

Appendix 2: Further Information on Achievements and Progress in the First Year of BDSIP

1. Background

1.1 BDSIP launched on 1 April 2018 as a schools' owned services company delivering a range of services to schools across School Improvement, Inclusion, Governor Services, Careers and Work Experience. The majority of services are traded to schools and BDSIP also delivers services to schools on behalf of the Council. BDSIP is a private limited company, registered with Companies House, operating as a social enterprise on a not-for-profit basis. Any surplus is re-invested in education services and infrastructure for the borough.

2. Overview

2.1 BDSIP has had a highly successful first year, engaging schools in a new relationship, clarifying and strengthening existing services, and introducing a number of new services in response to schools' priorities for additional support.

2.2 BDSIP's Chief Executive has undertaken approximately 40 1:1s with headteachers, the majority early in the year. These have explored headteachers' current experiences of the service and what they would like to see in future. Feedback from these discussions has driven the identification of year one priorities.

2.3 Priorities in BDSIP's first year have been:

- Preparing for launch and setting the business up;
- Defining the service offer and reviewing all pricing;
- Changing the culture of the organisation and developing expertise; and
- Introducing new and innovative services.

2.4 Fifty five of the fifty nine schools in the borough at September 2019 are members of BDSIP.

3. Launch and business set-up

3.1 Around 30 staff TUPE'd to BDSIP on 1 April 2018. The council's focus in the run-up to launch was on stakeholder engagement, particularly of schools, and on getting the legal shape of the organisation right. In its first year, BDSIP has built on these foundations by putting in place all the infrastructure required to run a business – covering such issues as arrangements for invoicing clients, office accommodation, setting up separate accounts and banking facilities and arranging appropriate insurance. This work has required a significant amount of resource but has now been substantively completed successfully, meaning the company is well placed to operate as an independent organisation.

3.2 In October 2019, BDSIP became the first of the 20 council subsidiaries and independent trading companies to finalise and sign-off its accounts for 2018-19, doing so with an unqualified audit opinion. The accounts showed that BDSIP has made a modest surplus.

4. Defining the service offer and pricing

4.1 Although many of the services BDSIP provides had been sold to schools for some time, there were several services where greater clarity was now needed around the elements of the service that schools paid for and elements that were provided free of charge by the council. There were also a number of services where the price charged for the service was lower than the cost of delivery, which had been appropriate in the council but was not sustainable for BDSIP.

4.2 A full review of all services and the pricing structure was undertaken immediately after launch in May and June 2018, with involvement of staff across BDSIP and of headteacher directors from the BDSIP Board. This led to the creation of a clearer and more transparently priced service offer, which was made available to schools in August 2018, articulating the service offer for 2019-20. The new offer, and the clarity of pricing, service the content and volume of the new offer and has been welcomed by schools.

4.3 Continuity of delivery of key services has also been maintained successfully. Since April 2018, there have been 29 Ofsted inspections of schools in the borough. All bar one of these have either maintained, or achieved for the first time, a 'Good' or 'Outstanding' judgement from Ofsted. The one school which received an adverse judgement (dropping from 'Good' to 'Requires improvement') had chosen to source school improvement support from an alternative provider and had not been receiving school improvement support from the council or BDSIP.

5. Changing the culture of the organisation and developing expertise

5.1 One of the priorities for BDSIP in its first year, which was strongly identified by headteachers, was building a consistent customer service approach to ensure that all services were delivered to consistent quality and that each school's experience of the service was not dependant on a particular individual delivering it. New customer service standards setting out clear response times and BDSIP's approach to customer care were developed by staff and launched alongside the new service offer in summer 2018.

5.2 BDSIP has been successful in recruiting service specialists, all with recent experience of school leadership/and or inspection, to broaden the range of expertise it is able to bring to schools. A deeper pool of school improvement associates has been identified and new in-house expertise has been appointed to lead on the key areas of Inclusion and SEN. Some staff who did not want to make the journey towards a more customer focused organisation have also left the organisation.

6. Introducing new and innovative services

6.1 A number of new and innovative services have been introduced by BDSIP in response to current unmet need which schools have identified. These include a cost-effective counselling service aimed at those who do not meet CAMHS thresholds but still require support, a Speech and Language Therapy Service, and a careers service for primary schools. Take up on these has been positive and continues to grow. At its meeting in October 2019, the BDSIP Board will consider the next wave of services to prioritise for development.

6.2 In addition, additional support has been made available in priority areas including secondary Maths and English.

7. Customer feedback

7.1 Feedback from schools has been positive. BDSIP has introduced 6 monthly temperature check surveys for schools. These were undertaken in December 2018 and June 2019.

Service quality has:	December 2018	June 2019
Improved	50%	62%
Been maintained	39%	35%
Got worse	11%	3%