

AGENDA ITEM

REPORT TO CABINET

24 APRIL 2014

**REPORT OF ARTS, LEISURE
AND CULTURE SELECT
COMMITTEE**

CABINET DECISION

Children & Young People – Lead Cabinet Member – Councillor Ann McCoy

SCRUTINY REVIEW OF CHILD POVERTY

1. Summary

The attached report presents the Arts, Leisure and Culture Select Committee findings following the Scrutiny Review of Child Poverty. The review sought to understand the impact of child poverty on a child's health and education and make recommendations on local action to help prevent and mitigate against this.

2. Recommendations

- (1) That the Committee supports and encourages the shift of resources from reaction to prevention and early intervention, in line with the work of the Health and Wellbeing Board and as part of the Council's strategic approach and financial strategy.
- (2) That a myth busting guide is produced for use by Councillors and staff to challenge some of the myths and the stigmatisation of people experiencing poverty.
- (3) That the Committee support the contribution of the locality forums together with other forums and bodies such as Catalyst in the mapping of support and advice and that progress reports on this work be submitted to the Select Committee as part of the monitoring of the implementation of the review recommendations.
- (4) That the Committee supports the implementation plan of the Early Help Strategy, to ensure Early Help services (including mental health and emotional health services) are aligned and co-ordinated.
- (5) That officers work with other partner agencies (e.g. the CCG as commissioner) to further explore the provision of speech and language therapy to children, particularly those most vulnerable, in order to input to future discussions on commissioning and/or development of these services.
- (6) That a communication plan is developed to deliver general and targeted publicity on income maximisation and benefit take-up.
- (7) That officers explore opportunities to raise awareness of benefit eligibility and other support through residents' contact with universal services.

- (8) That the “A Fairer Start Project” being piloted in Stockton Town Centre be supported and that a report on the outcome of the pilot and feasibility of rolling out this model across the Borough be submitted to the Select Committee as part of the monitoring of the implementation of the review recommendations.
- (9) That the Poverty Proofing the School Day initiative be supported and Stockton Schools be encouraged to take part in the project.
- (10) That signposting to financial help and other support together with details of free activities during the school holidays is distributed via pupils at the end of each school term.
- (11) That where children are refused access to school meals due to arrears, schools are provided with information which they can use to speak to parents about financial help and support available.
- (12) That officers assess the evidence of the benefits of providing free school meals and breakfast clubs for all primary school children and investigate whether funding is available to conduct a pilot for children in Stockton Primary Schools.
- (13) That the good practice underway in schools to minimise the impact of poverty on children is systematically disseminated to all schools and that all schools and academies are encouraged to implement this good practice.
- (14) That the Committee supports the relevant recommendations of the scrutiny review on welfare reform and financial inclusion, which have synergies with the review on child poverty.

3. Reasons for the Recommendations/Decision(s)

The report presents the findings of the scrutiny review that took place as part of the agreed work programme for 2013/14.

4. Members’ Interests

Members (including co-opted Members) should consider whether they have a personal interest in any item, as defined in **paragraphs 9 and 11** of the Council’s code of conduct and, if so, declare the existence and nature of that interest in accordance with and/or taking account of **paragraphs 12 - 17** of the code.

Where a Member regards him/herself as having a personal interest, as described in **paragraph 16** of the code, in any business of the Council he/she must then, **in accordance with paragraph 18** of the code, consider whether that interest is one which a member of the public, with knowledge of the relevant facts, would reasonably regard as so significant that it is likely to prejudice the Member’s judgement of the public interest and the business:-

- affects the members financial position or the financial position of a person or body described in **paragraph 17** of the code, or

- relates to the determining of any approval, consent, licence, permission or registration in relation to the member or any person or body described in **paragraph 17** of the code.

A Member with a personal interest, as described in **paragraph 18** of the code, may attend the meeting but must not take part in the consideration and voting upon the relevant item of business. However, a member with such an interest may make representations, answer questions or give evidence relating to that business before the business is considered or voted on, provided the public are also allowed to attend the meeting for the same purpose whether under a statutory right or otherwise (**paragraph 19** of the code)

Members may participate in any discussion and vote on a matter in which they have an interest, as described in **paragraph 18** of the code, where that interest relates to functions of the Council detailed in **paragraph 20** of the code.

Disclosable Pecuniary Interests

It is a criminal offence for a member to participate in any discussion or vote on a matter in which he/she has a disclosable pecuniary interest (and where an appropriate dispensation has not been granted) **paragraph 21** of the code.

Members are required to comply with any procedural rule adopted by the Council which requires a member to leave the meeting room whilst the meeting is discussing a matter in which that member has a disclosable pecuniary interest (**paragraph 22** of the code).

AGENDA ITEM

REPORT TO CABINET

24 APRIL 2014

**REPORT OF ARTS, LEISURE
AND CULTURE SELECT
COMMITTEE**

CABINET DECISION

SCRUTINY REVIEW OF CHILD POVERTY

SUMMARY

The attached report presents the Arts, Leisure and Culture Select Committee findings following the Scrutiny Review of Child Poverty.

RECOMMENDATIONS

- (1) That the Committee supports and encourages the shift of resources from reaction to prevention and early intervention, in line with the work of the Health and Wellbeing Board and as part of the Council's strategic approach and financial strategy.
- (2) That a myth busting guide is produced for use by Councillors and staff to challenge some of the myths and the stigmatisation of people experiencing poverty.
- (3) That the Committee support the contribution of the locality forums together with other forums and bodies such as Catalyst in the mapping of support and advice and that progress reports on this work be submitted to the Select Committee as part of the monitoring of the implementation of the review recommendations.
- (4) That the Committee supports the implementation plan of the Early Help Strategy, to ensure Early Help services (including mental health and emotional health services) are aligned and co-ordinated.
- (5) That officers work with other partner agencies (e.g. the CCG as commissioner) to further explore the provision of speech and language therapy to children, particularly those most vulnerable, in order to input to future discussions on commissioning and/or development of these services.
- (6) That a communication plan is developed to deliver general and targeted publicity on income maximisation and benefit take-up.
- (7) That officers explore opportunities to raise awareness of benefit eligibility and other support through residents' contact with universal services.
- (8) That the "A Fairer Start Project" being piloted in Stockton Town Centre be supported and that a report on the outcome of the pilot and feasibility of rolling out this model across the Borough be submitted to the Select Committee as part of the monitoring of the implementation of the review recommendations.

- (9) That the Poverty Proofing the School Day initiative be supported and Stockton Schools be encouraged to take part in the project.
- (10) That signposting to financial help and other support together with details of free activities during the school holidays is distributed via pupils at the end of each school term.
- (11) That where children are refused access to school meals due to arrears, schools are provided with information which they can use to speak to parents about financial help and support available.
- (12) That officers assess the evidence of the benefits of providing free school meals and breakfast clubs for all primary school children and investigate whether funding is available to conduct a pilot for children in Stockton Primary Schools.
- (13) That the good practice underway in schools to minimise the impact of poverty on children is systematically disseminated to all schools and that all schools and academies are encouraged to implement this good practice.
- (14) That the Committee supports the relevant recommendations of the scrutiny review on welfare reform and financial inclusion, which have synergies with the review on child poverty.

DETAIL

1. The attached report presents Cabinet with the outcomes of the Scrutiny review of Child Poverty. The review sought to understand the impact of child poverty on a child's health and education and make recommendations on local action to help prevent and mitigate against this.
2. Following consideration by Cabinet an action plan will be submitted to the Select Committee setting out how approved recommendations will be implemented detailing officers responsible for action and timescales.

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

3. None at this stage.

LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

4. None

RISK ASSESSMENT

5. This review is categorised as low to medium risk. Existing management systems and daily routine activities are sufficient to control and reduce risk.

SUSTAINABLE COMMUNITY STRATEGY IMPLICATIONS

6. The following strategies are relevant:

Sustainable Communities Strategy

- Wellbeing and achievement for adults, children and young people
This includes the Council Plan objective to reduce the impact of poverty on family life and the Tees Valley Unlimited Business Plan objective of improved economic inclusion.
- The work links in the general to the vision for Economic Renaissance in Stockton.

- Core improvement themes, particularly economic regeneration and transport; children and young people; and healthier communities and adults.

A framework for tackling Family Poverty

- Ensure that every child receives the best start in life
- Maximising Family income

Joint Health and Wellbeing Strategy 2013-2018

The Strategy identified 'giving every child the best start in life' as a key priority for the Health and Wellbeing Board. The work is also relevant to the Strategy vision, particularly in relation to the following key themes: give every child the best start in life; enable all children, young people and adults to maximise their capabilities and have control over their lives; create fair employment and good work for all; ensure a healthy standard of living for all; create and develop healthy and sustainable places and communities; and strengthen the role and impact of ill-health prevention.

EQUALITIES IMPACT ASSESSMENT

7. This report has been subject to an Equality Impact Assessment and has been judged to have a positive impact.

CONSULTATION INCLUDING WARD/COUNCILLORS

8. The proposals in this report have been developed in consultation with the Cabinet Member for Children and Young People and the Director of Public Health. The Committee received evidence from Council Services, the voluntary and community sector and local primary school - full details are set out in the Select Committee report.

Name of Contact Officer: Judith Trainer
Post Title: Team Leader Scrutiny and Electoral
Telephone No. 01642 528158
Email Address: judith.trainer@stockton.gov.uk

Education related? Yes

Background Papers None

Ward(s) and Ward Councillors

The proposals as a whole are not ward specific.

Property

None