



The
Big Committee
Brightmindsbigfutures


The Big Plan

Created and written
entirely by the young
people of Stockton-on-
Tees.



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About us:

What is Bright Minds Big Futures? (BMBF)

Bright Minds Big Futures is a program dedicated to giving young people within the Borough of Stockton-on-Tees a voice within the Local Authority.

We are split into three main divisions:

- The Big Committee, projects and discussion groups dedicated to making the Borough a great place to grow up.
- Social Action: This team helps run the projects and campaigns The Big Committee devise. Some of our campaign include "Take One or Leave One" and even supporting the national Make Your Mark Campaign "Put an End to Knife Crime". In the past we have hosted our own music gigs to fundraise for BMBF and volunteered at official council events. We are always looking for new volunteers to get involved and bring new ideas.
- SBC Correspondents: Any event that Stockton-on-Tees Borough Council run, we will correspond on. Separated into teams, we use social media for instant coverage and advertisements during events such as SIRF, Stockton Sparkles and Stockton Fireworks.

What is The Big Committee? (TBC)

We are a self-selected cabinet of young people working with the Council who discuss topics and issues facing young people within the area. We debate and come up with ways to improve growing up within the Borough working with Council Officers and Elected Members. This is an invite only table, but we are always looking for new volunteers to help each department!

Our Big Committee - 2018/2019

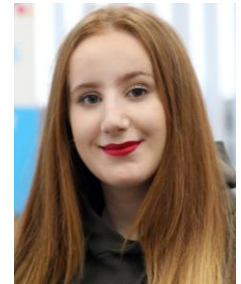


Kameron Spence – Chair of The Big Committee

I was elected Chair by the committee in 2018, and ever since I have loved working to try and make Stockton-on-Tees a great place to grow up. Soon I'll be moving away for university to study Film and TV Production, but Stockton will always be home to me. I have been dedicated to working with BMBF for almost two years now and hope to be working with them for years to come

Emily Hill – Vice Chair of The Big Committee

I am the Vice Chair and Head of Children and Young People's Services on our Big Committee. I'm passionate about improving the lives of our young people and ensuring equal opportunity for all. I have a special interest in health and have co-founded Youth Health Stockton-on-Tees along with our Head of Health and Wellbeing and organisation Health Watch.



Alex Whitmore - Head of Business & Regeneration

I am passionate about the local area and what it can become through investment in different business and regeneration projects such as the globe theatre and soon pocket park. I am old fashioned and believe that the town centre should be the community hub of any town and having such a unique town centre should bring people in of all ages. From the work I have done for the Council, it has given me a chance to work as BMBF assistant to help run and organise, so I can get the experience in local politics before I go to university to study government and politics.

Rebecca Dawson – Head of Fitness and Leisure

I am head of our fitness and leisure section within The Big Committee as well as lead correspondent for all the events we attend. Working within these departments has opened up so many opportunities for me to enhance my own skills while improving on things that I am passionate about. I have worked with BMBF since the beginning and cannot wait to see what the future holds!





George Reed – Head of Environment & Green Spaces

From event corresponding, I became a founding member of BMBF and helped shape our Big Committee from SYA. My Contributions to this plan in Education and E&GS, which I hope will demonstrate my wish for the Borough's young people to be demanding of local authority and proud of their locality, stem from face to face consultations with MBMF members. My volunteering for BMBF recently brought me a BYC regional award for Personal Development.

Lava Aram – Head of Health & Wellbeing

I am the head of Health and Well-being within The Big Committee. I and the Vice Chair have co-founded Youth Health Stockton-On-Tees with Health Watch and we aim to make a positive change in how healthcare professionals treat young people and hopefully, create a safe space for young people to consult on issues such as their mental health. I'm looking forward to our future achievements as a team.

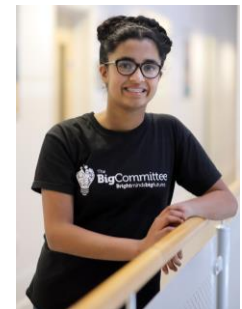


Liani Weston – Big Committee Administrator

I am the Administrator for The Big Committee to help organise the meeting. I enjoy changing peoples lives for the better and making sure they know what there entitled too in any aspect. I have recently been hired by North Tyneside council to help change lives of young people and for corporate parents to understand.

Netanya Alwis – Democratic Services

What sparked my interest in joining BMBF? As a correspondent and a Big Committee member, I have been given a voice that is heard in Stockton. Bright Minds Big Futures has given me a chance to connect with young people and make a difference to their lives!





Eve McDonald – Head of Education

I first became involved with BMBF during SIRF when I helped the correspondents with photographing the event. Since then, I joined the education group and have recently become part of The Big Committee, where I look forward to working further with other young people.

Kasia Clark

Hi, I'm Kasia. I am part of The Big Committee and the Correspondents group however I am also part of the Health and Well-Being group. I have lived in Stockton for almost 8 years. I am trying to make Stockton-on-Tees better for people who live here. BMBF has helped me develop my communication skills and given me the ability to have my voice heard.



Lilly Crisp

My name is Lilly Crisp, I am 14 years old and I joined BMBF in the summer of last year. I am an SBC Correspondent and a member of the Big Committee. Outside of BMBF I enjoy musical theatre, drama and dance. I joined BMBF because I love being a part of something which helps gives young people in the Borough a voice! I like to keep up to date with events occurring locally and globally and I love to help in my local community. I am described as being a kind and caring person and someone who doesn't back down from their opinions!

Elisha Kaur – BMBF Mentor/Advisor

As one of the founding members of BMBF, I have been working close with the initiative since 2017. Although, I am currently living away at university studying Law, I still operate within the role of advisor where I am still able to make an impact of young people's lives in Stockton-On-Tees. My vision for BMBF is ever expanding and I hope it will be applicable to every single young person in the borough.





Jess Hugill - BMBF Mentor/Advisor and Former MYP (Member of Youth Parliament) for Stockton-on-Tees

I have been involved with Youth Democracy in Stockton since 2015 when I was elected as MYP and I am excited to see the progress that BMBF will make towards giving a much-needed voice to the young people of the Borough. I am currently an engineering apprentice at Nestle, York but I will continue to support and mentor the group, helping wherever I can. I'm so proud to be part of such an amazing organisation!



Children & Young People's Service

Every child in Stockton-on-Tees deserves to be raised in a loving and caring environment that can develop all aspects of the young person.

If at any point a child or young person feels unsafe, there must be help in place that is easily accessible.

Social Care

Bright Minds Big Future promises to work closely with social workers and other SBC staff. We will listen to the requests and advice of workers and young people in care to ensure they have a happy and healthy upbringing.

What will we do	We will work closely with the Council and in particular Children's Services to make sure the voices of <i>Children in Our Care</i> and other specific groups are heard.
What we want	The Council to continue to give us opportunities to develop this work

Youth Groups (Youth United Stockton)

Youth groups are essential to the development and entertainment of young people.

What will we do	Bright Minds Big Futures agrees to promote and support youth groups within the Borough.
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<p>What we want</p>	<p>We urge the council to continue the support of youth groups available through Youth United Stockton.</p>
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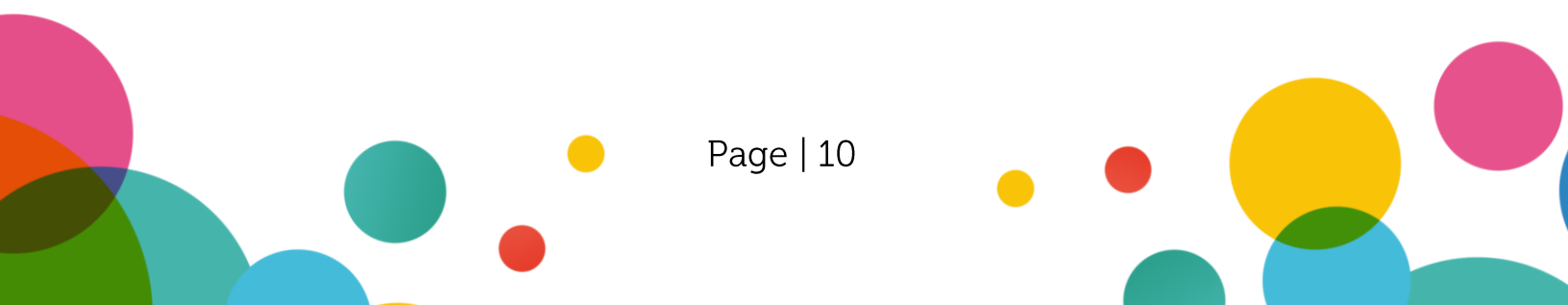
Youth Direction

Bright Minds Big Futures would like to develop a closer relationship with Youth Direction in making Stockton-on-Tees a great place to grow up.

Funding

Bright Minds Big Futures would like to thank the Council for the wonderful funding it has provided over the many years for Children and Young People’s Services.

<p>What will we do</p>	<p>We wish to nominate ambassadors from Bright Minds Big Futures to work and communicate with Youth Direction to form a relationship between the two groups.</p>
<p>What we want</p>	<p>We request that funding breakdowns will be made available for Bright Minds Big Futures to review expenditures for Children and Young People’s Services.</p> <p>We request that Youth Direction nominate a rep to work with us to achieve our goal.</p>





Community Safety

All children in Stockton-On-Tees should feel safe growing up. They should be given help and support to develop the skills they need to assure their own safety in future life. If a young person is unsafe, we shall ensure that they know the support that is available for them.

Police

From our survey (presented to over three hundred young people), many suggested the idea of increasing police patrols in at risk areas. Specific areas such as parks and high streets have been flagged by young people as unsafe.

What will we do	BMBF will work with our local MPs to raise the issue of cuts to police services. We will request that this issue to be faced in parliament and that services should have enough funding to supply enough officers for their area.
What we want	We urge the council to support us to work with the police to increase police patrols on highstreets during high nightlife activity. Police should be on patrol to ensure the safety of the public before an incident occurs rather than be called out when it may be too late.

Fire Safety

Bright Minds Big Futures believe that institutions should take it upon themselves to have the necessary systems in place to make sure young people are aware of the risk of fire and what to do in an emergency.

All children and young people within the Borough must be aware of the dangers of fire and must be prepared for an emergency.

What will we do	We urge schools, colleges and local youth groups to invite fire safety professionals in to talk to young people and educate them on fire safety.
What we want	We urge the council to support us in this aim.

Make Your Mark National Campaign – End to Knife Crime

In the year 2018, the young people of the UK through Make Your Mark voted for 'Put an End to Knife Crime' as one of the two national campaigns.

What will we do	BMBF promises to do all it can to support this campaign on a local scale. We will continue to work with The British Youth Council and Make Your Mark on national campaigns.
What we want	We urge the council to support us in this aim.



Drug Abuse

Through the survey we conducted, it was made aware to Bright Minds Big Futures that some young people have become trapped in a cycle of drug abuse. Many want to be able to exit this cycle safely and in a place where they feel safe from judgment. No young person should be in a position where they feel trapped with no support network.

What will we do	Organise campaigns to raise the awareness of the dangers and repercussions of drug abuse.
What we want	Support from SBC to look at how we can work together to make young people aware of support available for drug abuse, from services such as rehabilitation centres.



Transportation

From getting to work, college or even meeting up with friends, transport plays a huge part in the lives of everyone; not only children and young people. Bright Minds Big Futures wants to make sure that the transport systems in Stockton-on-Tees works for all young people.

Fewer Cars on the Road

Cars are one of the leading causes of climate change and damage to the environment. Schools in Stockton-On-Tees have contacted Bright Minds Big Futures requesting campaigns in support of reducing the number of cars on the road.

What will we do	We will create a campaign to increase cycling and public transport appeal, in response this reduces the number of cars on the road.
What we want	We urge the council to support us in this aim.

Transport Fees for Children and Young People

Bright Minds Big Futures has received large amount of comments on the price of public transport. Many complain that the price does not provide the correct quality of service. Other complain that, as it is still a legal requirement for under 18s to be in some form of education, it is unfair to make 16+ pay full price. While the "Stockton Pathfinder" helps reduce the price by half, for some routes this can still be expensive for students and young people.

<p>What will we do</p>	<p>We will campaign to reduce the price of public transport for young people, and in some cases make certain bus routes free for children and young people. Bright Minds Big Futures respects this has been a difficult topic in the past but would like the council to consider discussing it again.</p>
<p>What we want</p>	<p>We urge the council to support us in this aim and to help us approach and work with local bus companies.</p>

Transport Links

From the survey we conducted, many young people noted that they struggle to get to town centres and leisure areas due to the lack of bus routes and frequency of buses on existing routes.

<p>What will we do</p>	<p>BMBF will create a survey and go into local schools/colleges to locate where young people request new routes.</p>
<p>What we want</p>	<p>We would like the council to support us to work with local bus companies to discuss increasing the number of routes and buses.</p>



Congestion

Many young people that can drive have pointed out issues of congestion on busy roads, this in turn can affect busy bus routes to and from work/school.

What will we do	We want to open up a discussion with the relevant organisations concerning congestion within Stockton-on-Tees.
What we want	We urge the council to support us in this aim and help us make the relevant links.

Examples of Transport Groups in the North East

Newcastle has an effective system that works in reducing costs and making it easier for young people to use public transport. Find out more at:

Nexus Pop - <https://nexus.org.uk/pop>

What will we do	We want to create a similar system, or partnership, for example as 'Nexus Pop' in Stockton-on-Tees.
What we want	We urge the council to support us in this aim.



Business and Regeneration

From the survey given to all the young people of Stockton-on-Tees, many responded saying there isn't enough for young people to do in the Borough.

We want to make Stockton-on-Tees a great place to grow up, and businesses in Stockton-on-Tees play a large part in young people's lives.

Bright Minds Big Futures Hub

Bright Minds Big Futures have discussed the possibility of opening a Hub for young people to go to and relax, work and meet friends. We want to create a safe space on Stockton High Street for young people to come together.

We have considered how it will be run, our initial thought was that it would be a volunteer work placement ran by young people for young people, however after extensive research from The Big Committee, we found a group from Manchester named Ziferblat:

"Ziferblat is the world's first pay per minute sitting room, meeting room, coworking and events space. It's the place where you can do as you please, like an extension of your own home."

It costs 8p per minute and after four hours it is entirely free. All food and drinks are provided free of charge- you only pay for the time you spend. This new idea would be fresh and unique for the high street and appeal to all ages but be targeted mainly towards young people.

Another way of doing this would be to work with existing businesses on the high street to help support us in starting a Hub for young people, this is similar to the Child Friendly Leeds Ambassador program:

<https://www.leeds.gov.uk/childfriendlyleeds/how-do-i-get-involved>

What will we do	We would like to explore the possibility of a hub
What we want	We would appreciate time to discuss how we can develop this idea with Stockton Council.

BMBF Approved

Many young people have said they are unaware of existing businesses which are accessible to them and young people friendly. The Big Committee came up with the 'BMBF Approved' initiative where members of Bright Minds Big Futures can evaluate local businesses on how suitable they are for Young People. If they fulfil our requirements, they will be given a clear sticker to show on the front of the business to show they are suitable for young people.

What will we do	Businesses that qualify for the 'BMBF Approved' scheme will be given extra publicity and an official Award by Bright Minds Big Futures to show their commitment to young people
What we want	We would like support from the Council to devise and deliver the initiative, so that the public and young people know what it's all about and can get involved.

Promotional Work

Linking to the “BMBF Approved” initiative, Bright Minds Big Futures have had many comments saying young people do not know what is available for them in Stockton-On-Tees.


What will we do	We would like to work with the council to promote Young People Friendly leisure businesses and activities. Young people must be aware of what is there for them.
What we want	We urge the council to support us in this aim.

Token Economy System

Some of our committee members have researched the psychological studies on ‘Token Economy’ Systems. In a basic form, it is a form of behaviour modification to increase productiveness and reward members.

Bright Minds Big Futures believes we can use aspect of this to persuade young people to get involved more with us and volunteering programs we run. While the current ‘V-Inspired’ points system is amazing for young people going into higher education, we believe there is more we can do to thank the young people for the work they do.

While we accept it is a volunteering program and therefore we cannot pay volunteers, we would like to create a rewards system for them. This will increase the morale of Bright Minds Big Futures while also encouraging more positive work.



What will we do	We want to work with the Council to build a new system to reward our young volunteers. We have thought of ideas, such as discounts at local businesses similar to the booklets handed during events by 'Stockton Bid' but tailored to a younger audience.
What we want	We urge the council to support us in this aim.

Environment & Green Spaces

With issues regarding climate change quickly rising, there are many things that Stockton-on-Tees Council and Bright Minds Big Futures can do to care for our environment and ensure a safe and healthy future for young people. A healthier local environment can greatly benefit the health and wellbeing of the young people in the Borough.

Less Litter

One of the issues brought up by The Big Committee is the amount of litter around town centres and parks in the Borough. This issue was initially brought to us by Billingham South Primary School.

What will we do	BMBF will manage this system (below) once it is up and operational.
What we want	We want to work with SBC to create a volunteering system for young people to help with litter picking with the Council and Community groups. A vote in The Big Committee showed that young people would be willing to litter pick on an 'in your own time' volunteering basis if some sort of reward was given.

(Refer to 'Business and Regeneration' for 'Token Economy')

Recycling Bins

Recycling plastics and aluminium is very rare within schools; therefore, we will persuade schools to make it more available for students to recycle plastics and aluminium. Recycling is one of the best ways to care for the environment.

What will we do	We will contact schools and colleges in the Borough and ask them to consider investing in plastic aluminium recycling bins that are easily accessible to students and staff.
What we want	We urge the council to support us in this aim and help us contact schools to achieve this.

More Plants

Bright Minds Big Futures would like to persuade the council to plant flowers around town centres and parks. This makes areas look nicer and helps the environment. Planters can be created from 'Eco-Bricks'; plastic bottles filled with other plastics built into a planter box.

What will we do	We want the support of SBC to run an event where all ages can come together to build Eco-Brick planters that can be implemented into areas around Stockton-on-Tees. We also would like SBC to support us in persuading local business to invest in hanging baskets outside of establishments to increase aesthetic of the area.
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<p>What we want</p>	<p>BMBF will plan and host the event with the support from SBC. We will also work with them to find the best/appropriate areas to place the planters.</p>
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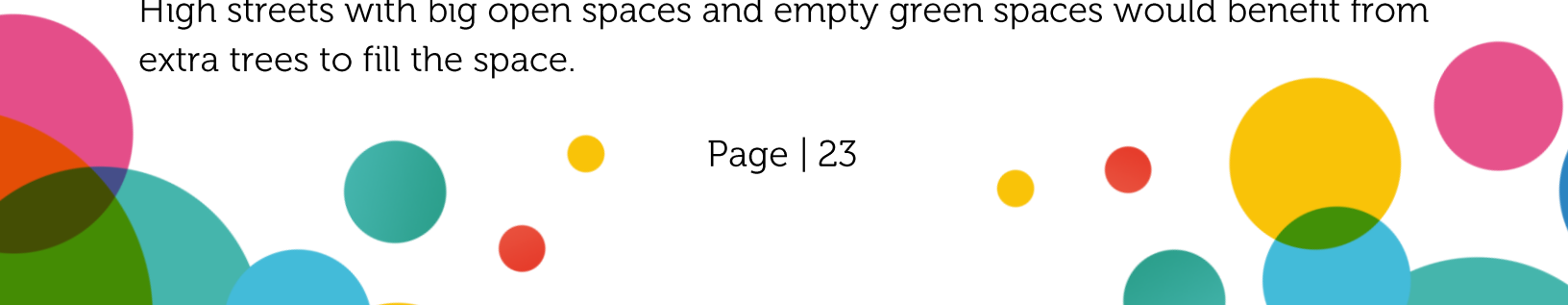
Planters on Bridges

Many people see our bridges as beautiful landmarks for Stockton-on-Tees. We believe that the bridges will look and feel even better with planter boxes along the edges.

<p>What will we do</p>	<p>The Big Committee already has a connection to the “Grow Wild” north charity that gives funding to groups to improve the environment with plants, wildlife and fungi. With this connection we could apply for funding to set up planting boxes along the big bridges on the River Tees in highly populated areas.</p>
<p>What we want</p>	<p>We would like to ask SBC if it would be possible to place planters on our bridges.</p>

Trees

Trees improve the aesthetic of an area and help clean the air. By increasing the number of trees; we can, in a small capacity, help reduce climate change. High streets with big open spaces and empty green spaces would benefit from extra trees to fill the space.



What will we do	We will campaign to plant more trees in open areas and green spaces, across the Borough.
What we want	We urge the council to support us in this aim.

Vegetable Plots

The Big Committee discussed the possibility of small vegetable patches in community centres/areas around Stockton-on-Tees. All grown products could go towards food banks and local shelters to help those in need.

What will we do	By working with charities such as Cultivate Tees Valley, along with the Council, Bright Minds Big Futures can grasp a greater understanding of which areas would benefit from locally grown vegetables.
What we want	We urge the council to support us in this aim.

Caring for The Environment

Many young people within and outside of Bright Minds Big Futures have commented on over grown pathways and abandoned green spaces that have become out of control. This can make areas unattractive and unsafe for children.

At Bright Minds Big Futures, we respect that land may be privately owned but we ask if the council could support us to contact owners and encourage private maintenance.

What will we do	Bright Minds Big Futures can create a survey/forum to ask the public for specific areas they feel need more maintenance.
What we want	We would like to discuss with the Council areas that are overgrown and how we can improve maintenance of these areas.

Protecting Existing Parks

Bright Minds Big futures would like to thank the council for the work they do protecting parks from private owners and would like to ask for the to continue to protect parks such as Preston park.

Parks are wonderful for environmental education for children and an amazing social area for all.

Environmental Education

Bright Minds Big Futures believes that it is vital for children and young people to be taught to care for their area from a young age. With the increasing dangers of climate change, it has been left to our generation to help reduce climate change for the future.

What will we do	We will try to persuade schools and colleges to educate young people on the benefit of protecting the environment. By teaching children and young people thing such as how to reduce plastics and the benefits of recycling and composting, each
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	young person will be equipped with small skills to help the environment.
What we want	We urge the council to support us in this aim.

Bike Lock Areas

Reducing the number of cars on the road will dramatically help the environment, however, to cater to the increase of cycling we would like to persuade the council to designate specific, clear and secure bike lock areas in high streets and town centres.

What will we do	We want to work with SBC to create a clear, safe place to secure bikes in town centres and high streets as it will encourage residents to increase their use of bikes and reduce their use of cars.
What we want	We urge the council to support us in this aim and help us contact the relevant organisations.

Lighting in Park & Paths

A risk to many people is dark parks and pathways, even more so when winter bring darkness earlier.

What will we do	We would like to work with the Council to evaluate public footpaths and work with us to highlight areas that may need more or new lighting.
What we want	We urge the council to support us in this aim.



Designing Green Spaces

Members of Bright Minds Big Futures and young people outside of the group have shown interest in having an input in the design and building of parks and green spaces.

What will we do	We would like to create a connection within the Council to enable us to input into plans for the development of green spaces and parks in Stockton-on-Tees.
What we want	We urge the council to support us in this aim.

E-Waste

The Big Committee believe there is a lack of locations in the Borough where E-waste can be dropped off for recycling. Which means more equipment in landfill sites which is worse for the environment.

What will we do	We will work to look into the possibility for more E-waste facilities
What we want	We want to discuss this further with SBC and understand their plans for the disposal of E-waste.



FSC Products

With deforestation a grave environmental concern, the Big Committee wants to encourage SBC to use products certified by the Forest Stewardship Council (FSC) wherever possible. The FSC label signifies the paper or wood in a product was produced sustainably.

What will we do	We will encourage SBC to choose sustainably produced wood and paper products where possible.
What we want	We want to have the opportunity to discuss further with SBC.



Health & Wellbeing

Being mindful of our health and wellbeing is important for everyone, but for young people especially, Bright Minds Big Futures thinks that there should be an emphasis on this to make sure all children and young people grow up to lead long, healthy and happy lives.

Mental Health

Both in our Bright Minds Big Futures survey and the recent Make Your Mark vote, the young people in our borough have identified mental health as an issue which needs to be tackled. We would like to help raise awareness for the support available for those struggling with mental health conditions, as well as removing the stigma surrounding it. Through these actions, we believe young people will feel more comfortable to speak to adults and health care professionals on this topic and begin a fully-supported journey to improve their mental health.

One of the biggest issues is the waiting time young people have when situations may be dire and quick action is needed. Many young people have had to wait two months or even more when on an emergency list.

What will we do	We wish to work in any capacity we can with Stockton Council and MPs to lower the waiting time or campaign for change.
What we want	We urge the council to support us in this aim.



Working with Schools

Bright Minds Big Futures believes that working with schools is integral in reducing the stigma surrounding health, as well as education our young people on the ways they can make better choices surrounding their health and wellbeing. PE departments could be improved to offer holistic development to all students, instead of only those in KS3. This also includes sexual health (see sexual health section)

What will we do	We will persuade schools, colleges and even universities to better educate our young people on health risks and services available to them. Work must also be done to teach young people how to live a healthy and active lifestyle.
What we want	We urge the council to support us in this aim by supporting us to make the relevant links.

Quicker Consultations

Whilst we appreciate most of our health care services are under the NHS, we should be able to work closely with doctor's surgeries and healthcare charities to improve the waiting time for young people.

We also feel that reliable information should be available online for young people to make informed decisions about their health.

Youth Health Stockton-on-Tees

Youth Health Stockton-on-Tees is an organisation formed and run by members of the Big Committee in partnership with Health Watch Stockton-on-Tees. It aims to give young people an avenue to voice their concerns about their own health and healthcare providers; it also works to improve social care in the Borough.

What will we do	BMBF believes we can influence real change in the Borough's health and social care provision and better the experiences for our young people.
What we want	We urge the council to support us by listening to our ideas and making change.

Sexual Health

Bright Minds Big Futures would like to raise awareness for sexual health risks and make young people aware of the services (such as sexual health clinics) available to them. We would also like to remove the stigma surrounding sexual health so that our young people feel open to discussions about their sexual health concerns.

What will we do	BMBF would like to try to persuade schools to play an active role in sex education for all forms of sexuality, not just heterosexuality. We believe all people are equal regardless of sexuality and should be equally educated.
What we want	We urge the council to support us in this aim.



School Meals

School meals are important part of life for all our young people. We believe that young people should be made aware of the food they are consuming at school, with nutritional and calorific information. BMBF believes that healthier and more culturally diverse meals should be offered to students in order to cater better for all dietary requirements.

What will we do	We ask the Council to support our campaign to ensure that free school meals are better publicised so that all young people have access to a healthy and fulfilling school meal.
What we want	We urge the council to support us and advise us in this aim.



Education

Education is a huge part of all our young people's lives. Bright Minds Big Futures would like to work with the council to improve the education and opportunities offered to our young people.

GlobalBridge

GlobalBridge is a website which provides students with a platform to showcase their qualifications and talents. GlobalBridge is used by further education providers and employers meaning that by using GlobalBridge as standard in the Borough's schools and colleges, our students can be afforded unique opportunities.

What will we do	BMBF will try to persuade schools and colleges in the Borough to research into GlobalBridge and make it available for their students.
What we want	We will urge the council to support us in this aim and look at also suggesting schools take this on board.



Apprenticeships

At Bright Minds Big Futures, we believe that all forms of further education should be promoted. By promoting apprenticeships, our young people will be able to find something valuable to extend their career opportunities.

What will we do	We will persuade schools and colleges to promote apprenticeships and support students wishing to take that path.
What we want	BMBF would request that SBC show stronger support for apprenticeships in the local area and promote them more effectively to young people.

Extra-Curricular Opportunities

Alongside academic studies, extra-curricular activities are vital in a well-rounded education. We believe that all young people should have access to extra-curricular activities such as sport, music and art clubs. They should have time to take part in said activities. Many young people have complained that due to the stress of and the amount of school work, students do not have time to take part in extracurricular activities.

What will we do	We wish to work with MPs to look into this issue with Bright Minds Big Future on a national scale.
What we want	We urge the council to support us in this aim.

Career Support

Between the ages of 16-18, young people have important decisions to make which will affect their whole lives. Bright Minds Big Futures thinks that all young people should be provided with career support and guidance to help them find the path that is right for them.

What will we do	We want to improve access to careers guidance in schools and colleges
What we want	BMBF asks if SBC can do anything to encourage schools and colleges to purchase and implement the best possible packages of careers guidance.

University Links

To help familiarise our young people with further education, Bright Minds Big Futures would like to form relationships with universities across the country. We would hope that visits to and from these universities will help our young people to make informed decisions regarding their choices for further education.

Curriculum and Teaching Methods

We believe that exams should focus on practical skills and application of our knowledge - rather than being glorified memory tests

What will we do	We want to influence change in Curriculum and Teaching methods.
What we want	Whilst Bright Minds Big Futures appreciates that exam reform is a national issue, we would very much

	welcome the support of the Council to facilitate discussions with MP's for national support.
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Exams to Reflect GCSEs and A-levels

Throughout our times in school, young people are subject to many different test and examinations in school and college. We believe that regardless of age, the questions and tasks should reflect the difficulty of our real exams; the results we receive should be in the same grading system as our GCSEs and A-Levels which we are ultimately working towards.

What will we do	We want to work with MP's to challenge the current system.
What we want	Whilst Bright Minds Big Futures appreciates that this is a national issue, we would very much welcome the support of the Council to facilitate discussions with MP's for national support.

Student Councils

Bright Minds Big Futures believes that student councils are crucial to hear the voices of our young people, as well as promoting democracy and an interest in the political climate of our country.

What will we do	We want to encourage all schools to have a form of student council so that we can work towards the needs and wishes of the young people in our Borough.
What we want	We urge the council to support us in this aim.



Literacy & Mathematics Skills

Basic literacy and mathematics skills are vital for all students.

What will we do	We want to work with MP's to challenge the current system.
What we want	BMBF would like the Council to support them in campaigning for there to be better provisions and support for older students who struggle with these critical skills.

Treatment of SEN Students

Bright Minds Big Futures believes that everyone is an individual and should be treated and supported as such.

What will we do	We want to work towards an increased focus on SEN students being treated as individuals and according to their personal requirements, as opposed to all SEN students being treated as one in the same.
What we want	We urge the council to support us in this aim.



Learning Skills

Bright Minds Big Futures would like learning skills to be better promoted in schools. We believe that skills such as critical thinking, creativity, communication and collaboration are vital in helping young people learn and are crucial to success in later life.

What will we do	BMBF would like to campaign for a better and more integrated Life Skills programme across Schools.
What we want	We will urge the council to support us in this aim.

Fitness & Leisure

Having down time is important for everyone. Bright Minds Big Futures would like to improve the facilities and activities for our young people to help encourage healthy and active social lives.

Leisure Centres and Facilities

Many young people feel that there are not enough activities to cater for the 14-17-year-old age range.

What will we do	BMBF would like to work with the Council and local facilities to improve the range of activities on offer to all our young people, carefully organising events to suit the interests of all ages.
What we want	We urge the council to support us in this aim.

Price of Activities

From the results of our survey and other consultations, young people feel as though there are not enough things to do within their price range.

What will we do	BMBF would like to work with the Council and local facilities to improve and increase fun and cost-effective activities for all our young people.
What we want	We will urge the council to support us in this aim.



Weight Loss Scheme

In the modern day and age, the obesity crisis looms over us all.

What will we do	BMBF would like to implement a Borough-wide weight loss scheme (like 'Newcastle Can') for people of all ages to partake in, simultaneously raising the awareness for a healthy, active lifestyle.
What we want	BMBF would like to work with the Council to develop this scheme.

Publicising Events

As the Borough has some fabulous fitness events throughout the year.

What will we do	BMBF would like to work to increase the amount of publicity they receive. By doing this, we will be able to get many more residents and young people involved and raise awareness for the opportunities in our home Borough.
What we want	BMBF would like to work with the Council to support this scheme.



Fitness Education

Bright Minds Big Futures believes that promoting an active lifestyle is vital in giving our young people the best place possible to grow up. By schools educating them on the positive impacts and fitness, diet and exercise, we can hope for happier, healthier future for all our young people.

Water Sports/River

Bright Minds Big Futures would like to work with the council to better promote our facilities down on the River Tees.

What will we do	We would like the Council to support us to campaign for a reduction in prices for young people to make water sport activities more accessible to us.
What we want	We urge the council to support us in this aim.

Diversity & Equality

Bright Minds Big Futures (BMBF) is dedicated to the application of equal opportunities throughout its work. In its meetings, activities, services and as an employer, no person shall be discriminated against. This shall be regardless of race, gender, sexual orientation, national or ethnic origin, physical, sensory or learning disability, political or religious beliefs, responsibilities for dependents, marital status, socio-economic background, HIV status, trades union activity, migrant status or on any other grounds that cannot be justified through the policy of the group.

LGBT+ Community

Bright Minds Big Futures is dedicated to enforcing equal rights and opportunities to all young people of any sex, gender identity and sexual identity. We want to extend support to any LGBT+ groups/persons within Stockton-on-Tees.

What will we do	BMBF would develop these events with the support and permission of the Council.
What we want	Members of BMBF have suggested a 'Pride' event to be held during LGBT history month in February to show Stockton Councils Support for the LGBT+ groups. These events can range from as big as parades to as small as a coffee evening at a local

	business supported by Stockton Council to show their support but must be easily accessible and affordable/free for everyone.
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Schools of Sanctuary

As Stockton-on-Tees is a City of Sanctuary, we would like our local schools to aim towards becoming a School of Sanctuary to show they are *“committed to being a safe and welcoming place for all, especially those seeking sanctuary. This could be people whose lives were in danger in their own country, who have troubles at home or are just looking for a space of safety.”*

What will we do	We will try to persuade local schools to become a School of Sanctuary.
What we want	We would like support from Stockton Council in persuading our local schools to become Schools of Sanctuary.

Democratic Services

Bright Minds Big Futures believes that democracy is extremely important. We are an apolitical group (does not support a specific political party) and is created purely to represent the views and opinions of every young person in the Borough. The Big Committee works on a democratic voting basis and want young people to have the opportunity to get involved in democracy and decision making.

Working with Our Local MP's

Bright Minds Big Futures would like to forge a positive and productive relationship with our two local MPs, present and future. As we are an apolitical group, we wish to work with any political party in the constituencies of Stockton-On-Tees.

What will we do	The Big Committee would like to have a meeting at least every two months with the elected MYP, Chair of The Big Committee and the elected MPs within Stockton to discuss the issues facing the young people of the Borough. BMBF respects that MPs have a very busy schedule but believe it is important to have a regular, healthy relationship with MPs..
What we want	We work with local council and councillors for local issues however we wish to work with our elected MP's for national issues that face the young people of the Borough. We

	would like the support of SBC to make this happen.
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Youth Parliament Voting

Currently, young people can only vote on who they want to represent them for Youth Parliament if their school or youth group decides to take part. Those schools and groups that do not take part or do not contact Stockton Council disadvantage their students/members by not opening the opportunity for them to vote.

What will we do	While we would like to work with schools and youth groups more closely and persuade them all to take part in voting, the Big Committee has come up with an alternative plan.
What we want	In a 'Make Your Mark' vote, young people can vote online with their name, constituency and postcode. We ask Stockton Council to consider this idea for future MYP votes to make it easier and more accessible for young people to choose their parliament representative. This would also be a fairer system as the elected MYP has traditionally come from a school with one of the highest number of students of the Borough and who are proactive in encouraging students to vote.



Working with the Member of Youth Parliament

There will always be a seat available for the Member of Youth Parliament (MYP) at the Big Committee table. Bright Minds Big Futures would like to support the MYP in making Stockton-on-Tees a great place to grow up.

Make Your Mark (Votes at 16)

Over 80,688 young people voted for 'Votes at 16' in Make Your Mark. The elected MYPs then decided that it would be one of our two national campaigns. BMBF will do all we can to help support this national campaign.

What will we do	We would like to start by forming a petition to know how many young people in Stockton-on-Tees would support 'Votes at 16'.
What we want	If there is a considerable majority, we will then present this to Stockton Council and our local MPs and ask for support in this campaign.



Our Priorities:

We look forward to working towards all areas of the plan over the next 12 months but feel that our key areas of priority are;

1. BMBF Hub
2. BMBF Approved Scheme
3. Token Economy
4. Transport fees
5. Establish strong connections with MP's to work on national campaigns such as mental health and GP waiting times

The Big Committee

February 2019