

Individual Decision

The attached report will be taken as an
Individual Portfolio Member Decision on:

Wednesday 13 July 2016

Ref:	Title	Portfolio Member	Page No.
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Individual Executive Member Decision

Alternative Provision: Joint Strategic Review of Pupil Referral Unit Service

Committee considering report:

Individual Executive Member Decision on 13 July 2016

Portfolio Member:

Councillor Dominic Boeck

Forward Plan Ref:

ID3062

1. Purpose of the Report

- 1.1 To seek approval to consult on the Alternative Provision: Education Plan for young people with additional needs, which has emerged from the Joint Strategic Review of the Pupil Referral Unit Service (PRUS).

2. Recommendation

- 2.1 To approve the Consultation Document and process.

3. Implications

3.1	Financial:	Alternative Provision is funded from the High Needs DSG funding block. DSG funding is ring fenced, and cannot be used for any other purpose than that set out in the School Finance Regulations. Savings from this proposal will be retained within the high needs block, which will help alleviate the overall funding pressures in this block. The proposal will impact on staffing structures, and redundancy/severance costs could fall on the Council if they were not able to be funded within the current PRUS budgets.
3.2	Policy:	None
3.3	Personnel:	The proposal will result in a reduction in the current service and budget, which will affect staffing structures. The impact of staff numbers/structures will not be determined until after the final design of the new Service is determined in December 2016. The timeline includes the formal processes for staff and Trades Union consultation, and there will be full consideration of role, job descriptions and line management structures as the project develops.
3.4	Legal:	The proposal to rationalise is a lawful one. The LA is responsible for arranging suitable full-time education for permanently excluded pupils, and for other pupils who – because of illness or other reasons – would not receive suitable education without such provision. Any school that is established and maintained by a local authority to enable it to discharge the above duty is to be known as a pupil referral unit. There is no requirement on LA to discharge

		<p>their duty by setting up a PRU – it can be by other means, for example it could be discharged by schools determining their own provision.</p> <p>There is secondary legislation in the form of Statutory Instruments concerning opening and closure of PRUs which will be followed.</p>
3.5	Risk Management:	Careful planning of the New PRU provision will ensure that vulnerable students are appropriately catered for.
3.6	Property:	The proposals could lead to 2 of the existing PRU buildings no longer being used for that purpose. The Council's Asset Management Group will need to consider whether there are suitable alternative uses within the Council for any of these buildings. No capital receipts are predicted as a consequence of the reorganisation proposal, though vacating Riverside and Moorside may create accommodation opportunities for other services and the communities they are located within. We will retain provision in the East of the District. This could be at Badgers Hill (under lease from the Tilehurst Parish Council) or we could explore alternative accommodation in the East. Assuming the PRU in the East is retained and/or replaced, this remains an unfunded pressure within the Education Capital Programme. The same would apply if there were a decision in the future to consolidate all provision onto a single site.
3.7	Other:	

4. Consultation Responses

Members:	
Leader of Council:	Councillor Roger Croft
Overview & Scrutiny Management Commission Chairman:	Councillor Emma Webster
Ward Members:	All Members
Opposition Spokesperson:	Councillor Mollie Lock
Local Stakeholders:	Initial discussion with staff
Officers Consulted:	Rachael Wardell (Director) Ian Pearson (Head of Education), Cathy Burnham (Service Manager), Claire White (Finance), Gabrielle Esplin and Richard Turner (Capital/Property), Leigh Hogan (Legal) and Abi Witting (HR).
Trade Union:	

5. Other options considered

- 5.1 We considered leaving the PRU Service unchanged, but this was not financially sustainable in the current climate.
- 5.2 We considered passing all of the funding to schools to deliver Alternative Provision themselves, which would have removed the Council-maintained Pupil Referral Unit Service (PRUS), and relied on the use of alternative provision providers from a range of sources. However, we felt this would not provide the best arrangement for West Berkshire students. This was also the view expressed during the pre-consultation exercise with secondary Headteachers in Summer 2015, although not all Headteachers responded. The final proposal encompasses the aspects of the alternative provision service which are important to Headteachers.

6. Introduction/Background

- 6.1 A Joint Strategic Review was established in November 2014 to determine the future of Alternative Provision in West Berkshire. The Joint Strategic Review group includes Councillors, mainstream school representatives, Council Officers, the two Headteachers from the current PRUS and the Chair and Vice Chair of the PRUS Management Committee.
- 6.2 A pre-consultation exercise was undertaken with secondary Headteachers in Summer 2015. Subsequent to this, a formal project timeline was created, taking account of the statutory requirements which apply to making prescribed changes to schools. The implementation date is scheduled for September 2017.
- 6.3 In developing the Consultation Plan, we have built on the good work that our existing PRUS is doing. The PRUS is split into two services, known as the Alternative Curriculum Service and the Reintegration Service. Both are rated "Good" by Ofsted.
- 6.4 Like many councils, we have to make difficult decisions about how we spend money. The Schools Forum plays a key role in determining how alternative provision is funded. We can no longer afford to deliver Alternative Provision in the same way. We have explored how we could deliver education to vulnerable pupils differently.
- 6.5 Following informal consultation with schools in Summer 2015 and discussions with the Joint Strategic Review group, we have finalised the Education Plan for alternative provision for young people with additional needs. We will:
 - Work in partnership with schools, and schools will work in partnership with each other, to integrate education for students with additional needs
 - Ensure there is sufficient provision for those students who cannot attend mainstream school.
 - Secure provision for those students that the Council may become responsible for – either because they are permanently excluded from school or to avoid them being permanently excluded. We will consolidate the current arrangement of 2 schools and 6 sites, into a single Alternative Education Provision Service (AEPS).

- We're committed to enabling every child and young person in West Berkshire to have the best start in life and the AEPS is a key part of our approach to delivering that commitment. The Plan outlines how the proposal will contribute to improving outcomes for young people in some detail. The AEPS will comprise a single school, with a single Headteacher, delivering the service on 4 sites.

6.6 The Plan is built around:

- Extending the delivery of Alternative Provision by working in partnership with schools and building on their strengths and assets. Some vulnerable students will access Alternative Provision at their mainstream school, rather than on an AEPS site.
- Delivering a range of positive outcomes through reshaping the service and working with schools to identify strengths and assets which can be developed to provide local solutions for local children.
- Delivering a financially sustainable model for the future by reducing the proportion of the budget spent on running buildings and reducing management, staffing and administration costs by removing duplication and integrating service delivery.

7. Consultation Document

7.1 The Consultation Document *Alternative Provision for young people with additional needs*:

- Explains the Local Landscape in West Berkshire in relation to vulnerable students
- Identifies the creation of a new Service called Alternative Education Provision Service (AEPS), drawing on the current PRUS, but with a re-designed infrastructure.
- Outlines the current capacity of 84 places (Primary (12), Secondary (60) and Post-16 (12)). The proposed new capacity is 60 places (Primary (12), Secondary (36) and Post-16 (12)). Alternative provision will be enhanced, outside of the work of the AEPS, by the development of new provision within mainstream schools. The aim is to share expertise across the system and to identify the right placements to meet individual pupils' needs.
- Encourages early intervention to reduce the need for alternative provision and plans a flexible, expandable model, which can adapt to the highs and lows of demand, and can offer a variety of provision.
- Reduces the number of sites from 6 to 4, de-commissioning the provision at Riverside Community Centre and Moorside Community Centre. These are 'community' buildings and we will consider the most appropriate use for the buildings going forwards, in discussion with the relevant community.
- Focuses on personalised time-tabling for students, combining on-site and off-site activities. Careful planning of the AEPS provision will ensure that vulnerable students are appropriately catered for.
- Clear accountability of the AEPS to a Management Committee.

- 7.2 Government plans may have an impact over time. The detail of the national position is still emerging. It appears that the government's direction of travel is in line with our future plans. This approach tracks with the government's White Paper, published in March 2016, which explains that, in the future:

We [the Government] will change accountability arrangements so that a pupil's mainstream school will retain accountability for their educational outcomes and will take a lead role in commissioning their provision, including when they have permanently excluded the pupil. As they [schools] will also be responsible for commissioning and accountable for educational outcomes, they will have stronger incentives to take preventative approaches and achieve value for money when identifying the best and most suitable provision for any child that needs it.

- 7.3 The funding mechanisms may change but the overall structure we are planning seems fit for purpose going forward. Relevant background papers are:
- Education Excellence Everywhere – Department for Education, March 2016
 - High Needs Funding Reform – Department for Education, March 2016
 - Schools National Funding Reform – Department for Education, March 2016
- 7.4 The proposed approach will not compromise outcomes for children, particularly the most disadvantaged, as services will be linked to local need, and we will work with schools to identify strengths and assets which can be developed to provide local solutions for local children.

8. Consultation Timeline

Consultation Timescales	Dates
Statutory Consultation (public)	July – October 2016
Statutory Representation period (public)	October – November 2016
Council Decision	January 2017
Formal Consultation with Staff and Trades Unions	January – March 2017
Implementation Plan approved, including any outcomes of competitive appointment process, and formal notice provided to staff	May 2017

9. Financial Implications

- 9.1 The AEPS would determine staffing structures / contracts based on what is affordable within their budget, in the same way as other schools do.
- 9.2 The AEPS will determine teaching and learning provision, based on the needs of the student. Flexible provision and Outreach will be tailored to meet the needs of schools.

- 9.3 We have looked at the current levels of income and expenditure and built a cost model for the AEPS. There will be a saving between the cost model for the current PRUS and the proposed AEPS. The savings are delivered by scaling down the size of the Service (from 84 to 60 students, and from 6 to 4 sites); by delivering efficiencies in costs across budget lines, including staffing reductions; and by removing the Council subsidy on the cost of a place.
- 9.4 As a result of being able to reduce charges payable by commissioners (Council or school), and the Council no longer subsidising placements commissioned directly by schools, there will be a saving to the Council's High Needs Block, which will help reduce the pressure in this block. The likely savings are shown in Table 1 below, with further information in Appendix B.

Table 1

SUMMARY OF SAVINGS: Current PRU compared to new AEPS	
Estimated annual expenditure compared to 2015/16 actual will go down by:	£1,138,878
Annual Top Up charge paid by the commissioner of the place (the Council, a school) will go down by:	£4,418
Which is a reduction in the daily rate of:	£23
The estimated saving to the Central Schools High Needs Budget will be:	£819,913
Schools commissioning places may (between them) be expected to pay annually an additional:	£196,086
<i>(there will no longer be a subsidy from the LA)</i>	

- 9.5 The proposal will rationalise our provision whilst ensuring that our statutory responsibilities are met. This will deliver efficiency savings and create a financially sustainable model of provision.

10. Proposals

- 10.1 It is recommended that the Consultation document is approved for public consultation.

11. Conclusion

- 11.1 It is recommended that permission to consult is granted.

12. Consultation and Engagement

- 12.1 This report has been commented on by Councillor Dominic Boeck, Rachael Wardell (Communities Director), Ian Pearson (Head of Education), Cathy Burnham (Service Manager), Abi Witting (HR), Claire White (Finance), Rachel Craggs (Equalities) and Leigh Hogan (Legal).

13. Conclusion

- 13.1 Following the public consultation of the proposed changes, the consultation responses will be considered. A final Education Plan for Alternative Provision will be brought forward for formal determination in December 2016.

14. Appendices

- Appendix A – Equalities Impact Assessment – Stage 1
 - Appendix B – Equalities Impact Assessment – Stage 2
 - Appendix C - Comparison of Cost, Charges, and Income
 - Appendix D – Consultation Document
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Background Papers:

1. Education Excellence Everywhere – Department for Education, March 2016
2. High Needs Funding Reform – Department for Education, March 2016
3. Schools National Funding Reform – Department for Education, March 2016

Subject to Call-In:

Yes

The item is due to be referred to Council for final approval ☐

Delays in implementation could have serious financial implications for the Council ☐

Delays in implementation could compromise the Council's position ☐

Considered or reviewed by Overview and Scrutiny Management Commission or associated Task Groups within preceding six months ☐

Item is Urgent Key Decision ☐

Report is to note only ☐

Wards affected: All

Strategic Aims and Priorities Supported:

The proposals will help achieve the following Council Strategy aim:

☒ **MEC – Become an even more effective Council**

The proposals contained in this report will help to achieve the following Council Strategy priority:

☒ **MEC1 – Become an even more effective Council**

Officer details:

Name: Caroline Corcoran

Job Title: Service Manager

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E-mail Address: caroline.corcoran@westberks.gov.uk

Appendix A

Equality Impact Assessment - Stage One

Name of policy, strategy or function:	Alternative Provision for young people with additional needs – Education Plan
Owner of item being assessed:	Caroline Corcoran
Name of assessor:	Caroline Corcoran
Date of assessment:	3/5/16

Is this a:		Is this:	
Policy	No	New or proposed	Yes
Strategy	Yes	Already exists and is being reviewed	Yes
Function	No	Is changing	Yes
Service	Yes		

1 What are the main aims, objectives and intended outcomes of the policy, strategy function or service and who is likely to benefit from it?	
Aims:	To re-design alternative provision, maintaining a focus on quality of delivery and the needs of the young person, whilst delivering a financially sustainable model for the future. We are re-shaping the service to meet a complex range of policy, financial and operational challenges, including changes to the funding framework, and to develop a delivery model more able to meet the requirements of schools
Objectives:	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Extending the delivery of Alternative Provision by working in partnership with schools and building on their strengths and assets. Some vulnerable students will access Alternative Provision at their mainstream school, rather than on an AEPS site. 2. Delivering a range of positive outcomes through reshaping the service and working with schools to identify strengths and assets which can be developed to provide local solutions for local children. 3. Delivering a financially sustainable model for the future by reducing the proportion of the budget spent on running buildings and reducing management, staffing and administration costs by removing duplication and integrating service delivery.

Outcomes:	<p>We want to better integrate mainstream schools, special schools and alternative education provision, including PRUs and independent provision, to share expertise across the system and to identify the right placements to meet individual pupils' needs. Some will remain in mainstream school, some will go to special schools and others may be permanently excluded and placed in a PRU or independent alternative provision.</p> <p>We will ensure that there is sufficient provision within West Berkshire for those students who need additional help and support.</p> <p>The Plan will not compromise outcomes for young people, particularly the most disadvantaged, as services will be linked to local need.</p> <p>We will work with schools to identify strengths and assets which can be developed to provide local solutions for local children.</p>
Benefits:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Greater opportunities for schools to be leaders and partners in the designing and commissioning of alternative provision • A greater focus on preventative work in primary schools and transition work between primary and secondary schools, with access to a wider range of support to address behavioural, social and mental health issues. • A continued emphasis on the importance of mainstream school attendance and reintegration wherever possible • Closer partnership working between schools on behaviour and vulnerability issues, supported by a skilled workforce. • The ability to maintain the important focus on full-time education for students.

2 Note which groups may be affected by the policy, strategy, function or service. Consider how they may be affected, whether it is positively or negatively and what sources of information have been used to determine this.

Group Affected	What might be the effect?	Information to support this
Age	<p>The current PRUS provides alternative provision for primary, secondary and post-16 students. The coverage across the age spectrum is retained in the proposed AEPS</p> <p>Positive Effect</p> <p>The number of places for secondary students is reduced.</p> <p>Potential for negative effect</p>	<p>West Berkshire Council is currently responsible for arranging suitable full-time education for permanently excluded pupils, and for other pupils who – because of illness or other reasons – would not receive suitable education without such provision. This applies to all children of compulsory school age (5-16) resident in West Berkshire.</p>
Disability	<p>The proposal recognises the Council's responsibilities and has specifically retained a guaranteed number of places (Reserved Quota) for Looked After Children or young people with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities and those in other vulnerable groups.</p> <p>The proposal also makes provision for the Council to purchase additional places above the Reserved Quota if needed. In addition, by working with mainstream schools and other providers, the Council could procure alternative provision outside of AEPS if this was the right solution for an individual student.</p> <p>The Council has stated its commitment to enable students to learn in the setting that best suits them, making sure the young person is at the centre of</p>	<p>West Berkshire Council is currently responsible for arranging suitable full-time education for permanently excluded pupils, and for other pupils who – because of illness or other reasons – would not receive suitable education without such provision. This applies to all children of compulsory school age (5-16) resident in West Berkshire.</p> <p>When a student receives a fixed-term exclusion of more than five days or a permanent exclusion, the school (in the case of fixed-term exclusion) and the local authority (in the case of a</p>

	everything we do. The right setting might be mainstream school, special school or alternative education provision, or a combination of these.	permanent exclusion) must provide alternative education for the student from the sixth day. We provide this more quickly for Looked After Children or young people with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities and those in other vulnerable groups.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Gender Re-assignment - Marriage and Civil Partnership - Pregnancy and Maternity - Race - Religion and Belief - Sex - Sexual Orientation 	This may be a factor for an individual student, and would be covered by the commitment to enable students to learn in the setting that best suits them, making sure the young person is at the centre of everything we do.	
Further Comments relating to the item:		
3 Result		
Are there any aspects of the policy, strategy, function or service, including how it is delivered or accessed, that could contribute to inequality?		Yes
Please provide an explanation for your answer: The focus of the proposal is on considering the individual needs of the student, and creating personalised timetabling and education provision to support their specific needs.		
Will the policy, strategy, function or service have an adverse impact upon the lives of people, including employees and service users?		Yes
Please provide an explanation for your answer: The proposal will affect employees in terms of a future staff re-structuring. However, at this stage, we are just beginning the consultation process, and the Plan may change and evolve over time, as it is influenced by feedback. Therefore, there is no direct impact at this point in the process for staff. Before a formal decision on the final Plan is made, there will be a further corporate paper with a revised EIA.		

If your answers to question 2 have identified potential adverse impacts and you have answered 'yes' to either of the sections at question 3, or you are unsure about the impact, then you should carry out a Stage 2 Equality Impact Assessment.

If a Stage Two Equality Impact Assessment is required, before proceeding you should discuss the scope of the Assessment with service managers in your area. You will also need to refer to the Equality Impact Assessment guidance and Stage Two template.

4 Identify next steps as appropriate:	
Stage Two required	Yes
Owner of Stage Two assessment:	Caroline Corcoran
Timescale for Stage Two assessment:	6/5/2016
Stage Two not required:	

Name: Caroline Corcoran

Date: 3/5/16

Please now forward this completed form to Rachel Craggs, the Principal Policy Officer (Equality and Diversity) for publication on the WBC website.

Appendix B

Equality Impact Assessment Template – Stage Two

Please complete this template if completion of the Stage 1 template has identified that a full Equality Impact Assessment (EIA) is required.

Before proceeding with this EIA, you should discuss the scope of the analysis with service managers in your area and you will need to refer to the equality impact assessment guidance. A couple of examples of Stage 2 EIAs are provided as an appendix to the guidance.

Name of item being assessed:	Alternative Provision for young people with additional needs – Education Plan
Version and release date of item (if applicable):	
Budget Holder for item being assessed:	
Name of assessor:	Caroline Corcoran
Name of Service & Directorate	Education, Communities
Date of assessment:	06/05/2016
Date Stage 1 EIA completed:	03/05/16

Any actions identified whilst completing this EIA should be recorded in the Action Plan at Step 7.

STEP 1 – Scoping the Equality Impact Assessment

1. What data, research and other evidence or information is available which will be relevant to this Equality Analysis? Please tick all that apply.			
Service Targets		Performance Targets	
User Satisfaction		Service Take-up	x
Workforce Monitoring		Press Coverage	
Complaints & Comments		Census Data	
Information from Trade Union		Community Intelligence	
Previous Equality Impact Analysis		Staff Survey	
Public Consultation		Other (please specify)	
		• Ofsted Inspection	x
		• White Paper	x
		• LCSB Audit	x

<p>2. Please summarise the findings from the available evidence for the areas you have ticked above.</p>
<p>The PRUS is audited by Ofsted and both schools within the PRUS are judged to be Good. The PRUS is well-used by West Berkshire schools.</p> <p>Statutory guidance explains what good alternative provision must look like and the proposals take account of these expectations.</p> <p>The proposals track with the aspirations of the government White Paper - Educational Excellence Everywhere (Department for Education, White Paper, March 2016).</p> <p>In December 2015 West Berkshire LSCB Board conducted a multi-professional audit of school exclusions in West Berkshire occurring during the period September 2015 and December 2015. There was an excellent range of partner agency contributions. The audit recognised the value that alternative provision provided, and also made recommendations on how the service could be further developed to meet the needs of schools and young people. The findings of the audit are in line with the direction of travel outlined in the Alternative Provision Education Plan.</p>
<p>3. If you have identified any gaps in the evidence provided above, please detail what additional research or data is required to fill these gaps? Have you considered commissioning new data or research eg a needs assessment?</p> <p>If 'No' please proceed to Step 2.</p>
<p>In developing the proposals, we also undertook research to look at what other Councils had done in relation to alternative provision. This supported our considerations.</p>

STEP 2 – Involvement and Consultation

<p>1. Please outline below how the findings from the evidence summarised above when broken down, will affect people with the 9 protected characteristics. Where no evidence is available to suggest that there will be an impact on any specific group, please insert the following statement '<i>There is no evidence to indicate that there will be a greater impact on this group than on any other.</i>'</p>	
<p>Target Groups</p>	<p>Describe the type of evidence used, with a brief summary of the responses gained and links to relevant documents</p>
<p>Age – relates to all ages</p>	<p>West Berkshire Council is currently responsible for arranging suitable full-time education for permanently excluded pupils, and for other pupils who – because of illness or other reasons – would not receive suitable education without such provision. This applies to all children of compulsory school age (5-16) resident in West Berkshire.</p>

	<p>The current PRUS provides alternative provision for primary, secondary and post-16 students. The coverage across the age spectrum is retained in the proposed AEPS. Positive Effect</p> <p>The number of places for secondary students is reduced. Potential for a negative effect.</p> <p><u>Actions to mitigate impact</u></p> <p>We are working with schools to develop alternative provision in mainstream school settings, and also considering the use of other providers, where it is appropriate to do so. West Berkshire will have a broader range of provision to meet the varying needs of students.</p>
<p>Disability - applies to a range of people that have a condition (physical or mental) which has a significant and long-term adverse effect on their ability to carry out 'normal' day-to-day activities. This protection also applies to people that have been diagnosed with a progressive illness such as HIV or cancer.</p>	<p>West Berkshire Council is currently responsible for arranging suitable full-time education for permanently excluded pupils, and for other pupils who – because of illness or other reasons – would not receive suitable education without such provision. This applies to all children of compulsory school age (5-16) resident in West Berkshire. Positive Effect</p> <p>When a student receives a fixed-term exclusion of more than five days or a permanent exclusion, the school (in the case of fixed-term exclusion) and the local authority (in the case of a permanent exclusion) must provide alternative education for the student from the sixth day. We provide this more quickly for Looked After Children or young people with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities and those in other vulnerable groups. Positive Effect</p> <p>The Council's commitment to enable students to learn in the setting that best suits them, making sure the young person is at the centre of everything we do. The right setting might be mainstream school, special school or alternative education provision, or a combination. Positive Statement</p> <p>The number of places for secondary students is reduced. Potential for a negative effect.</p>

	<p><u>Actions to mitigate impact</u></p> <p>The proposal recognises the Council's responsibilities and has specifically retained a guaranteed number of places (Reserved Quota) for Looked After Children or young people with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities and those in other vulnerable groups.</p> <p>The proposal makes provision for the Council to purchase additional places above the Reserved Quota if needed.</p> <p>By working with mainstream schools and other providers, the Council could procure alternative provision outside of AEPS if this was the right solution for an individual student.</p> <p>The proposal recognises the role of secondary headteachers as commissioners of provision from a variety of providers.</p>
<p>Gender reassignment - definition has been expanded to include people who chose to live in the opposite gender to the gender assigned to them at birth by removing the previously legal requirement for them to undergo medical supervision.</p>	<p>This may be a factor for an individual student, and would be covered by the commitment to enable students to learn in the setting that best suits them, making sure the young person is at the centre of everything we do.</p>
<p>Marriage and Civil partnership –.protects employees who are married or in a civil partnership against discrimination. Single people are not protected.</p>	<p>This may be a factor for an individual student, and would be covered by the commitment to enable students to learn in the setting that best suits them, making sure the young person is at the centre of everything we do.</p>
<p>Pregnancy and Maternity - protects against discrimination. With regard to employment, the woman is protected during the period of her pregnancy and any statutory maternity leave to which she is entitled. It is also unlawful to discriminate against women breastfeeding in a public place</p>	<p>This may be a factor for an individual student, and would be covered by the commitment to enable students to learn in the setting that best suits them, making sure the young person is at the centre of everything we do.</p>
<p>Race - includes colour, caste, ethnic / national origin or nationality.</p>	<p>This may be a factor for an individual student, and would be covered by the commitment to enable students to learn in the setting that best suits them, making sure the young person is at the centre of everything we do.</p>

Religion and Belief - covers any religion, religious or non-religious beliefs. Also includes philosophical belief or non-belief. To be protected, a belief must satisfy various criteria, including that it is a weighty and substantial aspect of human life and behaviour.	This may be a factor for an individual student, and would be covered by the commitment to enable students to learn in the setting that best suits them, making sure the young person is at the centre of everything we do.
Sex - applies to male or female.	This may be a factor for an individual student, and would be covered by the commitment to enable students to learn in the setting that best suits them, making sure the young person is at the centre of everything we do.
Sexual Orientation - protects lesbian, gay, bi-sexual and heterosexual people.	This may be a factor for an individual student, and would be covered by the commitment to enable students to learn in the setting that best suits them, making sure the young person is at the centre of everything we do.

2. Who are the main stakeholders (eg service users, staff etc) and what are their requirements?
<p>The main stakeholders are young people aged 5-16 resident in West Berkshire. We also support some post-16 students. There is a clear focus on considering the individual needs of the student, and creating personalised timetabling and education provision to support their specific needs.</p> <p>Staff are another stakeholder group, as are parents/carers.</p>

3. How will this item affect the stakeholders identified above?
<p>Young people aged 5-16 and their parents/carers: The focus on the individual needs of the young person remains. This is not changing. However, the method of delivery a personalised timetable and education provision may change. This could be because:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • the provider is different (the provider could be AEPS, a school, another alternative provider), • the location is different (the location could be within a mainstream school, or on a different AEPS site, or at the location of an alternative provider). • The provision may be different (there are many approaches to support a young person. It is not one size fits all, and different providers may offer different personalised solutions). <p>Staff: The proposal will affect employees in terms of a future staff re-structuring. However, at this stage, we are just beginning the consultation process, and the Plan may change and evolve over time, as it is influenced by feedback. Therefore, there is no direct impact on staff at this point in the process.</p>

STEP 3 – Assessing Impact and Strengthening the Policy

What are the measures you will take to improve access to this item or to mitigate against adverse impact?

Young people aged 5-16: The focus will remain firmly on the needs of the young person, and any change will be evaluated (with remedial action or minor tweaking if necessary) to ensure that the young person's needs are met. Concentrating on personalisation of provision to the specific needs of a young person means that mitigation actions can be taken swiftly to minimise any potential impact that arises.

Staff: Before a formal decision on the final Plan is made, there will be a further corporate paper with a revised EIA and taking full account of the Council's Organisational Change process and procedure. HR advice is being provided throughout the process, with a dedicated HR Manager assigned to support the project.

STEP 4 – Procurement and Partnerships

Is this item due to be carried out wholly or partly by contractors?

Yes

If 'yes', will there be any additional requirements placed on the contractor? Have you done any work already to include equality considerations into the contract? You should set out how you will make sure that any partner you work with complies with equality legislation.

If it is in a young person's best interests for the Council to procure alternative provision from another provider, this would be done under our current procurement rules and would be subject to the Council's legal contract, which include equalities requirements.

STEP 5 – Making a Decision

Summarise your findings and make a clear statement of the recommendation being made as a result of the assessment. This will need to take into account whether the Council will still meet its responsibilities under the Equality Duty.

The focus of the review, and the high-level principles which are the subject of the consultation are fit for purpose and chime with the direction of travel outlined by the government, the statutory requirements and the local expectations of those commissioning the service. The Council will still meet its responsibilities under the Equality Duty if it adopts the principles in the proposal.

A further Stage 2 EqlA will be written and considered when the final design of the future Service has been determined following a significant period of public consultation. This will take account of any equalities concerns which have been raised during the consultation, and any which have been subsequently identified within the Council.

STEP 6 – Monitoring, Evaluating and Reviewing

Before finalising your action plan, you must identify how you will monitor this item following the Equality Impact Assessment and include any changes of proposals you are making.

Once the change has taken place, how will you monitor the impact on the 9 protected characteristics?

At this stage we are consulting on high-level principles, which will underpin the future operational delivery model. A further Stage 2 EqIA will be written and considered when the final design of the future Service has been determined following a significant period of public consultation. This will take account of any equality concerns which have been raised during the consultation, and any which have been subsequently identified within the Council.

STEP 7 – Action Plan

Any actions identified as an outcome of going through Steps 1-6 should be mapped against the headings within the Action Plan. You should also summarise actions taken to mitigate against adverse impact.

	Actions	Target Date	Responsible Person
Involvement & consultation	Internal consultation Statutory Public consultation Statutory Public representation period Corporate decision-making process, including consideration of Consultation Report and findings	May 2016 6 July – 30 September 2016 12 October – 9 November 2016 22 November – 22 December 2016	Caroline Corcoran
Data collection	Consultation Report – see above		Caroline Corcoran
Assessing impact	Consultation Report – see above		Caroline Corcoran
Monitoring, evaluation and reviewing	The proposal will be reviewed in light of responses from the consultations at 3 key points, and the proposals be influenced by/change as a result.	1-11 October 10-21 November By Executive on 22 December	Caroline Corcoran Caroline Corcoran Caroline Corcoran

STEP 8 – Sign Off

The policy, strategy or function has been fully assessed in relation to its potential effects on equality and all relevant concerns have been addressed.

Contributors to the Assessment		
Name: Caroline Corcoran	Job Title: Service Manager (Access, Planning and Trading)	Date: 06/05/2016

Head of Service (sign off)		
Name: Ian Pearson	Job Title: Head of Education	Date: 06/05/2016

Please email a copy of the EIA to Rachel Craggs, Principal Policy Officer (Equality & Diversity:
Rachel.craggs@westberks.gov.uk)

Appendix C

Key: AC: Alternative Curriculum RS: Reintegration Service

Comparison of Cost, Charges & Income

	CURRENT PRU 2015/16 ACTUAL			NEW PRU (AEPS)	CHANGE
	RS	AC	Total		
No. of Places	36	48	84	60	-24
Cost Per Place	£35,005	£26,907	£30,377	£23,547	-£6,830
Cost Per Place net of Place Funding	£25,005	£16,907	£20,377	£13,547	-£6,830
Annual Top Up Charge Per Place	£19,618	£19,618	£19,618	£15,200	-£4,418
Daily Rate to Charge Per Place	£103	£103	£103	£80	-£23
Total Expenditure	£1,260,169	£1,291,529	£2,551,698	£1,412,820	-£1,138,878
Income:					
Total Place Funding	£360,000	£480,000	£840,000	£600,000	-£240,000
Total Paid by WBC (High Needs Block)	£439,834	£836,079	£1,275,913	£456,000	-£819,913
Total Paid by Schools	£93,714	£75,000	£168,714	£364,800	£196,086
Outreach paid by WBC	£117,000		£117,000		-£117,000
Other Funding received by PRUs	£16,616	£13,681	£30,297		-£30,297
Total Income	£1,027,164	£1,404,760	£2,431,924	£1,420,800	-£1,011,124
In Year Surplus/(Deficit)	-£233,005	£113,231	-£119,774	£7,980	£127,754
Average Number of Places Commissioned	27	46	74	54	
Occupancy	75.5%	96.8%	87.7%	90.0%	

Consultation Document

Alternative provision for young people
with additional needs

Education Plan



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INTRODUCTION

Background

1. Some young people resist or are simply not suited to universal educational opportunities and find themselves marginalised from conventional schools. Some are permanently excluded; others simply disengage. Many have Special Educational Needs and Disabilities; some have social, emotional and mental health difficulties; others have challenging home circumstances. Some or all of these difficulties create barriers to accessing mainstream school.
2. West Berkshire Council and its schools are committed to taking collective responsibility for these students, working in partnership to enable students to learn in the setting that best suits them, making sure we keep the young person at the centre of everything we do. The right setting might be mainstream school, special school or alternative education provision, or a combination of these.
3. Making provision for such learners is challenging as each student requires different approaches at different times. All pupils should be helped and encouraged to achieve or exceed the standards of a good education.

Why do things need to change?

4. Like many councils, we have to make difficult decisions about how we spend money. The Schools Forum plays a key role in determining how alternative provision is funded. We can no longer afford to deliver Alternative Provision in the same way. We have explored how we could deliver education to vulnerable pupils differently.
5. We are proposing to change the way we deliver Alternative Provision in West Berkshire. Alternative Provision is currently delivered through the Pupil Referral Unit Service (PRUS).
6. We have built on the good work that our existing PRUS is doing. The PRUS is split into two services, known as the Alternative Curriculum Service and the Reintegration Service. Both are rated “Good” by Ofsted. (See Appendix A).

7. At a high level, we are consulting on a strategic proposal to:
- Prioritise our resources where we will make the biggest difference to vulnerable pupils/students.
 - Extend the delivery of Alternative Provision by working in partnership with schools and building on their strengths and assets.
 - Contribute to improving the outcomes explained in paragraph 16.
 - Revise the membership and structure of the Management Committee which governs and monitors the Service which delivers alternative education provision.
8. We will not work on the detailed operational plans for the new Service until after a final decision has been made about the strategic direction. This is because the proposal may change as a result of the consultation, and a final strategic decision will not be made until January 2017.

What is Alternative Provision?

9. West Berkshire Council is currently responsible for arranging suitable full-time education for permanently excluded pupils, and for other pupils who – because of illness or other reasons – would not receive suitable education without such provision. This applies to all children of compulsory school age (5-16) resident in West Berkshire. This is called Alternative Provision.
10. When a student receives a fixed-term exclusion of more than five days or a permanent exclusion, the school (in the case of fixed-term exclusion) and the local authority (in the case of a permanent exclusion) must provide alternative education for the student from the sixth day. We provide this more quickly for Looked After Children or young people with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities and those in other vulnerable groups.
11. Statutory guidance¹ says good alternative provision includes:
- Good academic attainment on par with mainstream schools –particularly in English, Maths and science (including IT) – with appropriate accreditation and qualifications.
 - That the specific personal, social and academic needs of pupils are properly identified and met in order to help them overcome any barriers to attainment.
 - Improved pupil motivation and self-confidence, attendance and engagement with education.
 - Clearly defined objectives, including next steps following the placement such as reintegration into mainstream education, further education, training or employment.

¹ Alternative Provision – Statutory guidance for local authorities, January 2013

Who contributed to this review?

12. A Joint Strategic Review was established to determine the future of Alternative Provision in West Berkshire. The Joint Strategic Review group includes Councillors, mainstream school representatives, Council Officers, the two Headteachers from the current PRUS and the Chair and Vice Chair of the PRUS Management Committee.

What is the Plan about?

13. Following informal consultation with schools and discussions with the Joint Strategic Review group, we have finalised the plan:
1. We will work in partnership with schools, and schools will work in partnership with each other, to integrate education for students with additional needs.
 2. We will ensure there is sufficient provision for those students who cannot attend mainstream school.
 3. We will secure provision for those students that the Council may become responsible for – either because they are permanently excluded from school or to avoid them being permanently excluded. This will be achieved by creating a single Alternative Education Provision Service (AEPS).
14. We're committed to enabling every child and young person in West Berkshire to have the best start in life and the AEPS is a key part of our approach to delivering that commitment.
15. The plan is built around:
- Extending the delivery of Alternative Provision by working in partnership with schools and building on their strengths and assets. Some vulnerable students will access Alternative Provision at their mainstream school, rather than on an AEPS site. We anticipate that most, if not all, secondary schools will develop some form of alternative provision.
 - Delivering a range of positive outcomes through reshaping the service and working with schools to identify strengths and assets which can be developed to provide local solutions for local children.
 - Reducing the number of students that will be accommodated on AEPS sites.
 - Reducing the proportion of the budget spent on running buildings.
 - Reducing management, staffing and administration costs by removing duplication and integrating service delivery. The current PRUS comprises 2 schools, each with a Headteacher, delivering the service on 6 sites. The AEPS will comprise a single school, with a single Headteacher, delivering the service on 4 sites.

16. The plan will contribute to the Council's strategic priorities and to improving the outcomes set out below:

Strategic outcomes	Outcomes for children and young people
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reduction in (or eliminate) permanent exclusion at key stages 3 & 4. • Increase attendance. • Improve achievement of academic and vocational qualifications. • Reduce gap in achievement for children in care. • Reduction in pupils missing education. • Reduction in young people not in education, employment or training. • Reduction in substance misuse. • Reduction in offending and anti-social behaviour. • Reduction in teenage pregnancy. • Reduction in child sexual exploitation. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Intervene and offer support early. • Improve attendance. • Improve engagement in learning. • Improve emotional health and well-being including resilience. • Progress in learning. • Attain academic and/or vocational qualifications. • Are kept safe and feel safe. • Successful pathway to follow-on provision • Improve social skills and life-skills. • Improve employability and progression opportunities.

17. There is a summary of the key points near the end of the document.

What is the shared vision for Alternative Provision?

18. The shared vision (agreed by the Joint Strategic Review) is to offer outstanding Alternative Provision in which each learner:

- *Achieves their highest possible educational outcomes.*
- *Develops a strong positive attitude.*
- *Makes the best possible positive contributions to the launch pad for their chosen future.*

19. *Our team of staff and governors, working collaboratively with our stakeholders, will provide a relevant and holistic curriculum, underpinned by strong leadership and teaching of the highest quality that inspires learners.* The full vision is at Appendix B.

What is the government's vision for Alternative Provision?²

20. The White paper states that [The Government's]...*vision is of a world-leading system of Alternative Provision where the best teachers work with the children who need them most. Mainstream school headteachers will commission expert provision for pupils with needs and behaviour that have become unmanageable within a mainstream setting. So that mainstream headteachers can commission the right services, local authorities will retain a role in ensuring sufficiency of Alternative Provision in their area...*
21. *Alternative Provision will meet defined needs including significant behavioural problems; complex medical or mental health conditions; and extreme vulnerability due to personal and social issues. We will expect the [Alternative Provision] AP provider to work with the mainstream school to put in place a tailored plan for each pupil to support them to achieve the high quality qualifications they need for adult life.*

² Educational Excellence Everywhere – Department for Education, White Paper, March 2016

THE CONSULTATION PROCESS

Why are we consulting?

22. Councils that are considering a significant change to the way they provide Alternative Provision have a duty to consult local people and other stakeholders. The plan we propose qualifies as 'significant change' and that is why we are consulting you.
23. This consultation is important as it will give us views from a wide cross-section of the local community, including families, staff and schools.
24. We fully understand that you may have strong opinions about the proposal. We are flexible, open to ideas and we welcome your thoughts. However, **alternative proposals must be affordable and sustainable, and must be able to generate the level of savings outlined in this proposal. The need to make savings as we move forward is non-negotiable.**
25. The consultation responses will help to inform the decision-making process and will be taken into account when reaching the final decision.

Who are we consulting with?

26. During this statutory consultation we are consulting with:
- Local families, parents and carers who use the current PRUS.
 - School staff and Governors.
 - PRUS staff, its' Management Committee and Trades Unions.
 - Councillors and MPs.
 - Staff in other West Berkshire Council services.
 - West Berkshire residents.

How to find out more

27. You can also ask questions by emailing us at educationconsultation@westberks.gov.uk. We will respond to you, and also regularly update FAQs on our website, during the consultation period.

How to have your say

28. Your opinions are important to us, and we are keen to know what you think of our proposals. We are also keen to hear alternative suggestions. You can let us know by completing the online questionnaire. The form is on the Council's "Have Your Say" webpage.

www.westberks.gov.uk/consultations

29. **Remember: If you wish to suggest an alternative proposal, it must be able to generate the level of savings outlined in this proposal. The need to make savings is non-negotiable.**

30. If you have any queries or require further information, please do get in touch.

- Email educationconsultation@westberks.gov.uk.
- Write to Education Consultation, c/o the Access, Planning and Trading Team, West Berkshire Council, West St, Newbury, RG14 1BZ.

31. Your feedback is important and no decision will be made until the consultation ends and all comments have been considered. We look forward to hearing from you.

What happens after the consultation ends?

32. The Council will consider the results of the consultation and consider whether we will change our plans as a result. We will publish the outcome of this consultation on our website. Any comments you make will be made public but we will not include your name or any personal information which could identify you.

33. Once we have reviewed the feedback and made any changes, we will publish a Statutory Notice.

34. There will be a further period of 4 weeks during which comments on the Statutory Notice can be made. We will review feedback and make any changes.

35. A final decision will be made in January 2017, and the new arrangements will be implemented from September 2017.

THE DETAILED PLAN

West Berkshire – the local landscape

36. This plan aims to contribute to achieving:

West Berkshire Council Corporate Plan 2015-2019

Aim	Priority for Improvement
Better education communities	Improve educational attainment. Close the educational attainment gap.
Protect and support those who need it	Good at safeguarding children and vulnerable adults.

37. Our role has changed significantly in recent years as schools have become more autonomous. Our core role is to be a champion for children, especially the more vulnerable. Inclusion is at the heart of a school-led system and we encourage schools to accept responsibility for pupil needs. Specialist education provision is managed and supported collectively, and all pupils access education appropriate to their needs. We make sure that schools and other partners are focused on safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children.

38. As at January 2016, there are 25,845 pupils in our schools.

	Boys	Girls	Total
Primary	6,985	6,632	13,617
Secondary	5702	5775	11,477
Special	274	115	389
PRU	50	40	90
Nursery	154	118	272
Total	13,165	12,680	25,845

39. There are 82 schools in West Berkshire:

	Maintained	Academy	Total
Primary	64	2	66
Secondary	4	6	10
Special	2	0	2
PRU	2	0	2
Nursery	2	0	2
Total	74	8	82

40. Based on the total population of pupils:

- The overall school attendance rate was 96.3%.
- 1,783 (6.9%) pupils were eligible for free school meals (and therefore are from a low income family).
- 1,834 (7.1%) pupils have English as an additional language.
- 3,334 (12.9%) pupils have Special Educational Needs and Disabilities.

41. Temporary and permanent exclusions data is collected through the school census. The data below shows all exclusions during the calendar year 2015. There were 968 exclusions in this period: 936 were fixed term exclusions. 773 / 936 fixed term exclusions (82.5%) were from secondary schools. 22 were permanent exclusions and all of these (100%) were from secondary schools. 10 were lunch-time exclusions and 9 / 10 of these (90%) were from primary schools. The reasons for exclusions were:

Reason	Nos.
Bullying	10
Drug & alcohol related	33
Persistent disruptive behaviour	337
Damage	17
Other	99
Physical assault against an adult	65
Physical assault against a pupil	158
Racist	21
Sexual Misconduct	6
Theft	5
Verbal abuse against an adult	178
Verbal abuse against a pupil	39
Total	968

Current capacity

42. The Council and West Berkshire schools/academies are the commissioners of alternative provision in West Berkshire.

43. The council commissions mainly full-time alternative learning for pupils who are permanently excluded from school. It secures provision by either:

- Commissioning places – this includes directly funding places in PRUS, and placing pupils in special schools instead of alternative provision where it is appropriate to do so.
- Procuring Alternative Provision – where the local authority enters into a contract with an independent alternative provider.

44. Schools and academies may commission full-time and part-time alternative provision for pupils both as an alternative to mainstream school and to complement mainstream school (e.g. outdoor activities, or vocational courses). The options for schools to secure provision are to:

- Provide it themselves or enter into an arrangement with another school to do it (i.e. where there is no payment to the other school).
- Procure alternative provision – where the school (or group of schools) enter into a contract and pays an alternative provider or another school to educate the pupil. The provider could be an independent school, independent provider, PRU, alternative learning free school/academy, or another mainstream or specialist school.

45. Provision may be:

- Full-time (long term and revolving door).
- Part-time (long term and revolving door).
- Preventative programmes within schools.

46. Schools use a range of targeted interventions to support students within school. There are also a range of providers providing part-time alternative learning. Most provision is commissioned by schools, often to complement academic studies and these students stay on the school roll. Specialisms and educational focus vary considerably across these provisions. Several have a clear vocational skills focus, others utilise team building and self-esteem development, using sports, physical activity, performing and creative arts, to promote re-engagement with formal teaching and learning.

47. Information about the provision offered by the current PRUS is in Appendix B. The PRUS has its own Management Committee with delegated authority to manage its own budget and staff.

48. The current PRUS is delivered on 6 sites, as shown in Appendix C.

	Site	No of places
Primary	The Oaks, Thatcham	12
Secondary	Badgers Hill, Calcot	60
	Bridgeway, Newbury	
	The Porch, Newbury	
	Kingfisher, Riverside Community Centre, Newbury	
	The Key, Moorside Community Centre, Thatcham	
Post - 16	The Porch, Newbury	12
Total		84

49. Most sites are centred in Thatcham and Newbury, with Badgers Hill located near Reading in the east of the district.

50. The PRUS is also funded (through the Dedicated Schools Grant) to deliver outreach support in schools.
51. Students may come to PRUS for short-term placements (i.e. at The Oaks, Kingfisher, The Key), or for a permanent placement (i.e. The Porch, Bridgeway or Badgers Hill). Therefore, where the placements are short-term, the place at the PRUS (as listed in the table above) could be filled by a number of young people over the course of the school year, as students come and go.
52. There are other providers who can also offer places for students requiring alternative provision. Commissioners of buyers (i.e. schools, the Council) determine the appropriate provider for the student's needs.

Future capacity

53. In considering the blueprint for the future, we have considered:

- A focus on effective assessment and identification of student's needs. This should take place as early as possible and before a young person's behaviour has deteriorated to the extent that permanent exclusion is the only option.
- Alternative provision is selected to meet students' individual needs, rather than students just being sent to the places that are readily available. Also, in some cases, it will be appropriate to separate students across sites.
- Information is shared between schools and alternative provision provider and there is ongoing monitoring of progress between the school and the provider. This leads to clear and realistic plans with baselines against which to measure progress (including towards reintegration into mainstream schooling, further education, or employment). Where students have Special Educational Needs and Disabilities, these plans will link to Education, Health and Care Plans.
- Schools should develop strong relationships with alternative providers and share, rather than shift responsibility for the pupils they are unable to support. This could happen either through commissioning and accountability arrangements or by building school clusters, for example through federations and multi-academy trusts. (See the White Paper comments in paragraph 56).
- Alternative providers are recognised as partners in delivery and valuable sources of expertise.

54. We want to better integrate mainstream schools, special schools and alternative education provision, including PRUs and independent provision, to share expertise across the system and to identify the right placements to meet individual pupils' needs. Some will remain in mainstream school, some will go to special schools and others may be permanently excluded and placed in a PRU or independent alternative provision.
55. There is shared view about the importance of identifying early any significant concerns about a pupil, carrying out assessments promptly and introducing effective early intervention.
56. The plan encourages early intervention to reduce the need for alternative provision and to reduce the number of permanent exclusions, but nonetheless it is likely that demand for AEPS will continue. We plan a flexible, expandable model, which can adapt to the highs and lows of demand, and can offer a variety of provision, including outreach and short-term interventions as well as the traditional short-term and long-term placements on AEPS sites.
57. This approach tracks with the government's White Paper³, published in March 2016 (summarised in paragraphs 18 & 19 of this report). The White Paper explains that, in the future:
- We [the Government] will change accountability arrangements so that a pupil's mainstream school will retain accountability for their educational outcomes and will take a lead role in commissioning their provision, including when they have permanently excluded the pupil.*
- As they [schools] will also be responsible for commissioning and accountable for educational outcomes, they will have stronger incentives to take preventative approaches and achieve value for money when identifying the best and most suitable provision for any child that needs it.*
58. In terms of AEPS, the capacity for the future will be as follows. This is a reduction in the number of places for secondary students, from 60 to 36.

	Site	No of places
Primary	The Oaks, Thatcham	12
Secondary	Badgers Hill, Calcot	36
	Bridgeway, Newbury	
	The Porch, Newbury	
Post - 16	Bridgeway, Newbury	12
	The Porch, Newbury	
Total		60

59. The reduction in capacity means that the amount of accommodation that is required is reduced, and therefore we will no longer use Moorside or Riverside Community Centres.

³ Educational Excellence Everywhere – Department for Education, White Paper, March 2016

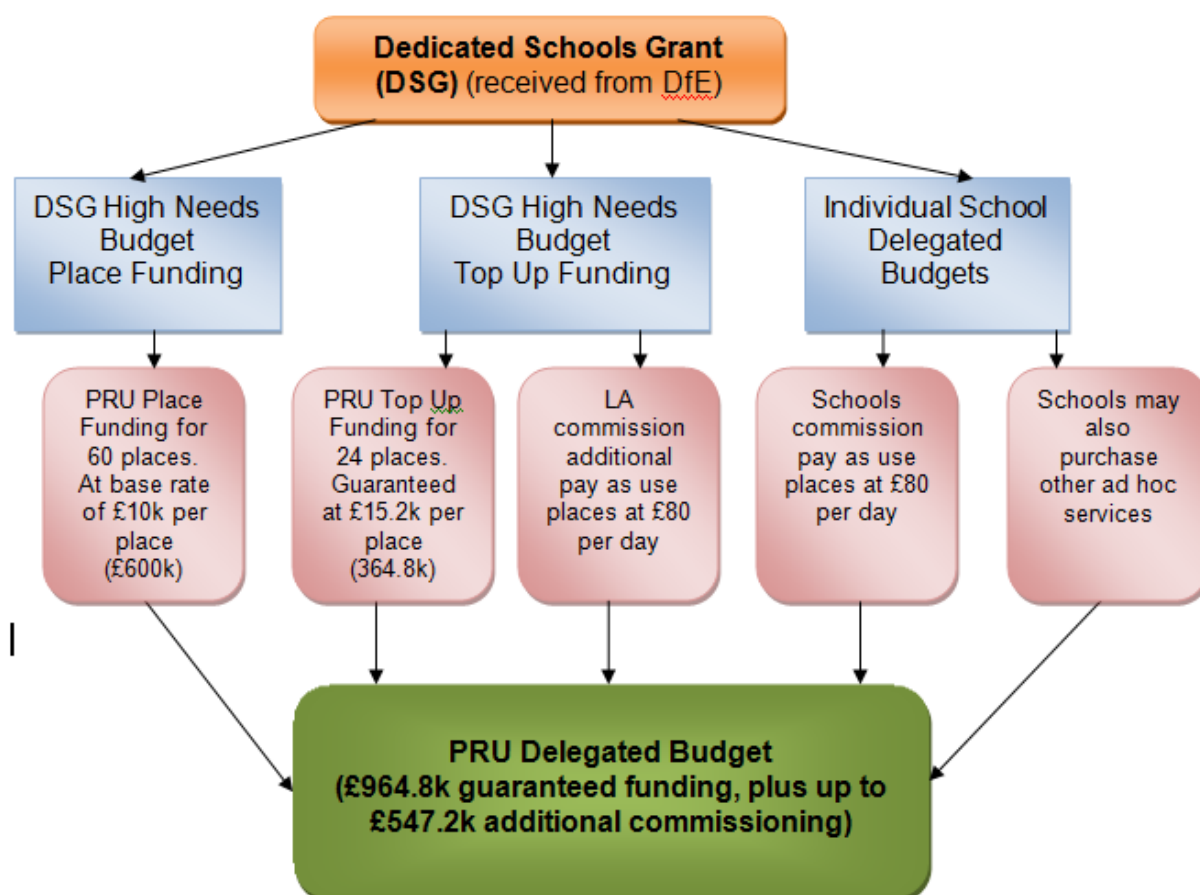
60. Future capacity is based on an analysis of the likely numbers of places we need for Looked After Children, students with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities and permanent exclusion, in order to meet our statutory duty to these young people. There is then a further allowance for schools to commission and the capacity is based on expected levels of demand.
61. In determining the level of provision in the AEPS, we have considered the alternative provision that schools may establish in their schools, and the potential for a range of interventions and approaches, either supported by AEPS or with alternative education providers.
62. Our aim is to ensure that there is sufficient provision within West Berkshire for those students who need additional help and support. This aim will be delivered in partnership with schools, the AEPS and alternative education providers.
63. The plan provides:
- Further opportunities for schools to be leaders and partners in the designing and commissioning of alternative provision.
 - A greater focus on preventative work in primary schools and transition work between primary and secondary schools, with access to a wider range of support to address behavioural, social and mental health issues.
 - A continued emphasis on the importance of mainstream school attendance and reintegration wherever possible.
 - Closer partnership working between schools on behaviour and vulnerability issues, supported by a skilled workforce.
 - The ability to maintain the important focus on full-time education for students.
64. The plan will not compromise outcomes for young people, particularly the most disadvantaged, as services will be linked to local need. We are re-shaping the service to meet a complex range of policy, financial and operational challenges, including changes to the funding framework, and to develop a delivery model more able to meet the requirements of schools. We will work with schools to identify strengths and assets which can be developed to provide local solutions for local children.
65. The plan will rationalise our provision whilst ensuring that our statutory responsibilities are met.

Premises and location

66. We believe that services can be delivered without the need to run an expensive network of buildings. We will reduce building related costs, and reduce management, staffing and administration costs by removing duplication and integrating service delivery. This means the AEPS would be able use more of its budget for services to the most vulnerable pupils/students that need additional help.
67. In terms of AEPS and its dedicated provision, the number of sites will be reduced from 6 sites (see Appendix C) to 4 sites.
68. The existing purpose-built primary provision at The Oaks in Thatcham will be retained.
69. Secondary provision will continue to be provided at Badgers Hill, Calcot; Bridgeway, Newbury and The Porch, Newbury.
70. We will retain provision in the east of the district. The site at Badger's Hill is leased from Tilehurst Parish Council. For this site to continue beyond the current lease, the Parish Council has indicated that capital works would be needed. We need accommodation in the east. This could be either at Badgers Hill (under lease from the Parish Council) or within alternative accommodation.
71. Post-16 provision will be delivered across the two Newbury sites: Bridgeway, Newbury and The Porch, Newbury.
72. The provision at Riverside Community Centre and Moorside Community Centre will be de-commissioned. These are 'community' buildings and we will consider the most appropriate use for the buildings going forwards, in discussion with the relevant community.
73. Of course, the proposal also includes provision for students with additional needs within schools and with other alternative education providers, so there would be a network of Alternative Provision in many sites across West Berkshire.

Funding

74. The cost of Alternative Provision is mostly met from the Government funding received for the high needs block of the Dedicated Schools Grant (DSG). This funding is ring fenced and cannot be used for any other purpose than set out in the School Finance Regulations.
75. For each place the AEPS would receive the Base Rate (currently £10k p.a). We will provide 60 places at the AEPS, funded at the Base Rate. Places in the AEPS would be funded through the High Needs Funding Block.
76. Where the pupil/student has additional needs not covered by the Base rate, then a Top-Up payment is made. The Rates for Top-Ups are determined by the Schools Forum. This is a daily rate, which is then multiplied by the number of days that the student is being educated by the AEPS.
77. We will implement a Reserved Quota, securing a guaranteed number of places for the Council to use for Looked After Children, children with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities and permanent exclusions. We will provide the Top-Up funding for the Reserved Quota, to be met from the High Needs funding block.
78. Where we require additional places for Looked After Children or children with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities above our Reserved Quota, and there are Non-Reserved places available, we will pay the Top-Up. If the Non-Reserved provision is full, we will commission places with an alternative education provider, based on the student's needs.
79. For other non-reserved places, the AEPS will receive the Top-Up from the commissioning school.
80. The diagram overleaf explains the way the funding flows.



81. The AEPS may also focus on providing services to schools, including Outreach services. This would provide additional income for the AEPS.

82. The table shows an example of how the number of places could be split between Reserved and non-reserved places, although the Council's drawdown of its Reserved Quota may be more flexibly applied based on the needs of individual students:

	Reserved Quota	Non-reserved quota
Primary	6	6
Secondary	12	24
Post - 16	6	6
Total	24	36

83. The implementation of the Reserved Quota provides a guaranteed base budget for AEPS.

84. We will review the level of the Reserved Quota in advance of budget setting for the following financial year and write to the AEPS if we want to make changes (increase/ decrease).

85. The government is exploring a national funding formula and therefore, the way in which AEPS is funded in the future may change. It appears that the commissioners of Alternative Provision places will be responsible for funding and therefore schools commissioning places will need to pay for Top Ups from their budget. Schools funding will be as per the new national formula, with no local flexibility.
86. We have looked at the current levels of income and expenditure and built a cost model for the AEPS. The new cost model also removes the subsidy which currently exists for places in the PRUS. For the AEPS, the cost of placing a student will be the same for the Council and for schools. We are satisfied that the overall structure we are planning is fit for purpose going forward, whilst delivering financial savings. The likely savings are:

Summary of Savings	
Reduction in annual expenditure (compared to 2015/16)	Full year effect - £1,138,878
	2017/18 financial year - £664,345
	2018/19 financial year - £474,533
Reduction in annual Top Up rate (paid by whoever commissions the place (Council or school))	£4,418 per place (reduction of £23 per school day)
Savings in the High Needs Funding Block will be:	£819,913
	2017/18 financial year - £478,283
	2018/19 financial year - £341,630

Teaching and Learning

- 87. AEPS would determine curriculum provision, based on the needs of the students and the needs of the commissioning schools, managing the curriculum provision within the available budget. This could include flexible provision and outreach work.
- 88. Capacity is based on an outline staffing ratio of one teacher to 6 students, although this could be flexibly applied, based on the needs of the students.
- 89. Students benefit from personalised time-tabling, and a combination of on-site and off-site activities. Careful planning of the AEPS provision will ensure that vulnerable students are appropriately catered for.
- 90. We expect the good standard of the current PRUS provision could be maintained, and even exceeded, in the new plan. The AEPS would be subject to Ofsted Inspection.

Monitoring and Governance

- 91. The AEPS would be accountable to its Management Committee. The PRUS already has a Management Committee and this will continue into the new AEPS Service, but with a revised constitution and membership.
- 92. It is expected that our secondary schools would have a higher profile on the AEPS Management Committee, due to their enhanced role in delivering local in-house provision for some pupils.
- 93. Over time, there could be a formal 'commissioning group of Headteachers' who directly influenced the size and costs of the AEPS. This would be particularly relevant when the AEPS is required to operate within a demand-led, market-driven environment.

Staffing

94. We believe that management, staffing and administration costs can be reduced by removing duplication and integrating service delivery. The current PRUS comprises 2 schools, each with a Headteacher, delivering the service on 6 sites. The AEPS will comprise a single school, with a single Headteacher, delivering the service on 4 sites.
95. An outline staffing structure has been used to establish that the funding rationale (as described in the Funding section) is sufficient to cover the base budget.
96. The AEPS would determine staffing structures based on the needs of the students, within their budget, in the same way as other schools do. We believe that the plan will result in an overall reduction in staffing numbers. Once the plan has been finalised, there will be a formal consultation process with staff and Trades Unions about staffing structures. This is due to begin in January 2017.
97. The line management of the Home Education Service currently sits with the PRUS. We propose that we will manage the Home Education Service in the future, and it would not be part of the new AEPS.
98. The Council's Behaviour Support Service is outside of the scope of the proposals.

SUMMARY: KEY POINTS OF THE PLAN

99. The key points are:

- West Berkshire Council and its schools are committed to taking collective responsibility for students with additional needs, working in partnership to enable students to learn in the setting that best suits them.
- We need to change the way we deliver Alternative Provision in West Berkshire as we can no longer afford to deliver this in the same way.
- Alternative Provision is currently delivered through the Pupil Referral Unit Service (PRUS).
- We will not compromise outcomes for young people, particularly the most disadvantaged, and we will keep the young person at the centre of everything we do.
- We will ensure there is the right provision for those students who cannot attend mainstream school, with a personal focus on their individual needs.
- We will work in partnership with schools, and schools will work in partnership with each other, to integrate education for students with additional needs.
- Together, we will contribute to delivering a range of positive student outcomes.
- We will secure provision for those students that the Council may become responsible for – either because they are permanently excluded from school or to avoid them being permanently excluded.
- We will create the new Alternative Education Provision Service (AEPS), which will be accountable to a Management Committee. The AEPS will comprise a single school, with a single Headteacher, delivering the service on 4 sites.
- We will retain the people, skills and expertise necessary to deliver a good quality AEPS service, building on the quality provided by the existing PRUS.
- We have also taken account of the alternative provision that schools may establish and the potential for a range of interventions and approaches, either supported by AEPS or with alternative education providers. We anticipate that most, if not all, secondary schools will develop some form of alternative provision.
- We will reduce the number of places, buildings and staff at the AEPS compared to the current PRUS. This is because the new plan will be delivered in partnership with schools, the AEPS and alternative education providers. This change will make the AEPS financially sustainable and deliver savings for the Council and schools.
- We plan to directly manage the Home Education Service from September 2017.
- The Behaviour Support Service is outside of the scope of the proposals.

APPENDIX A - Pupil Referral Unit Service (PRUS)

The PRUS is split into two Services:

The Alternative Curriculum Service - a pupil referral unit for students between the ages of 14 and 19. Students are referred to the unit from schools across West Berkshire because they are at risk of being excluded or have been permanently excluded from mainstream secondary schools. Some students have had their secondary schooling severely disrupted for a variety of reasons and are referred directly by the local authority.

The Alternative Curriculum was inspected in February 2015 and graded as a Good school. Ofsted said:

- *The Leadership and management are good.*
- *Teaching is very well led...the quality of teaching is good.*
- *Students behaviour, attendance, and progress is good...and very effectively monitored*
- *Parents and carers...greatly value the commitment of staff and the range of opportunities available.*

Locations: The Porch, Badger's Hill and Bridgeway (see Appendix C)

The Reintegration Service - provides short-term placements for students who do not have a place in a mainstream school, the reasons for which include fixed-term and permanent exclusions, but might also be for a variety of reasons such as a student in the care of the local authority arriving in the area without a school place, or a student waiting for a specialist place to become available. The Oaks is for primary-aged learners, Kingfisher (at Riverside Community Centre) covers Key Stage 3, with The Key (at Moorside Community Centre) being for students at Key Stage 4. The Home Education service is a separate part of the service working with students of school age who are unable to attend school for medical reasons, which include mental health issues.

The Reintegration Service was inspected in June 2014 and graded as a Good school. Ofsted said:

- *The headteacher and other leaders work well together in a service that is committed to providing the best possible education for students.*
- *The effectiveness of spiritual, moral, social and cultural provision is reflected in the fact that students develop much better social skills and attitudes.*
- *The focus is always on meeting the needs of students.*
- *Parents and carers are very positive about the service, particularly liking the regular contact so that they know how their children are getting on.*

Locations: The Oaks, Kingfisher, and The Key (see Appendix C)

APPENDIX B – The Shared Vision

By 2018 we will be able to say that:

We offer outstanding alternative educational provision in which each of our learners:

- Achieves their highest possible educational outcomes.
- Develops a strong positive attitude.
- Makes the best possible positive contributions to the launch pad for their chosen future.

Delivering the Vision

Our team of staff and governors, working collaboratively, with our stakeholders, will provide a relevant and holistic curriculum, underpinned by strong leadership and teaching of the highest quality that inspires learners.

Our team will:

- Teach, challenge and encourage our learners to meet and exceed target grades in all their subjects.
- Provide a relevant and holistic curriculum that enables learners to achieve nationally recognised qualifications.
- Ensure high levels of numeracy, literacy and communication skills for every learner.
- Engender a strong sense of personal responsibility and respect for others.
- Make effective use of data to drive self-evaluation and improvement of learner outcomes.
- Be passionate about focusing energies, technology and other resources to create and maintain an engaging learning environment appropriate to each learner and each subject.
- Be passionate about learning and the creation of a positive learning ethos and culture that fosters key life skills, including independence, communication, resilience, flexibility, integrity and self-discipline.
- Place our provision in the top 10% nationally on average data for achievement of value added outcomes.

We will rely on

- All team members – learners, staff, governors and stakeholders, having clear accountabilities.
- Parents and carers being well informed and engaged with our provision.

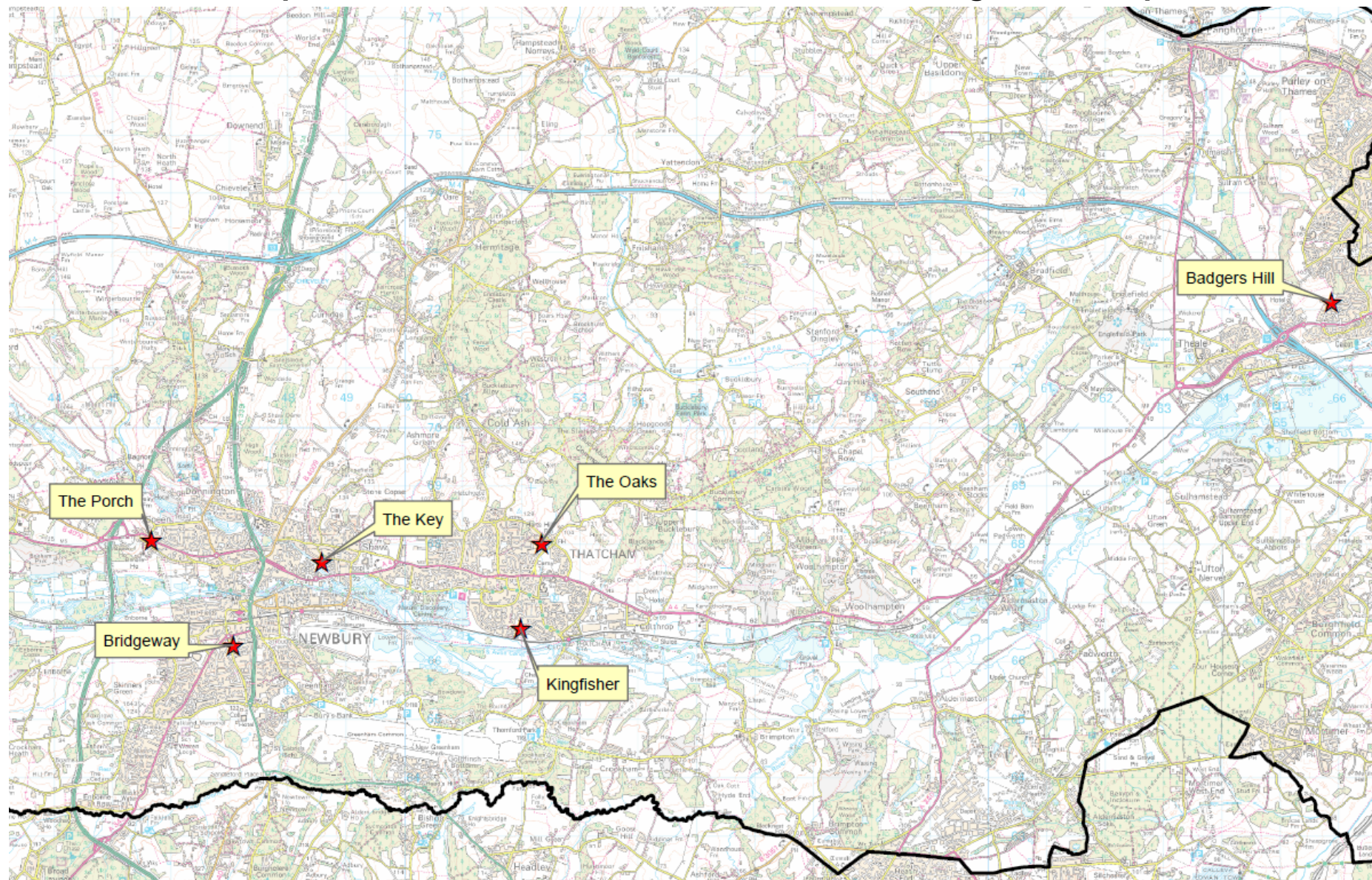
Our culture and ethos

- Help every learner do the very best they can.
- Inspire students and staff alike.
- Actively engage all our stakeholders.
- Works constantly to meet the needs of current and future learners.

Above all...

We are a vibrant community to which learners, staff and governors are proud to belong.

APPENDIX C – Map of Alternative Educational Provision Buildings – as at April 2016



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