

STOCKTON-ON-TEES BOROUGH COUNCIL

CABINET RECOMMENDATIONS

PROFORMA

Cabinet Meeting7th March 2019

1. Title of Item/Report

Bright Minds Big Futures - The Big Plan

2. Record of the Decision

Consideration was given to a report that sought endorsement for The Big Plan, a plan prepared by the Bright Minds Big Futures (BMBF) initiative.

The Big Plan was the culmination of a two year programme of engagement with young people, which was based on a specific focus on engagement and participation, using specific projects such as SBC Correspondents, Takeover Challenge and consultation processes to engage and connect with young people across Stockton-on-Tees. These findings, further research and the results of an online survey had enabled the initiative to gain a basic understanding of what it felt like to be a young person growing up in the Borough, hopes for the future, and therefore the details and proposals in The Big Plan.

The Council's ambition was to make the Borough of Stockton-on-Tees a place which was both great to grow up and a place which would also create the right conditions for young people to be successful and have a big future.

The vision for children and young people was of a commitment to ensuring children and young people were at the heart of the future of the Borough and to understanding what young people want from their perspective to make this happen.

In considering how to take this ambition further forward, an initial outline of an initiative 'Growing up Stockton' was developed as a means of engaging with children and young people. This was partially based around evidence from the Children's Society's model of a good childhood. The approach had been developed and tested through engaging and consulting with young people via BMBF. This initiative had evolved into a young person led movement focusing on:

- Supporting young people to achieve a sense of self
- Ensuring there are stable and supportive relationships

- Providing opportunities for young people to engage in and be supported by wider society.

These priorities also sat at the heart of the new Children and Young People Strategy 2019-23 which was agreed by cabinet on 14 February.

The initiative developed its own identity and brand as Bright Minds Big Futures.

The Bright Minds Big Futures (BMBF) initiative was approaching its two year anniversary. The initiative began with a heavy emphasis on engagement and participation (as an alternative to existing representational models of engagement), using specific projects such as SBC Correspondents, Takeover Challenge and consultation processes to engage and connect with young people across Stockton-on-Tees.

Securing the engagement of the first cohort of correspondents was critical and this had allowed the Council to develop and nurture positive relationships gaining the trust of those young people involved. This group had in turn brought along friends and family to join the 'movement' which continued to evolve and increase organically.

The report provided details of the work carried out so far and sets out the next steps and recommendations.

A number of key developments worthy of note were outlined within the report.

There had been a number of key milestones and achievements:

- The transition from Stockton Youth Assembly (SYA) to the Big Committee (following a proposal submitted by young people which included all of the existing active SYA Members).
- The development of The Big Plan.
- Winning two awards (Youth Led Project of the Year and Individual Personal Development Award) at the regional British Youth Council convention in January and shortlisted for the final in London on March 8th 2019.

BMBF prepared a paper and presentation making suggestions on improving and developing the Stockton Youth Assembly (SYA) meeting and processes into a new format wholly designed, implemented and led by young people. These were accepted at the SYA, and changes endorsed by the Children and Young people Select Committee as part of its review into The Child's Journey, agreed by cabinet in February 2019.

Meetings were held more frequently regularly along with a formal bi-monthly meeting which was also attended by the Leader, the Cabinet Member for Children and Young People and the Director of Children's Services.

The BMBF members set the agenda and had redesigned the format of the minutes into a simpler format echoing their own style and branding.

The position of Chair and other roles had all been decided by the Big Committee. The MYP no longer chaired the meeting, but attended in their formal capacity.

Members were recruited by the Committee as individuals not as representatives of institutions. They had full veto on all recruitment, selection and dismissal of Committee Members.

All Committee members sign up to a Pledge (to represent young people in the Borough), and a Code of Conduct and Purpose/Procedure (all devised by the Committee).

The Committee Members all had specific areas of responsibility which link to SBC services. They had the mandate to work directly with Officers, Elected Members, local MP's and external partners.

The Big Plan outlined the 'wish list' of young people in the Borough. The plan had been researched and written by the Committee in consultation with over 400 young people from schools and colleges.

The Big Plan covered the following areas and mirrored the roles of individuals on the Committee:

- Young Peoples Services
- Community Safety
- Environment
- Transport
- Business and Regeneration
- Health and Wellbeing
- Education
- Fitness and Leisure
- Diversity and Equality
- Democratic Services
- Our Priorities

Each area had a number of recommendations/requests and innovative project ideas. Some of the projects were already underway such as work with the Police, Public Health, SBC Social Care and Library Services

along with their own initiatives such as 'Take One Leave One' (period poverty), environmental work with Cultivate Tees Valley.

It was envisaged that the Council would work directly with the Big Committee on the implementation of the plan, and would play a key role in engagement of other partners as required.

Members of the Big Committee were in attendance at the meeting and made a presentation to Cabinet. The presentation covered the detail of the Big Committee, the Big Plan and the recent MYP election. Cabinet were then given the opportunity to ask questions and make comment on the presentation.

RESOLVED that:-

1. The Big Plan be endorsed.
2. Officers to work with the Big Committee on its implementation.
3. The Big Committee be invited back to Cabinet in October 2019 to report on the first 6 months of implementation.

3. Reasons for the Decision

To ensure that the Council continues to demonstrate its commitment to engaging children and young people and to supporting their aspirations to ensure Stockton-on-Tees is a great place to grow up in.

4. Alternative Options Considered and Rejected

None.

5. Declared (Cabinet Member) Conflicts of Interest

Councillor Nigel Cooke declared a personal non prejudicial interest in respect of agenda item 5 - Bright Minds Big Futures - The Big Plan as the report mentioned the Georgian Theatre which was managed by Tees music Alliance.

6. Details of any Dispensations

N/A

7. Date and Time by which Call In must be executed

Midnight, 15 March 2019

Proper Officer
11 March 2019