Public Document Pack



Rutland County Council

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Ladies and Gentlemen,

A meeting of the **SCHOOLS' FORUM** will be held via Zoom - https://us06web.zoom.us/j/88550441601 on **Thursday**, **1st February**, **2024** commencing at **4.00 pm** when it is hoped you will be able to attend.

Yours faithfully

Mark Andrews Chief Executive

Recording of Council Meetings: Any member of the public may film, audio-record, take photographs and use social media to report the proceedings of any meeting that is open to the public. A protocol on this facility is available at www.rutland.gov.uk/my-council/have-your-say/

SUPPLEMENTARY AGENDA

3) FINANCE UPDATE

To receive a report from Andrew Merry, Head of Finance, RCC. [ITEM FOR INFORMATION]

(15 MINUTES)

(Pages 5 - 8)

4) SEND IMPROVEMENT PLAN

To receive a report from Kulwinder Bola, SEND Improvement Programme Manager, RCC.

[ITEM FOR INFORMATION]

(10 MINUTES)

(Pages 9 - 18)

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SCHOOLS' FORUM

1st February 2024

FINANCE UPDATE

Report from Andrew Merry, Head of Finance (ds151 Officer)

DECISION RECOMMENDATIONS

That the Schools' Forum:

- 1. Notes the financial update
- 2. Noted the proposed rates for Early Years for 2024/25
- 3. Agrees the Membership of the Finance Sub-Group

1 DEDICATED SCHOOLS GRANT (DSG)

1.1 The table below shows the current position on the DSG, the deficit brought forward, the funding allocation for 2023/24 and a revised position to be carried forward into future financial years.

	Schools £000	High Needs £000	Early Years £000	Central Schools £000	Total £000
Surplus/(Deficit) Carry Forwards from 2022/23	(4)	(1,515)	108	86	(1,325)
DSG Allocations prior to recoupment	30,294	5,656	1,609	198	37,757
Transfer between blocks	(151)	151			0
Academy Recoupment	(29,158)	(310)			(29,468)
Expenditure in Year					
Schools' allocations	(985)				(985)
Nationally Agreed School Licences				(41)	(41)
Admissions Service- staffing costs				(63)	(63)
Statutory & Retained Duties				(94)	(94)
Education for under 5's			(21)		(21)
Early Years Pathway Development			(48)		(48)
3 & 4 Year Old Funding			(1,490)		(1,490)
2 Year Old Funding			(152)		(152)
SEN Funding Maintained Schools					
and Academies		(3,295)			(3,295)
SEN Funding Post 16		(110)			(110)
SEN Recovery Plan Expenditure		(200)			(200)
SEN Funding - Independent Special					
Schools		(1,510)			(1,510)
SEN Funding EOTAS & Tuition		(1,054)			(1,054)
SEN RCC Recharge		(197)			(197)
Early Years Inclusion (SENIF)		(45)			(45)
Under/(Over) spends in 2023/24	0	(914)	(102)	0	(1,016)
Surplus/(Deficit) Carried Forward to 2024/25	(4)	(2,429)	6	86	(2,341)

SEN – Special Educational Needs

EOTAS - Education Other Than at School

- 1.2 For 2023/24 the High Needs Block is operating in a challenging environment with new demand being experienced and inflationary pressures resulting in an increase in price.
- 1.3 The Council is currently working on two national workstreams to mitigate this pressure
 - the East Midlands Change Programme Partnership (CPP) alongside Leicester City and Leicestershire. The CPP will be testing the key system-level reforms set out in the Special Educational Needs and Disabilities & Alternative Provision (SEND AP) Improvement Plan that is expected to deliver the system and culture changes needed to improve outcomes and experiences for children and young people with SEND or in AP and their families. This work is funded via grant funding of £5.9m for the region. The financial impact of this improvement plan is to be modelled as the programme progresses from the current set-up phase.
 - Delivering Better Value Programme This is a £1.0m programme that aims to deliver interventions quicker to reduce the deficit on the DSG. The outcomes of this programme are that:
 - a) children are assisted to grow and succeed in mainstream school and to get practical help at the right time in the right way which avoids exclusions
 - b) children's needs are identified and assessed quickly and the graduated response followed
 - c) settings having a greater understanding of unmet needs and the known links to behaviour and learning and therefore are better able to meet most needs within a mainstream environment. This will in turn mean that;
 - d) EHCP's are seldom needed except to support the most complex of needs in mainstream, and only in exceptional cases will a child need an alternative setting other than mainstream.
 - e) Therefore, through better understanding, training and experience of supporting complex needs, Rutland's mainstream setting will become specialist in their own right. This will lead to fewer children with SEND being excluded from mainstream, because these settings are confident that they can meet needs and in cases of behaviours that challenge they are able to de-escalate situations by providing the appropriate support.
- 1.4 As part of this scheme the Council is required to provide a model of a possible deficit position. This showed that the deficit on the DSG could reach £15.8m by 2029/30 if no further mitigations were undertaken. Therefore, without meaningful intervention by the Council to address this deficit now the Council, under accounting convention, would be required to use a significant proportion of its General Fund to fund SEND expenditure once the statutory override deadline is reached. Funding the deficit at this rate would jeopardise the financial resilience and sustainability of the Council. Even at the current forecast deficit of £2.4m this restricts investment decisions that the Council could make in future service provision.
- 1.5 The Council **draft 2024/25 budget** goes into further details on the DSG position.

2 EARLY YEARS FUNDING

2.1 The proposed 2024/25 Early Years Funding rate is shown in the table below.

Group	DfE Rate	RCC Rate to Providers 24/25	RCC Rate to Providers 23/24
Under 2s	£9.45	£9.45	-
2 Year Olds	£6.98	£6.65	£5.63
3 & 4 Year Olds	£5.47	£5.20	£4.64

- 2.2 The budget has been set in line with the Operational Guide issued by the DfE, which can be found on this **link**
- 2.3 The table overleaf shows the funding position for 2023/24. As the table shows the Council is distributing all the funding that it has been allocated. The Council is able to do this as there is currently an estimated surplus of c£100k (forecasted) at the end of 2022/23. This surplus is being held to act as the contingency as the current funding levels did not allow for a contingency to be set from the core funding. The number of hours is based on January 2022 census data as the January 2023 Census data is not available until July.

Funding Type	Pupil Numbers	Total Hours	DfE Rate	Total Funding	
3 & 4 Year Olds					
Initial 15 Hours	352.19	200,748.30	£5.47	£1,098,093.20	
Additional 15	188.84	107,638.80	£5.47	£588,784.24	
Hours		, , , , , , , , , ,		, , ,	
	2 `	Year Olds			
2 Year Olds –	115.33	65,738.10	£6.98	£458,851.94	
Working Families					
2 Year Olds –	29.86	17,020.20	£6.98	£118,801.00	
Disadvantaged					
	Unde	r 2 Year Olds			
Under 2s	58.44	33,310.80	£9.45	£314,787.06	
		Other			
Pupil Premium Plus				£1,740.32	
Disability Access Funding				£17,290.00	
Total Funding	£2,598,347.76				
Centrally Retained	£87,696.79				
Contingency	£25,793.17				
Funding Available for Distribution to Providers				£2,484,857.79	
Distribution					
3 & 4 Year Olds (200,748.30hrs + 107,638.80hrs @£5.20/hr)				£1,602,533.57	
2 Year Olds (65,738.10hrs + 17,020.20hrs @ £6.65/hr)			£550,340.70		
Under 2 Year Olds (65,738.10hrs + 17,020.20hrs @ £6.65/hr)			£550,340.70		
2 Year Olds (65,738.10hrs + 17,020.20hrs @ £6.65/hr)			£550,340.70		
Deprivation supplement (£0.11 per hour)			£550.00		
Total Distribution			£2,487,243.64		
Deficit				£2,385.86	

- 2.4 In addition to the hourly rates in para 1.5 there are additional funding supplements available (subject to children's eligibility).
- 2.4.1 **Deprivation supplement for 3 and 4 year-olds**. This is currently £0.11/hour as per para 10.1 of the provider agreement.
- 2.4.2 **Special educational needs inclusion fund** (top ups) is available for all 3 and 4 yearolds children with SEN who are taking up the free entitlements, regardless of the number of hours taken. This is to target children with lower level or emerging SEN.

https://ris.rutland.gov.uk/kb5/rutland/directory/service.page?id=dXejgod6VEw

2.4.3 **Early Years Pupil Premium** (£0.62 per child per hour) 3 and 4-year-olds will be eligible for EYPP if the child receives the universal 15 hours entitlement and they meet set criteria. Please follow this link for further information.

https://www.rutland.gov.uk/my-services/schools-education-and-learning/early-education-and-childcare/funding/early-years-pupil-premium/early-education-and-childcare-providers/

2.4.4 **Disability Access Fund-** Providers receive at least £828 per eligible child per year. The funds could be used, for example, to support providers in making reasonable adjustments to their settings and/or helping with building capacity. 3- and 4-year-olds will be eligible for the DAF if: the child is in receipt of Disability Living Allowance; the child receives the universal 15 hours entitlement.

https://ris.rutland.gov.uk/kb5/rutland/directory/service.page?id=ZHflYG1vu8s&newlocalofferchannel=8 1

2.5 These proposals have been discussed with the early years working group on the 11th January 2024.

3 FINANCE SUB-GROUP

- 3.1 At the Extraordinary Meeting, Schools' Forum on Thursday 30th November 2023 it was agreed that a finance sub-group was set up.
- 3.2 The Council has had the following expression of interest for being members of the group, which is cross representative of Primary/Secondary Schools and Finance/Non-Finance Staff.

Name	School	Role	Member of Schools Forum
Stuart Williams	Catmose College	Chair	Yes
Rob Gooding	Rutland Learning Trust	Member	Yes
Graham Kirby	Rutland Learning Trust	Member	No
Lucy Lewin	Early Years School Forum rep	Member	Yes
Kirstie Croote	Uppingham Community College	Member	No
Rachel Wheatley	St Mary & St John C.E.V.A. Primary School	Member	No
Andrew Merry		LA Rep	No



SCHOOLS' FORUM

1st February 2024

DELIVERING BETTER VALUE (DBV) SEND PROGRAMME UPDATE

Report from Kulwinder Bola, SEND Improvement Programme Manager

	DECISION RECOMMENDATIONS
That the Schools' Forum:	
Notes the report.	

1. Purpose

- 1.1 To update members of the Schools' Forum on the progress of the Delivering Better Value Programme (DBV) for Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND) Recovery Plan initiatives and projects designed to reduce the pressure on the Designated School Grant (DSG) High Needs Block:
 - To update on the progress with DfE Delivering Better Value programme, and emerging themes and initiatives
 - To highlight related risks and issues.

2. Delivering Better Value in SEND Services Review

- 2.1 The DfE Delivering Better Value Review of SEND arrangements in Rutland as part of Tranche 2 continues. Rutland is one of 55 authorities taking part and activities to analyse local trends, examine future expected children's needs and predict demand and best use of available funding, have continued apace. Activities have included parental and education practitioner surveys, listening forums with small groups of parents and professionals and reviews of cases to focus thinking of outcomes.
- 2.2 Key themes are emerging and projects that follow this deep examination will add additional transformation resources that could help make Rutland's SEND systems more inclusive and meet the DfE Green Paper intentions and learning and opportunities identified from the recent Ofsted inspection.
- 2.3 Any projects considered will be set out in an updated SEND Recovery Plan and the Children and Young Peoples' Partnership Plan associated with Rutland's SEND and Inclusion Strategy.

3. Financial Modelling

3.1 Rutland County Council continues to see a steep rise in the volume of EHCP's which in turn impacts on the High Needs overspend. The DBV program is expected to make savings over time as shown below:

```
2024/25 £400k
2025/26 £730k
2026/27 £1,234k
2027/28 £1,849k
2028/29 £2,773k
2029/30 £2,773k
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2.2. Despite these savings, the deficit is anticipated to be £1.9m at the end of *this financial year*, and the deficit is expected to rise to £15.8m by 2029/30. This assumes £2.8m pounds worth of 'in-year' savings from 2028/29 shown above.

4. DBV SEND Programme Update

- 4.1 The DBV Programme will cover three key areas: Parental Confidence, Specialist Teams and Early Help. The presentation slides attached provide more details please see Appendix A.
- 4.2 With reference to the Specialist Teams Work Stream, we aim to further grow skills, expertise and confidence in supporting children with Special Educational Needs and Disability (SEND), through practitioner skills enhancement and a common understanding to the graduated response so that needs are not missed, misunderstood or misinterpreted.

The work in this area will be supported by Advisors for Teaching and Learning. These colleagues will aim to support schools' SENDCo so that children/young people with SEND, can thrive in mainstream school as far as possible without the need of EHCP and remain within their community and reach their own full potential.

The role of the Advisor for Teaching and Learning will be to support schools by acting as mentor and advise on how best to meet need. The Schools Support Partnership (SSP) evidence shows that children's outcomes into adulthood are improved by maintaining local networks, family and peer groups without the need for an EHCP or where appropriate to provide support as the Education, Health and Care Needs Assessment (EHCNA) process is expedited. Success is demonstrated through education practitioners exhibiting and expressing confident inclusive practice over time and supporting children effectively at an earlier stage where their needs change or emerge.

5. SEND Programme Update - SEND Governance

5.1 On the 1st November 2023, the SEND Strategic Area Partnership Board was created. This was one of the requirements of the SEND Improvement Plan and will be the board to which the DBV and the Change Programme will report to. The Board is made up of multi-agency partners with colleagues from Rutland County Council (Children and Families, SEND & Inclusion), Public Health, Schools' Forum, Health (ICB and LPT) and the Rutland Parent Carer Voice. The Board is chaired by an independent chair from the Schools Development and Support Agency (SDSA). The Board will meet four times a year.

6. Appendices

6.1 Appendix A – DBV Programme



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Rutland Delivering Better Value (DBV) in SEND

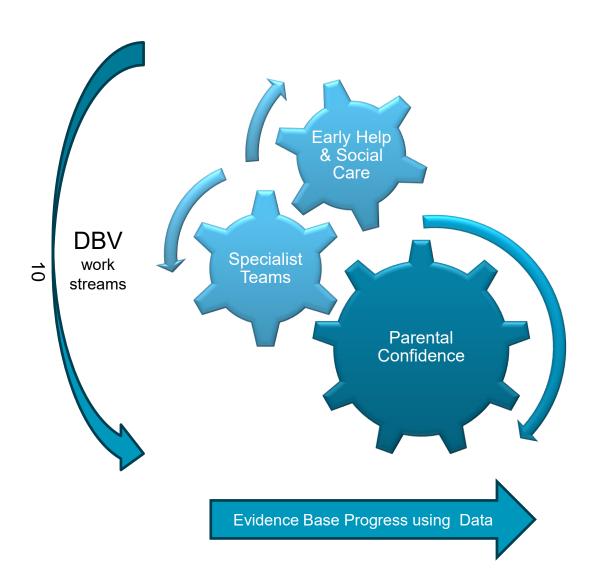
SCHOOLS FORUM Update Report

Date: 1ST February 2024

Reporting Period: Oct – Dec 2023

Rutland's Approach to Delivering Better Value (DBV)





The key to slowing the EHCP requests down is linked to increasing paranal confidence in Rutland's Ordinarily available provision across mainstream schools.

The DBV
Programme will work
hand in glove with
the SSP work.

Rutland DBV: Workstream 1 Update Report

Date of report 10/01/2024

Work Status Amber/ Green rating

Workstream Name:	Parental Confidence
Workstream Lead:	Kulwinder Bola
Reporting Period:	Oct - Dec 2023
Target/ Stretch Benefits:	£484,357/ £669,856
Budget (18 months):	£154,758

Workstream Objectives & Approach

Engaging *all* Parents & Carers. Initial interaction strategy with increased clarity of opportunity for support, how to find information. Creation of a map that shows what the provision will be without an EHCP or what you are able to access in terms of support. Programme of engagement to improve the narrative around recent changes and increase confidence in local mainstream provisions and SEN Units. The workstream will be supported by an independent facilitator, who is an expert by experience, to build upon existing work with parent carer voice and the Rutland Collaborative, to engaging increased numbers of families and embed parental participation in system change through a carefully structured tasks and working groups. CYP to be supported through this workstream to enable greater understanding and influencing of community perceptions of inclusion.

Area/ Project	Progress RAG	What is planned or has been achieved (Oct-Dec 2023)
Participation and Engagement Lead Practitioner	Green	Position filled on 1^{st} Dec 2023 - Post holder leads on co-ordinating parental group to collect views and ensure there is process of co-production across all workstreams to support parental confidence across the changing SEND System in RCC
Independent Facilitator	Green/ Amber	An independent facilitator - an expert by experience , to broaden scope and scale to influence wider parent groups, and to reshape negative perceptions of the system. Three workshops out four have been held (Early Intervention, Early Years, Inclusive Schools) the fourth due on 29 th Jan 2024 will be on Special Schools
Creation of accessible resources for Parent Carers, and for RPCV to lead on Peer training to support improved emotional wellbeing	Amber/Red	Plans underway to co-produce a pathway for accessing support relating to SLC needs, Neurodiversity using the graduated approach, Peer support via Healthy Parent Carer Programme, creating / signposting to self help videos, to support a range of SEND needs, greater understanding of the ordinarily availed offer of support within RCC (SSP enhanced offer).
CYP Engagement Events	Green/Amber	Using local network of YP forums to support the Early Intervention and Inclusive schools' workshops – need to seek views for Special schools workstream too.

Rutland DBV: Workstream 2 Update Report

Date of report 10/01/2024

Work Status Amber/ Green rating

Workstream Name:	Specialist Teams
Workstream Lead:	Kulwinder Bola
Reporting Period:	Oct - Dec 2023
Target/ Stretch Benefits:	£2,185,213/ £3,951,227
Budget (18 months):	£457,737

Workstream
Objectives &
Approach



A small, but highly skilled team of Advisors for Teaching and Learning (ATL) for SEND, will provide direct, hands-on support, training and advice for school SENDCo's, so that schools can demonstrate the impact of change in practice. Some schools will require more intensive support as they are not as far along their inclusive practice journey. The ATL for SEND will coach, advise and develop the graduated response pathway for all schools to follow pre and post- EHCP. The ATL for SEND, will identify training needs and facilitate where appropriate. Act as a guide for schools to bring in targeted support at the right time, for example SALT, OT or Mental Health, above and beyond what the NHS can offer. This will be swift and responsive. Working in partnership with the Schools Support Partnership and the ICB for ongoing sustainability, potential for traded service. Resources will be deployed intelligently across EY, primary and secondary where children are identified as most at risk of escalating to an EHCP or where children with an EHCP are most at risk of escalating out of mainstream.

Area/ Project	Progress RAG	What has been achieved (Oct-Dec 2023)
Advisor for Teaching & Learning (ATL) for SEND	Green/ Amber	Secondments opportunities have been identified and discussed with LCC who have two people for the two positions RCC have. JD have been drafted, and shared with LCC. Need to draft the Contracts for end of Jan / 1 st Feb 2024 start.
Training programme for schools	Green/ Amber	Training programme is under development. AET license, RCC to apply .
EHCP and Quality Lead for SEND	Green/ Amber	The paperwork to recruit a Fixed term post is compete – awaiting internal approval to advertise externally.
Nurture Hubs	Green	Funding to support 10 schools identified from DBV funds, expression of interest will be managed by Nurture Hub lead.

Rutland DBV: Workstream 3 Update Report

Date of report 10/01/2024

Work Status Amber/ red rating

Workstream Name:	Social Support and Early Intervention
Workstream Lead:	Kulwinder Bola
Reporting Period:	Oct - Dec 2023
Target/ Stretch Benefits:	£103, 584/ £112,469
Budget (18 months):	£19,840

Workstream Objectives & Approach

Social support for children and families to be provided through Early Help with a dedicated resource whose focus is increasing reach and facilitating additional social and community support for children, young people and families with SEND. The role will work to create healthy communities of support that ensures the pathways are appropriate and ideal for each CYP. To embed long-term sustainability of appropriate support for CYP and families through increased community led groups and activities. The main bulk of activity funded through RCC Communities Transformation programme.

Area/ Project	Progress RAG	What is planned or has been achieved (Oct-Dec 2023)
Community Support via Peer Mentors	Amber/Red	Drafting of initial thoughts on how to increase the community support to SEND families by additional capacity and value added to Family Hub. Aim is to support SEND families to navigate SEND services and offer peer support via Peer mentoring and ensure greater access to EY and EH pathways / opportunities at the right time.
Introduce SLCN support in early years coupled with parental advice and information on early communication support	Amber/Red	To Identify the type of speech language support needed to support families at home with children with SEND, use the finding to create a parent friendly toolkit, with settings using drop-in sessions for SEND families to learn how to apply the .learning from the toolkit.
Introduce wider social care offer with a view to offering short breaks to all SEND families	Amber/Red	Co-produce opportunities in the wider community/third sector to offer better support to SEND families to access leisure and short breaks together using community facilities. E.g. family swims in community pool

Rutland DBV: Workstream 4 Update Report

Date of report
Work Status

10/01/2024

Amber/ Green rating

Workstream Name:	Data and Infrastructure
Workstream Lead:	Kulwinder Bola
Reporting Period:	Oct - Dec 2023
Target/ Stretch Benefits:	£103,584/ £112,469
Budget (18 months):	£367,655

Workstream Objectives & Approach



Dedicated resources to support our data management system ensuring it is fit for purpose and make necessary improvements. Improve the process for generation and recording of data. Exploring data visualization tools to improve decision making across the system, especially intelligent commissioning. Increasing knowledge of children with SEN Support and those whose needs might escalate. Ability to support DBV workstreams in data, case management and reporting. This workstream also manages Programme Management and Finance capacity to ensure successful delivery of the DBV programme and financial accountability and ensure that the programme delivers the desired impacts on both system change and financial targets.

Area/ Project	Progress RAG	What is planned or has been achieved (Oct-Dec 2023)	
Data	Amber /red	Discussions held with data leads in RCC on how to assemble and organise the various data sets in exitance. We have the capability and capacity to design and deliver better SEND data recording and reports to inform practice changes, and DBV adds contribution to RCC costs, and need to work as SEND system to ensure the data is useful across the area.	
SEND Improvement Programme Manager	Green	This post was filled on 1 st November 2023	
Legal	Amber	Discussion with RCC legal as to what support they can provide as well as what local law firms can – awaiting quote from legal firm showing the cost for training RCC SEND staff	
Finance capacity to deliver the Programme.	Green	First DBV reporting to DfE for Oct-Dec 2023 submitted – and accepted.	
Project management and delivery support	Green	This post was filled on 1 st Oct 2023	

RAG Rating Definitions

RAG	Priority Status	Project Status	Milestone Status
Green	Highly confident: Successful delivery of all projects, including associated targets is highly likely (100%). Highly likely that targets will be met as a result of the impact of currently planned interventions.	On track: All major and minor deliverables on track to be delivered to stated time, quality and quantity targets (and are likely to be sufficient to meet the targets). Highly likely that all targets will be met and outcomes/impacts achieved.	Completed on time
Amber/Green	Confident: Successful delivery of all projects and targets is likely (probability of delivery 75%<99%), however constant attention is required to ensure risks do not materialise into major issues threatening one or more priorities. Likely that targets will be met and/or significant improvements will be seen as a result of the impact of currently planned interventions.	Off track but corrective action is being taken at the project level and we are confident this will bring the project back on track: all major and most minor deliverables on track to be delivered to stated time, quality and quantity targets. Likely that all targets will be met and/or see substantial improvement.	Delayed but with minimal impact to project
Amber/Red	Risk to delivery - Successful delivery of one or more projects and associated targets is in doubt (probability of delivery 50%<75%). Major risks and/or issues require urgent attention. Unlikely that targets will be met without further interventions or scale up of existing interventions. Any improvements are expected to be small.	Off track: One or more major interventions not on track to be successfully delivered. We are not confident in the plans to bring things back on track. May need to be escalated to Partnership Board. One or more targets are unlikely to be met, and may not see significant improvement, without urgent attention.	Delayed with some impact on project
Red	Serious risk to delivery Successful delivery of most or all projects, including associated three year targets, is highly unlikely (Probability of delivery < 50%). Major risks and issues affecting timing, quality, deliverables and budget which do not appear resolvable at this stage. Very unlikely targets will be met and/or there is likely to be no improvement.	Serious risk to delivery: Most major interventions unlikely to be successfully delivered. We will consider whether funding to red projects should be cancelled and the project terminated early. The matter should be escalated to the partnership board immediately Likely that no targets will be met and there will be no improvement in many or all.	Incomplete / delayed with significant impact on project

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