

**AGENDA ITEM**

**REPORT TO CABINET**

**17 DECEMBER 2020**

**REPORT OF CHILDREN AND YOUNG  
PEOPLE SELECT COMMITTEE**

**CABINET DECISION**

**Lead Cabinet Member – Children and Young People - Councillor Lisa Evans**

**SCRUTINY REVIEW OF THE COST OF SCHOOL UNIFORM**

**SUMMARY**

The Children and Young People Select Committee has completed a review examining the cost of school uniform.

**REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATION(S) / DECISION(S)**

This topic was included in the Scrutiny Work Programme for 2019/20. The review is now complete and the recommendations have been endorsed by the Children and Young People Select Committee for submission to Cabinet.

**RECOMMENDATIONS**

1. That Academy Trusts and Governing Bodies of Stockton Schools be asked to review their school uniform policies as a matter of urgency in consultation with parents and children taking account of the DfE advice to give the highest priority to cost and, in particular:
  - Keeping items of branded uniform to a minimum
  - Avoiding the use of specified suppliers
  - Avoiding different requirements for different year groups
  - Avoiding the compulsory use of children's initials on uniform items
2. That school governing bodies and leadership teams review the support they provide to families struggling to meet uniform costs taking account of the ideas and initiatives in place across Stockton schools gathered as part of this scrutiny exercise.
3. That all support provided by schools is clearly published on school websites alongside their uniform policies.
4. That improved co-ordination/ signposting of community and school-based support is co-ordinated through the new Community Partnerships.
5. That Government is urged to pass legislation to put the DfE best practice guidance on a statutory footing and support is sought from local MPs towards this end.
6. That the findings from the scrutiny review and the best practice from the school survey be shared with all Stockton Schools and reinforced at appropriate forums.

## **DETAIL**

1. The attached report outlines the outcomes of the Scrutiny Review of the Cost of School Uniform.
2. The overall aim of the review was to understand the issues raised by residents about the cost of school uniform and the opportunities locally to support parents in meeting those costs.
3. The Select Committee has considered desk top research of uniform polices across primary and secondary schools and has taken evidence from Council Officers, Children North East, Citizen's Advice Bureau and local community organisations. A survey was also sent to all Head Teachers to gather evidence about the support provided by individual schools.

## **COMMUNITY IMPACT IMPLICATIONS**

4. The recommendations seek to reduce the burden of uniform costs on local families and ensure that appropriate support is available and publicised.

## **FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

5. Costs are set out in the Select Committee report. There are no direct financial implications for the Council arising from the recommendations.

## **LEGAL IMPLICATIONS**

6. None.

## **RISK ASSESSMENT**

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

## **WARDS AFFECTED AND CONSULTATION WITH WARD/COUNCILLORS**

8. Not applicable.

## **BACKGROUND PAPERS**

9. None.

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