

Public Questions for Children and Young People Scrutiny Committee 15th June 2023 7:00pm

Question number	Question	Submitted by	Answer
1	What is Bury LA's policy around a prolonged transition period for a child starting reception in primary school who is a summerborn child with SEND?	Sarah Wilson	<p>Thank you for the question. The Council's admissions policy sets out the arrangements that apply to summer born children:</p> <p>Parents of children who are admitted to the school before they are of compulsory school age can defer their child's entry until later in the school year. Where entry is deferred, the school will hold a place for that child and not offer it to another child. A parent cannot defer entry beyond the beginning of the term after the child's fifth birthday, nor beyond the academic year for which the original application was accepted. Parents can also request that their child attends on a part time basis until the child reaches compulsory school age. Where parents wish to defer admission under the 'summer born regulations', parents must put their request in writing to the school admissions team, together with any supporting evidence that the parent wishes to be taken into account. Decisions on requests for admission outside the normal age group will be made on the basis of the circumstances of each case and in the best interests of the child concerned. This will include taking account of the parent's views; any information provided about the child's academic, social and emotional development; where relevant, their medical history and the views of a medical professional; whether they have previously been educated out of their normal age group; and whether they may naturally have fallen into a lower age group if it were not for being born prematurely. This request should be sent team at the time of normal application.</p> <p>Where a child has an EHCP, advice from the EHCP Assessment Team will be taken into account.</p>

<p>2</p>	<p>What is Bury’s annual spend on the professional fees of solicitors and barristers in connection with advice and representation at SENDIST Tribunal hearings, and what is the council’s success rate at those hearings?</p> <p>Supplementary Question:</p> <p>Jane Johnston asked for it to be recorded on the minutes that a response should include Bury’s annual spend on the professional fees of solicitors and barristers in connection with advice and</p>	<p>Jane Johnston</p>	<p>Thank you for the question. In 2022 we had 20 appeals in total. (12 no to assess, 1 on placement and 7 on content of the plan)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> · 16 of these were resolved before it got to a hearing · 3 went to a hearing (1 was upheld and 2 were partially upheld) · 1 was struck out <p>Only one has gone to tribunal this year and that was upheld in part, and was for content. All the others lodged this year are yet to be heard.</p> <p>Since last September to now, there has only been one case where legal costs were incurred, but the hearing was cancelled.</p> <p>We are seeking final confirmation of costs and will respond directly to the requestor and then publish the response in the papers for the next Children and Young People scrutiny committee</p> <p>Going forward we will seek to include the tribunal data on the SEND dashboard which is a regular agenda item at the SEND Board.</p> <p>Supplementary Answer:</p> <p>Councillor Smith confirmed this will be included in the response planned for the next Committee and will be added to the dashboard so this information can be tracked in future.</p>
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	representation at SENDIST Tribunal hearings.		
3	<p>Please confirm how many complaints have been received by the complaints team in the last six months and whether or not in each case the complaint procedure set out by the local authority was in fact followed?</p> <p>What process is undertaken for lessons to be learnt from the various Ombudsman's judgements in relation to Bury LA's failings?</p>	Sarah Garbett	<p>Thank you for the question. In the six months 01/10/23 to 31/03/23, there were 27 complaints received relating to the SEND Team. There were an additional 14 received relating to School Transport making a total of 41 complaints in this six month period.</p> <p>It is confirmed that all procedures within the Complaints policy were adhered to.</p> <p>In this period, 68% of complaints were responded to within timescales.</p> <p>However, since April there has been an increase in complaints totaling 69.</p> <p>26 SEND complaints in April which included 2 LGO and 7 MP.</p> <p>Then there were 23 SEND complaints in May, which included 3 MP complaints and in June so far there have been 20 complaints which includes 2 LGO and 5 MP</p> <p>Under Corporate procedures, the Ombudsman's recommendations are summarised quarterly and a report is sent to the relevant Heads of Department and the Director of Education and Skills requesting an update on progress. Recommendations that the LGO confirm as complete are updated on the monitoring table.</p> <p>The SEND Development plan and wider service plan are regularly reviewed and service improvement recommendations are included and go to the SEND board</p>

4	<p>Could the LA please confirm the current structure of the EHC team, the members of that team and their reporting structure and any vacancies?</p>	Gemma Hall	<p>Thank you for the question. Current staffing:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> · 1 x EHCP team Manager · 3 x Senior Case Workers · 3 x Case worker Assessment team · 5 x Case worker Annual Review team · 1 x Lead Assistant case worker · 4 x Assistant case worker <p>The team report directly into the Strategic Lead for SEND and Inclusion, who reports into the Director of Education and Skills who reports into the Exec Director of Children's</p> <p>We have 1 vacancy for a full-time Assistant Caseworker at present, however we do have agency staff filling some of the other roles.</p>
5	<p>When children are failed by their current named school /placement, what do the EHCP team do to ensure that children who are unable to attend that setting (named on their EHCP) are being provided an alternative education whilst they find a more suitable placement. Why are children left on roll and schools given money for them when the children have not been able to attend there, there should</p>	Kiran Hampson	<p>Thank you for the question. It is not possible to provide a generic response as this would depend on the individual case involved. However, depending on the situation, if there was a placement breakdown an annual review would be held and a resolution sought in the first instance. If agreement could not be reached the right of appeal would be open to the parent.</p> <p>The LA take their duties under section 19 of the Education Act 1996 very seriously, ensuring the child has an appropriate school place and seek to minimise the length of time a child is out of any setting. The EHC team would maintain regular contact with the alternative provision whilst consulting with other</p>

	<p>be a process in place to monitor those children unable to attend and support parents with advice on next steps in the interim period- to ensure children have some routine in place , whether academic, therapeutic to recover from trauma of a failed school placement and continue some of their education.</p> <p>Supplementary question:</p> <p>You quoted section 19 of the legislation, I can provide a number of examples where the Council and Local Authority haven't followed the Section 19 procedures. There are a number of parents here today whose children are out of education. You said at the last Scrutiny the priority was Children that are out of education. If you are saying Section 19 is upheld I can give you a number of examples where children are out of education, EHCP's aren't being followed they are not in placements and no support is being provided. I am asking what support, policies and procedures are in place.</p>		<p>placements and take into account professional advice and parent and child views.</p> <p>Children are left on roll as the school has delegated responsibility to ensure that barriers are removed to ensure child can attend. It is a parent's responsibility to ensure children can attend.</p> <p>Supplementary Answer:</p> <p>The procedures are those outlined in the answer. As far as I am aware we are following the procedures. I understand there are issues with some and that is why we have been to tribunal with one being upheld and two partially held up about how they are being executed.</p>
6	<p>Could the Local Authority please update us on the make-up of both the EHC team and the Disability</p>	<p>Jo Kinloch</p>	<p>Thank you for the question. Bury currently has 2448 Education, Health & Care Plans (EHCPs), with an average of 62 new</p>

	<p>Social Worker team.</p> <p>Please also provide data as to the current caseloads of the DSWs and the EHC caseworkers and their responsiveness to individual cases.</p>	<p>requests for assessment each month.</p> <p>Through work undertaken across GM it is estimated that assessments take on average take 3 working days per worker to complete, and that an Annual Review takes 1 day to complete. This does not include ongoing casework, placement identification work and liaison work.</p> <p>There is no official caseload weighting agreement for EHCP officers set out in statutory guidance. It is accepted that caseloads in the region of 300 cases per staff member while high is not uncommon. However we are currently reviewing capacity versus demand in the team</p> <p>Current staffing:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> · 1 x EHCP team Manager · 3 x Senior Case Workers · 3 x Case worker Assessment team · 5 x Case worker Annual Review team · 1 x Lead Assistant case worker · 4 x Assistant case worker <p>Currently the caseload in Bury for the EHC Officer in the Annual Review team is at 489.</p> <p>We are currently reviewing this to ensure the team has the correct capacity.</p> <p>However, Bury Council is the fifth highest in the country for issuing EHCP plans and therefore the partnership aims to</p>
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	<p>Supplementary Question:</p> <p>What is the current plan for improving the response time to parents because we can all sat here, vouch for the fact that unfortunately it is not currently a reasonable response time and also what the plan is for removing the out of office messages on the emails of the various case workers</p>		<p>ensure need is met earlier without an EHCP and therefore reduce the number of plans issued.</p> <p>Children With Disabilities Team</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> · CWD Manager x1 · ATM x1 · Social Workers x6 · EHC Assessor x1 – t · Family support workers x4 full time roles fulfilled by 5 members of staff – there are currently 4 permanent family support workers on the team. Their role is to review short breaks on a biannual basis and they will keep in contact with families as a minimum every three months. In addition to this role they can also be allocated to work with social workers where there is a need for more intensive or more specific support. <p>Supplementary Answer:</p> <p>Question 4’s answer outlines that we have 1 vacancy for a full-time Assistant Caseworker at present, however we do have agency staff filling some of the other roles. It is recognised that the office support is missing and the plan is to fill that vacancy. The desired response times vary depending on the type of contact received but we do recognise that triaging the emails needs to be done. The out of office responses will be resolved as the new structure is emerging and work is taking place to</p>
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	<p>and senior case workers and Head of the EHC Team which refer to being utterly overwhelmed by an influx of emails and they will hopefully get back to parents as soon as possible, this doesn't seem to be an acceptable out of office response.</p>		<p>improve the response times.</p> <p>Jeanette Richards, Executive Director advised the questions point to resourcing issues in the EHC Team. We have seen information in relation to the escalation in complaints and the need to respond to these complaints. Throughout the past 5 years, if you scale the number of EHCPs per head of population, Bury's rate has been between 15 and 25% higher than the national rate. This remains true in 2023. Bury's rate of EHCPs per 10,000 4 to 19 year olds was 576. The national rate is 486.</p> <p>Looking at the national data published last week, which reflected the position around EHCPs in all local authorities as at January 2023, Bury has the 5th highest rate for new EHCPs issued during the calendar year 2022, 78% higher than the national rate). Overall, we are the 21st highest LA for total number of EHCPs (out of 150 local authorities); and the third highest in the North West.</p> <p>Despite this high demand, Bury Council's ECHP team has continued to increase their compliance rate at 20 weeks. In 2020 Bury's compliance rate was 27% and in 2022 it had risen to 50% which was the same as the national average; currently for 2023 it is at 70%, which is 20% above the last published national data.</p>
7	<p>what does the local authority plan to do about the home to school transport crisis currently experienced by many families and when do they plan to update to outdated transport policy?</p>	Kiera Delaney	<p>Thank you for the question. The School & College Transport team provide transport to 438 children and young people across 110 routes to schools in Bury and outside of the borough on a daily basis. The shortage of home to school transport is a nationwide issue and the team are in regular liaison with Greater Manchester colleagues, Department for Education and other local authorities across the Northwest to discuss the impact on home to school transport.</p>

			<p>Unfortunately, the service we are able to provide is being severely impacted by the publicised national driver shortage as an ongoing result of the recent coronavirus pandemic. Several drivers have left employment in the transport trade to pursue a career in the HGV (heavy goods vehicle) industry and unfortunately have not returned to private hire work. In addition to the shortage of drivers there is also reduced vehicle availability, many contractors are finding it difficult to source and purchase vehicles that are suitable for use on home to school transport.</p> <p>The Council are aware of the concerns regarding the practicalities of transport and every effort is being made to minimise the impact on young people and their families. Due to the shortage of drivers and vehicles it may take us longer to put transport arrangements in place. Where there is a delay in providing suitable transport arrangements alternative forms of travel assistance are being offered to families in the form of mileage reimbursement or a personal travel budget.</p> <p>The shortage of drivers is unfortunately outside of the Council's control however, the Department for Transport and the Driver and Vehicle Standards Agency are proposing to reform the driver training rules that are in place. The proposed changes are in relation to the Certificate of Professional Competence (CPC), a professional qualification that is required by all minibus drivers in addition to their driving licence. The Department for</p> <p>Transport are currently analysing feedback from the consultation, if implemented it is expected the process for renewing the CPC qualification will be more cost effective with flexibility on the training route to encourage new and former drivers to return to the transport sector.</p>
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	<p>Supplementary question:</p> <p>I appreciate the response. I want to know what the local authority are going to do imminently about transport because if we are prioritising children out of education and without transport they cannot access that education.</p>		<p>The existing contract for home to school transport is due to expire on 31 August 2023. A new contract has been advertised and evaluation of tenders is underway, the new framework will allow new contractors to be appointment to the contract throughout the duration of the contract term (2026/2027), 19 contractors have so far been successful in their application, a further 4 applications are in the process of being evaluated. It is hoped that an increased number of contractors on the framework will alleviate some of the pressure in arranging transport.</p> <p>The team are in the process of amending the policy for Travel Arrangements between home and school or college for pupils and young people with Special Educational Needs and Disability. A draft policy has been produced that is currently with the Council’s legal team to undertake a compliancy check. A full formal consultation will be undertaken with all stakeholders prior to the implementation of the policy.</p> <p>Supplementary answer:</p> <p>Currently in the short term you can use the personal budget can be used to access transport. The tender finishes at the end of August so we hope this will be completed for the next School year we will have more of a framework that is flexible to move quicker and better with the new policy which is due to come out.</p>
8	What measures does the LA take to ensure that parents and schools	Catherine White	Thank you for the question. Whilst taking into account the statutory duty to provide a suitable and appropriate education,

	<p>are aware of the legalities and possibilities around reduced timetables and flexi schooling for children who are struggling to attend?</p>		<p>the LA consider the views, wishes and feelings of the child and their parent or carer. The EHC team maintains regular contact with the school/education provider to achieve the best possible outcomes for the child.</p> <p>At present, the council is unaware for any requests for flexi schooling. Any request would need to go directly to the school. We are unaware of any flexi schooling policies, however we would provide advice for any school if flexi schooling was applied for.</p> <p>The Attendance team have now set up termly meetings with schools to review all children who are struggling to attend, and the Attendance policy has been revised and brings greater clarity around the school's responsibilities.</p> <p>The LA has invested in software to ensure that Bury Council has live attendance data from schools to improve safeguarding.</p>
9	<p>When it has been identified that mainstream school is not suitable for a child, how does the LA support parents in finding the most suitable place for their child?</p>	Melissa Platt	<p>Thank you for the question. The EHC team seek to provide as much information as possible to parents in finding a suitable placement for the child or young person using the information and advice that is made available to them. The EHC team provide details of placements to parents/carers and consult with schools/education providers.</p> <p>In co-production and consultation with the child or young person and their parent/carers, as well as any professionals involved the EHC team provide parent/carer support with meetings by phone, virtually and in person. The EHC team also provide support with meetings with education providers where required and signpost to services such as SENDIASS and our DfE approved strategic partner, Bury2Gether, the parent carer forum.</p>

	Supplementary Question:		Supplementary answer:
10	<p>Do we have a timescale on how long it is currently taking to find alternative provision?</p> <p>Could the LA please update us on the progress of the social care review that we were told would be completed by October 2023?</p>	Rebecca McCauley	<p>We will work out a suitable mean of how long it takes to find alternative provision and give an indication of this.</p> <p>Thank you for the question. The Social Care improvement journey is well documented and has been reported both through the scrutiny committee and through monitoring visits from the DFE and Ofsted.</p> <p>In the last Ofsted monitoring visit the improvements in CWD were noted.</p> <p>There is ongoing work around the short breaks offer. We are currently reviewing the 14-25 transitions offer. We will bring an update on the 14-25 transitions work to C+YP scrutiny.</p> <p>A project has been undertaken by the SEN And Inclusion and Children with Disabilities (CWD) team to develop an information pack to support practice knowledge and skills when working with children and young people with SEND. This is intended drive continual practice development across all teams as part of an implementation programme and will sit well alongside existing mechanisms such as CWD Consultations and CWD Links joining training opportunities for practice development.</p>
11	<p>Why have the LA repeatedly denied children their human rights by failing to provide suitable or appropriate full time education. Children are entitled to a full time education yet there a mass</p>	Stacey Wilde	<p>Thank you for the question. Only one question may be submitted in advance of the meeting the email below contains 3 separate questions – Questioner has been asked to re-word and ask one and one supplementary question, and to return to Julie Gallagher as a matter of urgency.</p> <p>1. The Local Authority take their statutory duty under the</p>

	<p>proportion that the LA have refused to provide, and denied, full time education by way of funding for alternative independent school providers. Also, why does the multi-disciplinary board repeatedly deny children funding for independent provision best fit for children in favour of cheaper providers. Please clarify the right to request a specific provider is the right of the parent and young person and not for the board to decide where the child goes.</p> <p>Please clarify what does the LA intend to do about the mass failings to update and amend EHC Plans within the legal timescales, or at all, denying parents the ability to evoke their rights to tribunal.</p>		<p>Education Act 1996, section 19 very seriously. This includes providing placements at alternative independent schools. It is not possible to provide an in-depth answer to this question as it would depend on each individual case and circumstance. However the SEN 2 data released last week once again shows that Bury Council place many more children in independent providers than other councils; the data shows that Bury issues more EHCP plans and has an increasing compliance rate.</p> <p>Bury Council is working with its schools to increase the SEND provision within Bury including an ambitious programme of Resource provision and Specialist provision expansion.</p> <p>Bury Council is currently going out to tender for high quality Alternative Provision.</p> <p>2. The multi-disciplinary board assess and make decisions on a case-by-case basis based on the information and advice provided and taking into account their duties under the Education Act 1996, Children and Families Act 2014 and the SEND Code of Practice.</p> <p>3. The EHC team has undergone a restructure and training is ongoing. Whilst we acknowledge that there have been delays historically in updating and amending some plans, this is continually improving and the backlog is reducing. The team are undergoing extensive training on plan writing and also attend additional external training events.</p> <p>We are constantly striving to improve services and parental experience. In 2020, the EHCPP compliance rate was 27%; in 2022 it was 50%- national average; and currently this year compliance is at 70%. However the partnership and Local Area need to acknowledge the demand for EHCPs and work together</p>
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			<p>to meet need earlier. Bury Council issued the fifth highest proportion of EHCPs in 2022 and we now have the 20th highest EHCP rate in the country.</p>
12	<p>EOTAS (Education Other Than At School) – there is currently no Bury LA EOTAS policy. Could we please be updated as to where the LA is up to with preparation of a policy and guidelines for parents?</p> <p>Supplementary Question:</p> <p>What is being done about parents who are being left to source provision and fund interim provisions whilst the EOTAS is agreed and the EHCP is amended?</p>	Aislinn Marek	<p>Thank you for the question. Currently request for EOTAS (Education Other than at School) are considered under the personal budget policy as it is considered a personal budget for Education.</p> <p>However this is an area we are aware of. The strategic lead for SEND is leading on this with the Council for Disabled Children who will be working with the Strategic Lead for SEND to co-produce with parents a EOTAS policy.</p> <p>Supplementary answer:</p> <p>Jeanette Richards, Executive Director advised that this is not something she is aware of and she was unaware this is something that parents are having to fund so will take this back and respond directly in relation to this issue.</p>
13	<p>As the LA have sought to recruit experienced social workers from overseas, what steps have they taken,</p> <p>or do they propose to take, including overseas recruitment, to secure experienced staff to manage SEND children caseloads and other</p>	Martyn West	<p>Thank you for the question. As detailed earlier, there are very few vacancies in the Education and SEND team.</p> <p>The demand for EHCps is the fifth highest in the country and therefore the focus of the Local SEND Area is on, not only meeting that demand with more timeliness but identifying and meeting need earlier.</p> <p>We are currently reviewing the capacity within the team and</p>

	vacancies in the education provision including experienced teachers and support staff?		<p>reviewing a business case to review capacity.</p> <p>At this moment in time there is no plan to use overseas recruitment and there is a competitive field for recruitment. I am delighted that there have been a number of the posts filled in the last 18 months where colleagues have lived experience.</p>
14	<p>Why is there still no confirmed date for the opening of the autism school in Bury, when this has been planned for over 4 years?</p> <p>Why has there been no communication to parents whose children have been provisionally offered this school, but have no formal offer and therefore no school place for September 2023?</p>	Paul Williams	<p>Thank you for the question. The building to accommodate the new school is being delivered by the DfE and is currently scheduled for completion in January 2024. The intention is that the school will open from that date.</p> <p>The confirmation of the official opening date is a matter for the DfE to agree with Shaw Trust, the sponsor of the new school.</p> <p>The LA is pressing the DfE confirm the January 2024 opening date without further delay.</p> <p>At that point formal offers of places can be made. The EHCP team are case-working our September offer and continue to look at solutions.</p> <p>We are unable to comment on individual cases, however no formal offers of a place at the new Shaw Trust school have been made to any parents as the formal consultation required by legislation cannot take place until the DfE agrees formal registration of the school. Further updates will be provided when available.</p>
15	Some SEND parents have huge packages of support payed for by the council. Some parents have Horse riding packages and	Philip Clarence	<p>Thank you for the question. Bury has a far higher proportion of EHCPs than at national and has a deficit in the High Needs Budget which is proving very challenging to eradicate with</p>

	<p>equestrian therapy. These parents always seem to be the rich parents, the ones that can afford to pay for private therapy reports and solicitors to secure their provision in their EHCP's.</p> <p>Their children are the ones that will be ok in life. Whereas my child is very complex and will require support for the rest of their life. It doesn't feel fair that those that can afford to shout the loudest receive provision above and beyond the rest of us.</p> <p>What happened to being in it together? What happened to shared equity of the SEND budget? What will the council do to create fairness for all?</p>		<p>ongoing demand.</p> <p>Although we cannot comment on individual cases, through service development and SEND improvement the focus is on ensuring greater equity across the system and ensuring more needs are met at universal and targeted rather than high cost individual packages</p>
<p>16</p>	<p>Why is the council allowing the same parents to repeatedly attend scrutiny, shouting about their own personal issues. There are over 6 thousand SEND parents in Bury. We can't all have a private audience.</p> <p>I would appreciate hearing less of the lone voices.</p> <p>When will the council say enough is</p>	<p>Mrs Khan</p>	<p>Thank you for the question. Children and Young People scrutiny committee falls under Bury Democratic processes in which member of the public can attend or submit questions ahead of the meeting. There is 30 minutes given to this.</p> <p>We are very conscious that almost 30000 children attend Bury schools; delighted to report that we have an improving proportion of good or better schools, and that we have approx 6000 children with identified SEND and 2400 EHCP plans. As previously stated one of the challenges is that the Local Area and partnership including parents need to work together to ensure needs can be met earlier and in the SEND Development plan there is an acknowledgement that we need to improve</p>

	enough?		<p>universal services to ensure that the high cost demand lessens.</p> <p>Bury Council is committed to its improvement journey and will continue to work with all parents in coproduction and consultation; including Bury2gether as its strategic partner.</p>
17	<p>I am aware that Early Years EHCP's in Bury are very high.</p> <p>A large nursery group in Bury, is well known for refusing SEND children placements at their nursery unless they have an EHCP.</p> <p>Not only is this Disability Discrimination but this is driving up Bury's EHCP's unnecessarily.</p> <p>What can the council do to intervene?</p>	David McGovern	<p>Thank you for the question. Our settings are private business and regulated and inspected by Ofsted. The council has an offer to settings in relation to advice and support to ensure settings are able to meet the needs of all of our children</p> <p>We are currently reviewing our approach for children 0-5 with emerging needs and how we utilize our inclusion funding to look at more group funding, training for staff on speech and language therapies as well as implementing an outreach team that will be able to support individual settings. We are currently collating the data on settings that are finding it challenging to provide places and over the summer will be seeking to meet to discuss our approach and support.</p>
18	<p>Please confirm what continuing provision development is undertaken each year by all members of the SEN team to ensure a sound understanding of the framework of SEND law and the duties of LAs to interpret and apply the legal requirements of the Children and Families Act 2014.</p> <p>As a related point, please confirm what the consequences are for staff</p>	Sara Slawycz	<p>Thank you for the question. The EHC team receive training through providers such as, the Council for Disabled Children, SENDIASS, IPSEA and Contact as well as other external training providers. As well as the Children and Families Act 2014, the EHC team are given training using the SEND Code of Practice, which is the statutory guidance the LA must adhere to. The EHC team also attend events co-ordinated by the DfE approved parent carer forum; their strategic partner Bury2Gether.</p> <p>This would of course depend on the individual case, so it would be difficult to provide a detailed response. However, where it is</p>

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	when it is identified that decisions and processes aren't being made/actioned lawfully or in line with the SEND Code of Practice to ensure accountability in the workplace.		identified that there is a training issue, this would be addressed with the individual involved, so that any areas of weakness can be identified and addressed and followed up within the team for continual development and improvement.
19	There are a number of EHCPs issued by Bury LA under which the LA is knowingly and unlawfully failing to provide provision contained in Section F of those EHCPs which was secured at tribunal. Why is this being allowed to happen?	Laura Dale	Thank you for the question. It would be difficult to comment on this without more information on the cases involved and we would ask that the parent/carers involved contact the EHC team manager, Sian O'Brien following this meeting. The LA take tribunal decisions and their duties as set out in section 42 of the Children and Families Act 2014 to provide the provision as detailed in Section F of an EHC plan very seriously.
20	"I understand the LA is currently reviewing its EBSA policy. Please could we have an update on this and when the revised policy is likely to be in place? Will those with lived experience have any input during this process?"	Ms Taylor	Thank you for the question. The LA are in the process of reviewing the EBSA policy in co-production with our strategic partner, the DfE approved parent carer forum Bury2Gether, Andy Smith from Spectrum Gaming, as well as sessions with parents.
21	Could the LA please confirm the current service level agreements in place with regards to communication from EHC team to parents (i.e. returning emails and phonecalls) and data as to whether these are being met?	Donnah Buchanan	Thank you for the question. The EHC team aim to respond to emails within 48 hours. Occasionally, where cases are more complex, or require a more detailed response or input from other departments, this could take longer. Response times are currently under review and whilst training within the EHC team is ongoing, we anticipate that there may be times where phone calls may not be answered as promptly as we would like. We are constantly looking for ways to improve and in coproduction with our strategic partner Bury2Gether, and with the feedback of our

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			parent/carers we will be looking to develop and improve our current service levels.
22	could the LA please update me on the progress of the social care review that we were told would be completed by october 2023	Mr M Hampson	<p>Thank you for the question. The Social Care improvement journey is well documented and has been reported both through the scrutiny committee and through monitoring visits from the DFE and Ofsted.</p> <p>In the last Ofsted monitoring visit the improvements in CWD were noted.</p> <p>There is ongoing work around the short breaks offer. We are currently reviewing the 14-25 transitions offer. We will bring an update on the 14-25 transitions work to C+YP scrutiny.</p> <p>A project has been undertaken by the SEN And Inclusion and CWD team to develop an information pack to support practice knowledge and skills when working with children and young people with SEND. This is intended drive continual practice development across all teams as part of an implementation programme and will sit well alongside existing mechanisms such as CWD Consultations and CWD Links joining training opportunities for practice development.</p>