods or services received during the period for which payments have not yet been made, and for income due, which has not yet been received.

BALANCE SHEET / STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL POSITION

A statement of the Company's assets and liabilities at the 31 March (Statement of Financial Position date).

CAPITAL EXPENDITURE

Expenditure on the acquisition or enhancement of assets that have a significant value and a useful life beyond one year.

CASH & CASH EQUIVALENTS

Cash is represented by notes and coins held by the Company and deposits available on demand. Cash equivalents are short-term, highly liquid investments that are readily convertible to known amounts of cash and which are subject to an insignificant risk of changes in value e.g. instant access accounts.

COMMUNITY INTEREST COMPANY

A Community Interest Company is a special type of Ltd Company which exists to benefit the community rather than the private shareholders. Its primary objectives are social objectives and any surpluses are reinvested into the organisation.

CREDITORS OR TRADE PAYABLES

Organisations and individuals to whom the Company owes money.

CURRENT ASSETS

These are assets that will become payable to us or could be called upon within the next accounting period (i.e. less than one year). Examples are stock, cash and receivables.

CURRENT LIABILITIES

Those amounts which will become payable or could be called upon in the next accounting period (i.e. less than one year).

DEBTORS or TRADE RECEIVABLES

Organisations and individuals who owe money to the Company.

DEDICATED SCHOOLS GRANT

A ring-fenced, Central Government Grant paid to Councils by the Department for Education to fund education services within the boroughs. A significant proportion is devolved to schools on a formulaic basis.

DEPRECIATION

The writing down of the value of a fixed asset in the Statement of Financial Position in line with its expected useful life.

EMPLOYEE BENEFITS

Salaries, wages, paid annual leave, paid sick leave, pension benefits and termination benefits.

FINANCIAL INSTRUMENTS

A financial instrument is any contract that gives rise to a financial asset of one entity and a financial liability or equity instrument of another.

FINANCE LEASE

Leases are classified as finance leases where the terms of the lease transfer substantially all the risks and rewards incidental to ownership of the property, plant or equipment from the lessor to the lessee.

NON CURRENT ASSETS

These are assets that are likely to be in use by the Company for more than one year, such as property, plant and equipment.

IAS19

Accounting standard requiring the recognition by an authority of the attributable share of the assets and liabilities of pension funds with which it is associated showing the employer's commitment to increase contributions to make up any shortfall in attributable net assets, or its ability to benefit (via reduced contributions) from a surplus in the scheme, even though the fund retains title to the assets and the responsibility to pay pensions.

IFRS 16

Accounting standard that introduces a single lessee accounting model and requires a lessee to recognise assets and liabilities for all leases with a term of more than 12 months, unless the underlying asset is of low value. A lessee is required to recognise a right-of-use asset representing its right to use the underlying leased asset and a lease liability representing its obligation to make lease payments.

STATEMENT OF COMPREHENSIVE INCOME

A Core Primary Statement that provides a summary of the resources generated and consumed by the Company in the period.

INTERNATIONAL FINANCIAL REPORTING STANDARDS (IFRS)

The regulations under which the accounts are published. A set of international accounting standards stating how particular types of transactions and other events should be reported in financial statements. IFRS are issued by the International Accounting Standards Board.

INTANGIBLE FIXED ASSETS

Intangible fixed assets that are likely to be in use by the Company for more than one year are recognised where there is no 'physical' asset but the Company controls future economic benefits from the asset. For example computer software.

NET BOOK VALUE

An asset or liabilities original book value net of any accounting adjustments such as depreciation.

NET REALISABLE VALUE

The value of an asset that can be realised upon the sale of the asset, less any costs associated with either the eventual sale or the disposal of the asset in question.

NON EXECUTIVE INDEPENDENT DIRECTORS (NEID)

A member of the board of directors of a company or organisation who does not form part of the executive management team.

OPERATING LEASE

This is a type of lease under which lease rentals are paid for the use of the asset over the period of the lease. The asset remains the legal property of the lessor and has to be returned at the end of the lease.

OUTTURN

This is the final expenditure and income in any financial period. Outturn reports usually compare the final net expenditure (expenditure less income) against the relevant budget.

PROVISIONS

Amounts set aside for liabilities and losses which are likely to occur but where the exact amount or timing is uncertain but can be reasonably estimated.

RIGHT OF USE ASSET

The right-of-use asset recognises a lessee's right to use an asset over the life of a lease. At the termination of a lease, the right-of-use asset and associated lease liability are removed from the books of the lessee.

TANGIBLE NON-CURRENT ASSETS

Tangible fixed assets are 'physical' assets that provide future economic benefit and are likely to be in use by the Company for more than one year.

TERMINATION BENEFITS

Amounts payable to employees as a result of a decision by the Company to terminate an officer's employment prior to normal retirement age or an officers decision to accept voluntary redundancy.

THIRD PARTY PAYMENTS

Items reported under Third Party Payments for management accounts include contract payments made throughout the year. Examples include payments to third parties for independent child placements, Special Education Needs placements and other contract payments.

TRANSFER OF UNDERTAKINGS (PROTECTION OF EMPLOYMENT) REGULATIONS 2006 (TUPE)

A part of [UK labour law](#), protecting employees whose business is being transferred to another business. The regulations aim to protect employees' employment and most significant terms and conditions.

WORK PROGRAMME - PEOPLE OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY PANEL

EXECUTIVE DIRECTORS	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Stephen Evans (Chief Executive) • Kevin McDaniel (Executive Director of Adult Services and Health) • Lin Ferguson (Executive Director of Children’s Services and Education)
LINK OFFICERS & HEADS OF SERVICES	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Clive Haines (Deputy Director for Education) • Lynne Lidster (Head of Commissioning – Adults and Children)

ADDITIONAL MEETING: TBC December 2023

ITEM	RESPONSIBLE OFFICER
Supporting children with SEND	<i>Scoping document attached – to be agreed by the Panel.</i>
Support for home educated children	<i>Scoping document attached – to be agreed by the Panel.</i>
One Housing Group?	
Work Programme	Mark Beeley , <i>Principal Democratic Services Officer – Overview & Scrutiny</i>

MEETING: 1st FEBRUARY 2024

ITEM	RESPONSIBLE OFFICER
Hold for Budget 2024/25	Finance
Work Programme	Mark Beeley , <i>Principal Democratic Services Officer – Overview & Scrutiny</i>

MEETING: 2nd APRIL 2024

ITEM	RESPONSIBLE OFFICER
Work Programme	Mark Beeley , <i>Principal Democratic Services Officer – Overview & Scrutiny</i>

ITEMS SUGGESTED BUT NOT YET PROGRAMMED

ITEM	COMMENTS
Impact of Home Office decisions in relation to the dispersed support for Asylum seekers (all ages)	
Task and Finish Group – Air Pollution	<i>Meeting due to be set up shortly.</i>
Task and Finish Group – Domestic Abuse	<i>In progress – meeting took place in September, further meetings planned for October and December.</i>
Use of artificial intelligence	<i>Suggested by Councillor Cross – scoping document to be drafted.</i>
The Adult Social Care Budget - Cost of residential care	Kevin McDaniel , Executive Director of Adult Services and Health
Community and Voluntary sector – how well do we work together?	Kevin McDaniel , Executive Director of Adult Services and Health

REJECTED ITEMS

ITEM	COMMENTS
Sunningdale Health Hub and the creation of a new hospital in the borough	<i>Duplication of work – this will be considered by the Health and Wellbeing Board.</i>
Reopening the walk in centre at St Marks Hospital	<i>Duplication of work – this will be considered by the Health and Wellbeing Board.</i>

[Terms of Reference for the People Overview and Scrutiny Panel](#)

[Cabinet Forward Plan](#)

Royal Borough of Windsor and Maidenhead

Overview and Scrutiny Panels

Scrutiny Review – Scoping and Planning Document

Title of the Review	Home Education Support in RBWM
Panel Name	People Overview and Scrutiny Panel
Panel Members	Councillors Helen Taylor (Chair), Devon Davies (Vice Chair), Mandy Brar, Suzanne Cross, Carole Da Costa, Jack Douglas, Genevieve Gosling, George Shaw and John Story
Support Officer(s)	Lin Ferguson – Executive Director of Children’s Services and Education
Lead Member(s)/Officer(s) Identify a nominated: - Elected Member - Lead Officer	Councillor Jack Douglas Clive Haines – Deputy Director for Education
Relevant Cabinet Member	Councillor Amy Tisi – Cabinet Member for Children’s Services, Education and Windsor
Purpose of the Review <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Specify exactly which Outcome(s) the review is examining? • Also being clear what the review is not looking at • What is the Scrutiny Review seeking to achieve? • Where possible refer to VFM issues of service cost, service performance and/or customer satisfaction. 	<p>The RBWM Corporate Plan has a target that:</p> <p>"At least 95% of the borough’s education settings are judged to be Good or Outstanding".</p> <p>This refers in the first instance to schools and other educational establishments - home education is too niche a topic to be addressed directly in the Corporate Plan. However, the same general principle can be inferred to apply to the home education setting and where the council has the capability, it should work towards helping parents achieve the home education analogy of 'good' or 'outstanding' education settings.</p> <p>Parents have the legal right to choose to educate their children other than by attendance at school, usually by providing</p>

	<p>education at home. In cases where a child is withdrawn from school, the Home Education team in the Education Welfare Service will then make initial contact with the family. AfC are committed to building trusting, positive relationships with parents.</p> <p>In other cases, the decision to keep a child out of school may not be known to RBWM and therefore the same level of support might not be provided.</p> <p>A review of the current situation would have two primary purposes, both focussed on supporting the best educational outcomes for children:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Understanding where AfC can offer useful low-cost assistance, beyond building trusting, positive relationships with parents. • Enabling the borough to intervene in cases where a home educated child is not receiving suitable education and AfC are currently unaware. <p>The review is not looking at the moral, legal, ethical or educational case for elective home education. It is assumed that choice and diversity are inherently a good thing and the balance of pros and cons are best weighed up by individual parents as the law provides.</p>
<p>Criteria for Selection</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Why has this particular topic been considered to be a priority issue for scrutiny? • Which of the criteria promoted by the Centre for Governance and Scrutiny does it satisfy? 	<p>Four core principles have been established (by the Centre for Governance and Scrutiny) to help people understand the most important qualities of scrutiny and accountability;</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Constructive ‘critical friend’ challenge 2. Amplifies the voices and concerns of the public 3. Led by independent people who take responsibility for their role.

	<p>4. Drives improvement in public services</p> <p>This review will look to amplify the voices and concerns of the public by ensuring that there is adequate provision and support in place for those children in the borough who are home educated.</p> <p>The review will also look to drive improvement in public services, as parents could be supported with access to school exam halls or gym facilities.</p>
Terms of Reference	A report could be considered by the Panel outlining the support and options available to parents who choose to home educate their children. The Panel would then have the opportunity to speak to officers and satisfy themselves that the council provides a comprehensive support package. Should gaps or areas of improvement be identified, recommendations can be made to Cabinet.
<p>What are the anticipated outcomes of the review?</p> <p>Key Lines of Enquiry</p> <p>Sources of Information/Evidence</p> <p>What factors / outcomes will demonstrate that this Scrutiny Review has been a success?</p>	<p>Goals of the review:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Suggest ways to improve the data we collect on elective home education within the borough. • Suggest ways in which we can affordably assist with the education of home-educated children in the borough.
<p>Resource & budget requirements;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • specialist staff • any external support • site visits • consultation • research 	<p>None identified.</p> <p>Officer time and resource in preparing a report.</p>
<p>Corporate Risks associated with this Review?</p> <p>Identify any weaknesses and barriers to success</p>	None identified.
Who will receive the review conclusions and any resultant recommendations?	Cabinet

<p>What is the Review Timescale? • Identify key meeting dates and any deadlines for reports, recommendations or decisions.</p>	<p>Scoping document agreed by the Panel.</p> <p>Item considered by People Overview and Scrutiny Panel.</p> <p>Recommendations made to the Cabinet Member following consideration of the item.</p>
<p>How could a review be publicised?</p> <p>Do we need to publicise the review to encourage community involvement? • What sort of media coverage do we want? (e.g. Flyers, leaflets, radio broadcast, press release, etc.)</p>	<p>Review could be publicised through social media and the newsletter, residents with experience of home education could share their experience with the Panel and provide first hand evidence.</p>
<p>Completed by/ Date:</p>	
<p>Approved by Scrutiny Panel / Date:</p>	<p>People Overview and Scrutiny Panel – October 2023</p>

Royal Borough of Windsor and Maidenhead

Overview and Scrutiny Panels

Scrutiny Review – Scoping and Planning Document

Title of the Review	How does the council provide support to children with Special Education Needs or Disabilities (SEND)
Panel Name	People Overview and Scrutiny Panel
Panel Members	Councillors Helen Taylor (Chair), Devon Davies (Vice Chair), Mandy Brar, Suzanne Cross, Carole Da Costa, Jack Douglas, Genevieve Gosling, George Shaw and John Story
Support Officer(s)	
Lead Member(s)/Officer(s) Identify a nominated: - Elected Member - Lead Officer	Councillor Mandy Brar Councillor Devon Davies
Relevant Cabinet Member	Councillor Amy Tisi – Cabinet Member for Children’s Services, Education and Windsor
Purpose of the Review <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Specify exactly which Outcome(s) the review is examining? • Also being clear what the review is not looking at • What is the Scrutiny Review seeking to achieve? • Where possible refer to VFM issues of service cost, service performance and/or customer satisfaction. 	<p>There are a couple of goals in the RBWM Corporate Plan relating to children:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensure that every child in the borough is able to experience positive outcomes in childhood, through healthy living, readiness to learn, and positive parenting, and support targeted at those most at risk. • An increase in the attainment ranking for Children in Care, Special Educational Needs and Disability (SEND) and children eligible for Free School Meals (FSM) in GCSE English and Maths. <p>These goals show that the borough wants to ensure that all children are able to thrive and achieve their potential. However,</p>

	<p>children with SEND and EHCPs require additional support from the council and schools.</p> <p>This review will look to consider:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How does RBWM currently use limited resources to achieve good outcomes for children with SEND? • Does the SEND Local Offer match the needs and difficulties faced by SEND children in the borough? • Are we reaching out to all residents to ensure that they know of the support available? • Are the parents, as well as the children, being supported appropriately? • How prepared is the council for future demand and strain on the service? • What improvements can be made to ensure that the support offer compliments the needs of SEND children in the borough?
<p>Criteria for Selection</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Why has this particular topic been considered to be a priority issue for scrutiny? • Which of the criteria promoted by the Centre for Governance and Scrutiny does it satisfy? 	<p>Nationally, the number of children with SEND has increased and this has placed greater pressure on local authorities. The attainment gap between children with SEND and other children has increased, particularly over the course of the pandemic.</p> <p>The review will look to consider the range of support on offer for SEND children and whether there is data to confirm if all groups are being reached. Key performance indicators and metrics around attainment can be used by the Panel to assert whether support is helping to shorten the gap.</p>
<p>Terms of Reference</p>	<p>Single scrutiny item considered by the Panel. The report and SEND strategy can be reviewed and following discussion next steps can be confirmed.</p>

<p>What are the anticipated outcomes of the review?</p> <p>Key Lines of Enquiry</p> <p>Sources of Information/Evidence</p> <p>What factors / outcomes will demonstrate that this Scrutiny Review has been a success?</p>	<p>Do the priorities in the SEND strategy match the needs and priorities of children?</p> <p>How are we measuring these priorities?</p> <p>What are the key performance targets for the SEND strategy and are we achieving these targets? If not, why?</p>
<p>Corporate Risks associated with this Review?</p> <p>Identify any weaknesses and barriers to success</p>	<p>Need to ensure that all discussions are kept generic and that individual cases are not discussed.</p>
<p>Who will receive the review conclusions and any resultant recommendations?</p>	<p>Panel can make relevant recommendations to officers on reviewing the support offer available. If necessary, recommendations on the SEND strategy can be made to Cabinet.</p>
<p>What is the Review Timescale? • Identify key meeting dates and any deadlines for reports, recommendations or decisions.</p>	<p>Agree scoping document.</p> <p>Item likely to be considered by the Panel later in the year.</p>
<p>How could a review be publicised?</p> <p>Do we need to publicise the review to encourage community involvement? • What sort of media coverage do we want? (e.g. Flyers, leaflets, radio broadcast, press release, etc.)</p>	<p>Through social media and newsletters.</p> <p>The Panel could appeal for parents of children with SEND to speak at a Panel meeting and share their experience.</p> <p>SENCO leads in schools, headteachers and governors would also be good sources of information for the review and could be invited as witnesses to the Panel meeting.</p>
<p>Completed by/ Date:</p>	<p>Councillor Mandy Brar</p> <p>Councillor Devon Davies</p> <p>Mark Beeley</p>
<p>Approved by Scrutiny Panel / Date:</p>	<p>People Overview and Scrutiny Panel – October 2023</p>

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