

Date: Wednesday 15 November 2023 at 5.00 pm

Venue: Jim Cooke Conference Suite, Stockton Central Library, Church Road,
Stockton-on-Tees, TS18 1TU

Cllr Carol Clark (Chair)
Cllr Barbara Inman (Vice-Chair)

Cllr Nathan Gale
Cllr David Reynard
Cllr Emily Tate
Cllr Katie Weston

Cllr Ray Godwin
Cllr Stephen Richardson
Cllr Sally Ann Watson

AGENDA

- 1 Evacuation Procedure** (Pages 7 - 8)
- 2 Apologies for Absence**
- 3 Declarations of Interest**
- 4 Minutes**
To approve the minutes of the last meeting held on 19 July 2023. (Pages 9 - 10)
- 5 Progress Update - Scrutiny Review of Care Leavers EET** (Pages 11 - 16)
- 6 Progress Update - Scrutiny Review of Child Poverty** (Pages 17 - 28)
- 7 Scrutiny Review of Narrowing the Gap in Educational Attainment**
To consider the scope for this appreciative inquiry scrutiny.

Members of the Public - Rights to Attend Meeting

With the exception of any item identified above as containing exempt or confidential information under the Local Government Act 1972 Section 100A(4), members of the public are entitled to attend this meeting and/or have access to the agenda papers.

Persons wishing to obtain any further information on this meeting, including the opportunities available for any member of the public to speak at the meeting; or for details of access to the meeting for disabled people, please

Contact: Scrutiny Support Officer Rachel Harrison on email rachel.harrison@stockton.gov.uk

KEY - Declarable interests are:-

- Disclosable Pecuniary Interests (DPI's)
- Other Registerable Interests (ORI's)
- Non Registerable Interests (NRI's)

Members – Declaration of Interest Guidance



Table 1 - Disclosable Pecuniary Interests

Subject	Description
Employment, office, trade, profession or vocation	Any employment, office, trade, profession or vocation carried on for profit or gain
Sponsorship	Any payment or provision of any other financial benefit (other than from the council) made to the councillor during the previous 12-month period for expenses incurred by him/her in carrying out his/her duties as a councillor, or towards his/her election expenses. This includes any payment or financial benefit from a trade union within the meaning of the Trade Union and Labour Relations (Consolidation) Act 1992.
Contracts	Any contract made between the councillor or his/her spouse or civil partner or the person with whom the councillor is living as if they were spouses/civil partners (or a firm in which such person is a partner, or an incorporated body of which such person is a director* or a body that such person has a beneficial interest in the securities of*) and the council — (a) under which goods or services are to be provided or works are to be executed; and (b) which has not been fully discharged.
Land and property	Any beneficial interest in land which is within the area of the council. 'Land' excludes an easement, servitude, interest or right in or over land which does not give the councillor or his/her spouse or civil partner or the person with whom the councillor is living as if they were spouses/ civil partners (alone or jointly with another) a right to occupy or to receive income.
Licences	Any licence (alone or jointly with others) to occupy land in the area of the council for a month or longer.
Corporate tenancies	Any tenancy where (to the councillor's knowledge)— (a) the landlord is the council; and (b) the tenant is a body that the councillor, or his/her spouse or civil partner or the person with whom the councillor is living as if they were spouses/ civil partners is a partner of or a director* of or has a beneficial interest in the securities* of.
Securities	Any beneficial interest in securities* of a body where— (a) that body (to the councillor's knowledge) has a place of business or land in the area of the council; and (b) either— (i) the total nominal value of the securities* exceeds £25,000 or one hundredth of the total issued share capital of that body; or (ii) if the share capital of that body is of more than one class, the total nominal value of the shares of any one class in which the councillor, or his/ her spouse or civil partner or the person with whom the councillor is living as if they were spouses/civil partners have a beneficial interest exceeds one hundredth of the total issued share capital of that class.

* 'director' includes a member of the committee of management of an industrial and provident society.

* 'securities' means shares, debentures, debenture stock, loan stock, bonds, units of a collective investment scheme within the meaning of the Financial Services and Markets Act 2000 and other securities of any description, other than money deposited with a building society.

Table 2 – Other Registerable Interest

You must register as an Other Registrable Interest:

- a) any unpaid directorships
- b) any body of which you are a member or are in a position of general control or management and to which you are nominated or appointed by your authority
- c) any body
 - (i) exercising functions of a public nature
 - (ii) directed to charitable purposes or
 - (iii) one of whose principal purposes includes the influence of public opinion or policy (including any political party or trade union) of which you are a member or in a position of general control or management

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Jim Cooke Conference Suite, Stockton Central Library **Evacuation Procedure & Housekeeping**

If the fire or bomb alarm should sound please exit by the nearest emergency exit. The Fire alarm is a continuous ring and the Bomb alarm is the same as the fire alarm however it is an intermittent ring.

If the Fire Alarm rings exit through the nearest available emergency exit and form up in Municipal Buildings Car Park.

The assembly point for everyone if the Bomb alarm is sounded is the car park at the rear of Splash on Church Road.

The emergency exits are located via the doors between the 2 projector screens. The key coded emergency exit door will automatically disengage when the alarm sounds.

The Toilets are located on the Ground floor corridor of Municipal Buildings next to the emergency exit. Both the ladies and gents toilets are located on the right hand side.

Microphones

During the meeting, members of the Committee, and officers in attendance, will have access to a microphone. Please use the microphones, when directed to speak by the Chair, to ensure you are heard by the Committee.

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Children & Young People Select Committee

A meeting of Children & Young People Select Committee was held on Wednesday, 19 July 2023.

Present: Cllr Carol Clark (Chair), Cllr Barbara Inman (Vice Chair), Cllr Ray Godwin Cllr David Reynard, Cllr Stephen Richardson, Cllr Paul Rowling (sub for Cllr Nathan Gale), Cllr Emily Tate, Cllr Sally Ann Watson, Cllr Katie Weston

Officers: Martin Gray, Adele Moore, David Willingham, Miriam Sigsworth (CS), Judy Trainer (DS)

Apologies: Cllr Nathan Gale

1 Evacuation Procedure

The Evacuation Procedure was noted.

2 Declarations of Interest

There were no declarations of interest.

3 Minutes of the meeting held on 8 March 2023

AGREED that the minutes of the meeting held on 8 March 2023, be confirmed as a correct record and signed by the Chair.

4 Action Plan – Contextual Safeguarding and Youth Relationships

The Select Committee considered an action plan in respect of its previous scrutiny review of Contextual Safeguarding and Youth Relationships. The action plan set out how the agreed recommendations would be implemented and target dates for completion.

AGREED that the action plan be approved a progress update be presented to the Select Committee in due course.

5 Children's Services Overview Report 2023

Martin Gray presented the overview report for Children's Services. The report also included a summary of current performance data and a link to performance across the Council Plan reported on a six-monthly basis to Executive Scrutiny Committee.

The key issues highlighted and discussed were as follows:

- The most recent Inspection of Local Authority Children's Services had resulted in an overall judgement of "Required Improvement". The key areas for improvement identified by Ofsted were:
 - The quality and effectiveness of plans for children and care leavers, including safety plans agreed with parents
 - Sufficiency of suitable foster homes for children
 - Frontline management oversight across the service, in relation to the

- quality of assessment and plans and the impact of interventions
- Opportunities for more children and care leavers to have a voice and to influence the development of services
- The Good and Beyond Board provided oversight and drive for continuous improvement planning and the Inspection recognised the considerable amount of progress since the 2019 inspection and the September 2022 focused visit
- Work was underway for the forthcoming SEND and AP Inspection which would take place in the next three years. In 2023 a Local Inclusion Partnership would be established in line with the SEND Green Paper and a strategic action plan would be agreed in advance of a new Local Inclusion Strategy to be developed in 2024. The vast majority of SEND children were educated in mainstream schools and funding was available to support this
- There continued to be significant demand across children's social care. The number of children in care had stabilised since April 2020. A more recent development had been the significant increase in the number of unaccompanied asylum seeking children
- The number of children placed out of Borough was broadly the same as four years ago and the Council was the highest performing Authority in the country around keeping children and young people as close to home as possible
- Stockton schools performed well overall, being the best performing in the region although there was an attainment gap between those children from poorer backgrounds, SEND and children in care
- A new Attendance Strategy for the Borough was to be presented to Cabinet in October
- A performance and improvement framework had been launched across the Directorate which increased the breadth and range of quality assurance activity taking place and supported service improvement
- The alternative provision free school would provide places for children at risk of exclusion whilst retaining them on the school roll as well as "turnaround" type of provision for children excluded based on an effective model operating in Doncaster
- The Doncaster based provision by Delta Academy was highly regarded by DfE and Ofsted. It positively impacted on children who attend and also promoted inclusive mainstream education
- The recruitment and retention of skilled, experienced staff was highlighted as a key factor in driving improvement
- New children's homes were being developed, supported by DfE capital funding. Members highlighted the importance of early consultation with Members regarding the location of children's homes

AGREED that the report be noted.

6 Chair's Update and Select Committee Work Programme

AGREED that the Work Programme be noted.

PROGRESS UPDATE: Review of Care Leavers EET

SCRUTINY MONITORING – PROGRESS UPDATE	
Review:	Scrutiny Review of Care Leavers EET
Link Officer/s:	David Willingham
Action Plan Agreed:	September 2021

Updates on the progress of actions in relation to agreed recommendations from previous scrutiny reviews are required approximately 12 months after the relevant Select Committee has agreed the Action Plan. Progress updates must be detailed, evidencing what has taken place regarding each recommendation – a grade assessing progress should then be given (see end of document for grading explanation). Any evidence on the impact of the actions undertaken should also be recorded for each recommendation.

Recommendation 2:	Redefines its approach and commitment to getting a young person in care or leaving care into education, employment or training by retraining and refocusing the workforce.
Responsibility:	David Willingham
Date:	April 2022
Agreed Action:	Develop and implement EET focused approach throughout Youth Direction and wider Children's Services. Widen the responsibilities of existing workforce so young people have one person who facilitates and supports their needs.
Agreed Success Measure:	Reduction in the number of workers involved with a young person Leaving Care. A multi skilled and flexible work force able to meet the needs of Children and Young People who are Care leavers
Evidence of Progress (September 2022):	Children's Service review concluded, and new structure implemented 1 February 2022. Personal Adviser – Targeted Workers are working with children in our care from 15 years old, enabling a trusted positive relationship to form whilst in school. Several Youth Direction careers IAG teams have merged to become one Opportunities Team, providing a seamless transition from pre to post 16 with a clear vision on working with young people. Virtual School and Opportunities have agreed to extend the Personal Education Plan for all care leavers until end of Year 13. 3 dedicated Progression Adviser posts are now working with young people up to aged 25 years.
Assessment of Progress (September 2022): (include explanation if required)	2. On track

PROGRESS UPDATE: Review of Care Leavers EET

Evidence of Impact (September 2022):	The review and recruitment is now complete and we have a new team who are keen to embed this work. we have seen a change in the way teams think about young people and the importance of focusing on EET.
Evidence of Progress (February 2023):	Personal Advisers are allocated to young people, who are cared for at 15years and 6 months. This model allows the young person form relationships at the earliest opportunity, and allowing those conversations about aspirations to be reaffirmed, working alongside the Progression Adviser.
Assessment of Progress (February 2023): (include explanation if required)	2. On track Early signs of impact, communication between workers enables a plan of action and delivery of the same messages to young people. This builds trusted relationships between staff, and the young person understands that all professionals are working towards the same goals.
Evidence of Impact (February 2023):	Gradual increase in young people moving towards EET. Current figures are: 17/18 years = 67% 19 years = 66%
Evidence of Progress (November 2023):	Over the last 12 months the service has work towards defining roles and responsibilities working with cared for and care experienced young people. Young people understand the different roles and know who to contact regarding there careers aspirations.
Assessment of Progress (November 2023): (include explanation if required)	1. Fully Achieved Progression Advisers work with Personal Advisers to seek opportunities regarding EET. Personal Advisers continue to take on the lead professional role for care leavers.
Evidence of Impact (November 2023):	Although EET figures have stabilised, we can now identify those young people who need most support. This helps focus our work and enables the workforce to remove some of the barriers and provide opportunities to accessing EET.

Recommendation 6:	Has a corporate commitment to creating a sustainable model to increase access to work experience and apprenticeship opportunities within SBC for young people leaving care.
Responsibility:	David Willingham/Rhona Bollands
Date:	Apprenticeships within SBC. 3 by April 2022 and minimum of 5 by April 2023
Agreed Action:	Develop a proposal that builds on existing work and identify areas for improvement for Member and CMT approval. Develop a plan to upskill and support workforce to source and support apprenticeships and work experience within SBC
Agreed Success Measure:	Increased work experience within SBC Increased numbers of Leaving Care Apprenticeships within SBC. 3 by April 2022 and minimum of 5 by April 2023 Process to monitor and evaluate implemented through CiOC Strategic Group.
Evidence of Progress (September 2022):	3 x care experienced young people in apprenticeships within SBC.

PROGRESS UPDATE: Review of Care Leavers EET

Assessment of Progress (September 2022): (include explanation if required)	2. On track
Evidence of Impact (September 2022):	We as an LA have again increased our efforts re Apprenticeships, and we are heavily invested in the local Apprenticeship offer in terms of support and signposting for young people and young adults. The local offer of work experience continues to be explored with wider organisations, although the offer from SBC continues. We anticipate that the new employer engagement workers will progress this work quickly, so we hope to see even more progress in the year ahead.
Evidence of Progress (February 2023):	2 x care experienced young people in apprenticeships within SBC. 1 has not continued with their employment for reasons outside of our control.
Assessment of Progress (February 2023): (include explanation if required)	3. Slipped Further work to do on work experience and apprenticeship recruitment. We need to take some of the evidence on lessons learned and tailor our approach to ensure young people are successful. Further work will be within the workplan from the CIOC/CL Strategy. Service Lead – Children and Young People is part of a regional strategic group looking at 5 workstreams to have a cohesive offer across the region. This workstream is EET, therefore other regional good areas of practice can be shared and used to improve the offer we have in Stockton.
Evidence of Impact (February 2023):	2 young people have maintained their apprenticeship.
Evidence of Progress (November 2023):	2 young people have completed their apprenticeship and now have a qualification. One young person has been successful in obtaining a full-time job within SBC. 2 x care experienced young people are due to start an apprenticeship in SBC. These were successful within the recent recruitment campaign held in May 2023.
Assessment of Progress (November 2023): (include explanation if required)	1. Fully Achieved This work is ongoing, and we continue to review and evaluate our approach to care experienced young people obtaining employment within the LA. Regional work continues and we will continue to implement regional changes asked by the Regional Care Leavers Board.
Evidence of Impact (November 2023):	Young people are reporting that the opportunity provided has allowed them to create some stability, focus and drive towards improving their aspirations. Our coaching and mentoring within the most recent campaign has proven successful with two successful appointments.

PROGRESS UPDATE: Review of Care Leavers EET

Recommendation 7:	Has a Borough-Wide commitment to creating a sustainable model to increase access to work experience and job opportunities with local employers and partner agencies for young people leaving care through the creation of a dedicated brokerage resource which will focus on pro-actively finding, placing and maintaining young people in education, employment and training.
Responsibility:	David Willingham/Rhona Bollands
Date:	3 by April 2022 and minimum of 5 by April 2023 working across minimum of 4 areas April 2022
Agreed Action:	Develop plan to identify and engage with relevant existing forums and strategic groups to improve work experience and job opportunities across the borough. Use Children's Services review as an opportunity to create dedicated brokerage coordination resource.
Agreed Success Measure:	Increased numbers of apprenticeships and opportunities within SBC. 3 by April 2022 and minimum of 5 by April 2023 working across minimum of 4 areas. At least 5 external employers are engaged and offer opportunities in first year, and continues to improve and is monitored through CIOC Strategic Group. Opportunities are coordinated through dedicated teams.
Evidence of Progress (September 2022):	2 x Care Leavers working towards a Youth Support Apprenticeship in Children's Services 1 x Care Leaver working within Care for your Area
Assessment of Progress (September 2022): (include explanation if required)	2. On Track
Evidence of Impact (September 2022):	The review and recruitment is now complete and we have a new team who are keen to embed this work. we have seen a change in the way teams think about young people and the importance of focusing on EET.
Evidence of Progress (February 2023):	1 x Care Leavers working towards a Youth Support Apprenticeship in Children's Services 1 x Care Leaver working within Care for your Area
Assessment of Progress (February 2023): (include explanation if required)	3. Slipped The co-production of the CIOC/CL strategy will help the Local Authority focus on the priorities on the 'family business' and a priority plan will be formed as part of the ongoing work. Work is also re-aligned to ensure our in-house Pathway Team are engaging with our work ready young people, this is on an outreach basis enabling workers and young people to meet in a place suitable and comfortable for the young person. As a Local Authority we need to look wider than Children's Services for work experience placements and Apprenticeship opportunities: greater variety of

PROGRESS UPDATE: Review of Care Leavers EET

	<p>opportunity and less sensitivity of case work for young people who have previously received a service. This would allow for more meaningful work and job shadowing across all Directorates. We also need to consider more entry-level jobs elsewhere in SBC.</p>
<p>Evidence of Impact (February 2023):</p>	<p>Children’s Services Team is working together on this agenda and using the Employer Engagement Worker role is allowing us to have those conversations with the external employees that serve Stockton-on-Tees.</p>
<p>Evidence of Progress (November 2023):</p>	<p>Progress is ongoing but further work is required at a corporate level to ensure we have commitment across all directorates to provide opportunities.</p>
<p>Assessment of Progress (November 2023): (include explanation if required)</p>	<p>2. On-Track</p> <p>This is a council wide response and requires commitment from CMT to drive the agenda forward.</p> <p>Ongoing work with the DWP, and the draft protocol that needs management agreement will allow for a collaborative approach to move young people into the labour market and away from the benefit system.</p>
<p>Evidence of Impact (November 2023):</p>	<p>Children’s Services have the evidence of how this has been successful, and we need to use this as the blueprint across the council.</p>

Assessment of Progress Gradings:	1 Fully Achieved	2 On-Track	3 Slipped	4 Not Achieved
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PROGRESS UPDATE: Review of Child Poverty

SCRUTINY MONITORING – PROGRESS UPDATE	
Review:	Scrutiny Review of Child Poverty
Link Officer/s:	Haleem Ghafoor
Action Plan Agreed:	July 2022

Updates on the progress of actions in relation to agreed recommendations from previous scrutiny reviews are required approximately 12 months after the relevant Select Committee has agreed the Action Plan. Progress updates must be detailed, evidencing what has taken place regarding each recommendation – a grade assessing progress should then be given (see end of document for grading explanation). Any evidence on the impact of the actions undertaken should also be recorded for each recommendation.

Recommendation 1:	That a family poverty profile is compiled and updated annually from available data and input from those with lived experience and is used to identify a key priority for targeted action each year; an initial focus being take up of Free School Meals for those eligible and in need.
Responsibility:	Fairer Stockton-on-Tees (FSOT) – lead for the family poverty profile Public Health (PH) Strategy Systems and Improvement (SSI) Children Services (CS) Little Sprouts
Date:	March 2023
Agreed Action:	<p>Defining who we are talking about and analysing on annual basis (i.e. lone parents, disabled sibling or parent, BAME, having a young child in household, Having young parents under 25, Armed Forces etc.)</p> <p>Develop a theme as part of the FSOT work around Child Poverty</p> <p>Link in with targeted work through the FSOT framework and roll out across other areas as the work develops.</p> <p>Family poverty profile - Compile a profile from available data to monitor measure every year</p> <p>Develop and agree a process for ongoing input from those with lived experience around Child Poverty through dialogue with schools, Thrive, Community Partnerships, Members</p>

PROGRESS UPDATE: Review of Child Poverty

	<p>Annual focus on priorities Targeted action – doing one thing well Initial focus on: FSM – take up for those eligible and Those in need but not on FSM</p> <p>Go through annual process to define one key area to make progress on take up of FSM</p> <p>Map breakfast provisions across our schools in the borough to identify any gaps</p>
<p>Agreed Measure: Success</p>	<p>Key strand included as part of the FSOT work</p> <p>Annual family profile completion</p> <p>An increase in those eligible for FSM take up</p> <p>Overall increased take up of HAF provision and FSM on the FSOT areas.</p>
<p>Evidence of Progress (February 2023):</p>	<p>As part of the Fairer Stockton-on-Tees work (FSOT) (the Councils strategic framework for tackling inequality across the borough) a series of key measures will be tracked to enable the Council (and its partners) identify progress against its ambition to tackle child poverty. Examples of these key measures include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Number of children in absolute low-income families (broken down by age of child, gender of child, family type and work status) - Number of children in Relative low-income families (broken down by age of child, gender of child, family type and work status) - Net household income threshold before housing costs - Net household income threshold after housing costs - FSM eligibility of children - Income Deprivation effecting children index (IDACI) - Number of households claiming Universal Credit - Average weekly earnings - Children in Income Support households (2001, Source: DWP) - Children in Income Based job Seekers Allowance households - Children in Working Families Tax Credit households - Children in Disabled Person’s Tax Credit households whose equivalised income (excluding housing benefits) is below 60% of median before housing costs - National Asylum Support Service (NASS) supported asylum seekers in England in receipt of subsistence only and accommodation support <p><i>In addition, the following actions have been undertaken/are ongoing:</i></p>

PROGRESS UPDATE: Review of Child Poverty

	<p>Holidays activities Fund (HAF) Programme – eligible children are those with benefit-related Free School Meals (FSM) eligibility or those suffering financial hardship. This is assessed on an individual basis but can award 15% of the programme's places on this basis. Currently we are unable to record all bookings on a single system, but this will be resolved when EYES is live. In addition, as due to scheme criteria we are working with schools and the SBC Communication Team to encourage parents to check if families are eligible for free school meals through a quick to use checker.</p> <p>Supporting Families criteria has changed from 6 outcomes to 10 enabling practitioners to look at areas in more detail, this includes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Financial Stability - Secure Housing <p>Education Improvement Service (EIS) led pilot on increasing FSM take up Northfield/ Billingham South schools, in collaboration with SBC Information and Intelligence and SBC Citizen's Advice Bureau (CAB) has commenced. Pilot evaluated positively. New SLA offer to schools via SBC Information and Intelligence as a result.</p> <p>Effective practice take-up case study to be shared at EIS Closing the Gap event 20.10.22 via Fairfield Primary School Headteacher (almost doubled FSM take up and increased Pupil Premium budget by over £40K).</p> <p>Ongoing administrative support in ordering and delivering food vouchers to schools (over 9,000).</p> <p>Breakfast initiatives trialled across Family Hubs throughout the summer (Not HAF Funded). Introduction of breakfast and play sessions, which seen a footfall of 275 parents and children attend to have breakfast and part-take in activities. One session was held in the local park. Children of all ages attended.</p> <p>Thrive has held an event which SBC Officers attended and presented our approach around the Cost of Living Crisis and Fairer Stockton-on-Tees. Workshops were held with those with 'Lived Experience' around poverty and further discussion are planned with Thrive to discuss how we take forward the issues presented.</p>
<p>Assessment of Progress (February 2023): (include explanation if required)</p>	<p>2. On track</p>
<p>Evidence of Impact (February 2023):</p>	<p>Details of impact currently being collated.</p>

PROGRESS UPDATE: Review of Child Poverty

<p>Evidence of Progress (November 2023):</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Update of places on the HAF program has increased and information is being shared with home educated children. • The Supporting Families Program is continuing. • Free school meal take up across the Borough has increased. We had more individual children attend last summer, but this summer we increased our secondary, SEND and non-FSM percentages. Furthermore the % of non FSM has also gone up significantly since Summer 22, which means we are reaching more of our families who are on low income but over the threshold for FSM. • FSM auto-enrolment project group was set up and is exploring the feasibility of bringing in auto-enrolment of eligible pupils onto free school meals in collaboration with members from the Northeast Child Poverty Commission group. • Intelligence gathered through the HAF program has been used to identify and target those families most in need, using a multi-agency process. • Mapping completed of schools across the region who offer breakfast clubs. Discussions with Public Health and members of the Child Poverty project group ongoing, to identify how we take this forward and support families who don't have access to this provision. • Anti-Poverty Strategy group has been set up and monthly meetings are held to establish what 'Poverty means for people living in Stockton-on-Tees' gathering the views of this with lived experience. This will result in an Anti-Poverty Strategy and action plan co-produced with internal/external partners and those with a lived experience. This plan will incorporate actions to mitigate, prevent and address poverty with our borough. We anticipate that Child Poverty will be a key theme a part of this work. • This work will also be picked up as part of the wider Cost of Living Scrutiny review taking place at present.
<p>Assessment of Progress (November 2023): (include explanation if required)</p>	<p>1- Fully Achieved</p>
<p>Evidence of Impact (November 2023):</p>	<p>Data on increase in take up of FSM available if needed.</p>

PROGRESS UPDATE: Review of Child Poverty

Recommendation 2:	<p>That support offered to families in poverty is enhanced through:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) A more integrated and visible offer for families experiencing poverty focusing on information, advice, financial and other support b) Roll out of Poverty Proofing the School Day across all Stockton Schools c) Establishing a mutual aid/ giving scheme, in partnership with Catalyst, to facilitate community giving d) Ensuring an enhanced support offer is available for communities and areas targeted through the Fairer Stockton-on-Tees Framework
Responsibility:	<p>Family Hubs EIS Little Sprouts PH/FSOT CS Catalyst</p>
Date:	<p>March 23</p>
Agreed Action:	<p>Access to help, delivery and support:</p> <p>Review our support offer, make it accessible, work with families experiencing poverty and building better links with employment and welfare / benefits service teams to target those most needing help for example:</p> <p>Welfare advice drop ins</p> <p>Outreach employment support in neighbourhoods</p> <p>Pension Credit campaigns</p> <p>Improve families benefits take up through communications campaign, promoting awareness of the available benefits and other financial support that people can access</p> <p>Poverty proofing all schools:</p> <p>Revisit and review current stage of poverty proofing for all our schools</p> <p>Explore the development of a Benevolent Fund / recycling scheme for school related items</p> <p>Community/ Partnership giving:</p> <p>Build on COVID-19 mutual support to sustain mutual aid / giving scheme</p>

PROGRESS UPDATE: Review of Child Poverty

	<p>Explore the establishment of a Child Poverty Partnership and Fund (with contributions from across all sectors i.e. Housing groups etc.) for those most in crisis to access to enable families</p> <p>Develop extended support offer as part of FSOT</p>
<p>Agreed Measure: Success</p>	<p>Increased provision for those families affected by Child Poverty</p> <p>Increased number of schools delivering Healthy Schools programme initiatives</p> <p>An increase with the number of our schools undertaken Poverty proofed activity</p> <p>Continued funding targeting and supporting families affected by Child Poverty</p> <p>Successfully secured funds</p> <p>Establishment of a partnership</p> <p>Establishment of specific offer / additional support</p> <p>Impact on FSOT outcomes</p>
<p>Evidence of Progress (February 2023):</p>	<p>a) A more integrated and visible offer for families experiencing poverty focusing on information, advice, financial and other support</p> <p>Engaged support from Citizens Advice Bureau (CAB) to deliver Cost of Living School Information event to front line workers in SBC primary and secondary schools. Very well attended and positively evaluated. Termly event to sustain this offer now in place. Attendance is strengthening.</p> <p>Areas covered included the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Welfare benefits - an overview of benefits relevant to households with school-age children • Energy - how households can reduce energy costs • Grants - what grants are available, and how to access them • Emergency support - how to access crisis support, including energy vouchers and data vouchers • Saving money - information on schemes to reduce expenditure on essentials such as water and telephone • Practical support - where are local food banks, community pantries and providers of other practical assistance, Who can help - what organisations are there locally who can help, and how to access them <p>Family Hubs: Provide a range of services inclusive of:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Food bank vouchers. • Low cost cafes/affordable meals. • Citizens Advice Bureau drop in sessions.

PROGRESS UPDATE: Review of Child Poverty

- Household health checks – run at hubs.

Overall check of household spend, to support with how families can reduce bills.

- Drop-in sessions – families can access to discuss any areas of need and support.
- Food Pantry - (via Stockton Food Power Network)
- Job Clubs.

SMART Team house DWP benefits advisors who can provide advice and support around benefits/applications. They also support getting parents/carers into employment.

Opportunities Team have a dedicated ESF project (Pathways) which can engage 16–29-year-old people who are currently unemployed to engage in the programme, with additional funding available to enable work readiness.

A Child Poverty task and finish group has also been established as a part of the Cost of Living work to respond to any emerging trends and issues.

Ongoing Cost of Living Hub on SBC website and development of information for staff to ensure they have up-to-date and relevant information to support families on a range of cost-of-living issues.

Whilst Warm Spaces are generally Mon-Fri (daytime), FSOT Team are exploring options to develop services for weekends/families, and ongoing throughout the Summer months, with a view to continue the Warm Spaces programme into Winter 2023/24.

b) Roll out of Poverty Proofing the School Day across all Stockton Schools

Strategies which support schools to Poverty Proof routinely flagged at termly Closing the Gap (CTG) EIS event

Routinely engage with Children North East to promote their research, resources and new initiatives at CTG events.

Cost of Living Crisis and support an ongoing agenda item at Education Matters and Governor Briefings.

EIS have liaised with Catalyst Stockton to scope out School Uniform support spreadsheet - support sourced from both schools and VCSE. The spreadsheet is included on the on SBC COL Hub website and promoted to all schools.

A National Lottery bid has been secured for £450k. The project funding will give financial support commitment over the next 3

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	<p>years to address inequalities by identifying gaps in the area, working with VCSE and statutory services to address these gaps and through volunteer support to individuals not currently accessing services in deprived communities.</p> <p>Outcomes will include;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • More people experiencing healthy living - eating healthier food, taking more exercise • Increased good mental health • Increased income and reduced poverty in the disadvantaged parts of the Borough • Increased partnership and collaboration between partner organisations • Increased commissioning from statutory bodies of VCSE services • More volunteering in Stockton-on-Tees supporting the FSOT framework. <p>Strategies which support schools to Poverty Proof routinely flagged at termly Closing the Gap (CTG) EIS events.</p> <p>Regular engagement with Children North East takes place to promote their research, resources and new initiatives at CTG events.</p> <p>c) Establishing a mutual aid/ giving scheme, in partnership with Catalyst, to facilitate community giving</p> <p>Work will take place through the Child Poverty task and finish to give this some consideration in how we take this forward.</p> <p>d) Ensuring an enhanced support offer is available for communities and areas targeted through the Fairer Stockton-on-Tees Framework</p> <p>Grants between £50-£500 have been provided to the VCSE to support families through providing Warm Spaces.</p> <p>A FSOT Co-Ordinator has been employed through Catalyst to ensure that we extend the FSOT support through the VCSE</p>
<p>Assessment of Progress (February 2023): (include explanation if required)</p>	<p>2. On Track</p>
<p>Evidence of Impact (February 2023):</p>	<p>Details of impact currently being collated.</p>
<p>Evidence of Progress (November 2023):</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Citizens Advice Bureau staff are providing outreach support in schools, offering bespoke guidance for families in areas such as benefit advice and maximising income.

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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <u>The Bread and Butter Thing</u> (TBBT) is now available in 3 locations across the Borough, providing families with a cost effective, healthy food options. • FSOT team, together with Catalyst attended Adult Wellbeing week, to provide Front Line Adult Social Care staff with information of support available to families, provided by VCSE sector, Moneywise Tees Credit Union and CAB. • 60 <u>Community Spaces</u> (previously Warm Spaces) will continue to operate throughout Winter 2023, due to £60,000 funding received from Public Health. Each venue will receive £500 and can apply for an extra £1000, with evidence of providing extra support to residents across the Borough, over the next two years. • Here to help printed <u>booklet</u> created to ensure that it reflects emerging issues and priorities for families. • Outreach Here to Help <u>events</u> arranged to provide communities with a range of support, referrals and advice. These are being held across the seven Community Partnership areas between Sept 23 – March 24. Details can heard on BBC Tees Here to help event coverage, which can be heard here at 2:17 https://www.bbc.co.uk/sounds/play/p0qb6cf8 • A Cost of Living (COL) <u>e-newsletter</u> developed and issued quarterly. The e-newsletter has been created to help support employees and people we work with, manage through these difficult times using the help and support that is available from the Council and our partner organisations. • EIS have actioned/ continue to action all relevant recommendation in the Scrutiny Review of the Cost of School Uniform report and ongoing promotion of <u>School Uniform support</u> continues to be developed further. • Progress on school uniform activity is to be reported into the Cost of Living Scrutiny review, with ongoing work with schools and governing bodies. • A proposal to develop a Child Poverty Fund is also being given some consideration, through working with our Welfare Support team. • This work will also be picked up as part of the wider Cost of Living Scrutiny review taking place at present.
<p>Assessment of Progress</p>	<p>1 - Fully Achieved</p>

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(November 2023): (include explanation if required)	
Evidence of Impact (November 2023):	Evidence provided through the links, as above.

Recommendation 4:	That, subject to funding, a direct payments scheme is developed for those identified as in need, building on the examples of vouchers during the pandemic.
Responsibility:	CS
Date:	March 23
Agreed Action:	<p>Making sure better access to existing support (e.g. benefits, FSM, access to employment)</p> <p>Cost out options for a direct payment scheme as part of wider work on benefits access and take up</p>
Agreed Success Measure:	<p>An increase in those eligible for FSM take up</p> <p>Increased take up of those non eligible to FSM meals</p> <p>Overall increased take up of HAF provision and FSM on the FSOT areas.</p>
Evidence of Progress (February 2023):	<p>Currently working to develop this recommendation. To inform this action work has been ongoing with schools to identify children who take up HAF places throughout the year, ensuring that families take into consideration the that they maybe eligibility for the scheme and to undertake a simple check.</p> <p>Supporting Families Co-Ordinator has been working with all teams across Children’s Services to educate workers on the criteria of HAF including the 15% discretion for children outside of the free school meal eligibility.</p> <p>Public Health funding allows for HAF to take place in the 3 x half-terms across the school year. These places are focussed within the FSOT areas, which are in line with our targeted audience for the longer holiday periods.</p>
Assessment of Progress (February 2023): (include explanation if required)	On track
Evidence of Impact (February 2023):	Details of impact currently being collated.
Evidence of Progress (November 2023):	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Currently exploring FSM auto enrolment options for free school meals, with the support of members from Northeast Child Poverty Commission

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Assessment of Progress (November 2023): (include explanation if required)	1 - Fully Achieved
Evidence of Impact (November 2023):	Notes from FSM auto-enrolment project group

Recommendation 5:	That all subsidy policies are reviewed and revised as appropriate to provide streamlined and enhanced support for families.
Responsibility:	CS FSOT Welfare rights lead
Date:	June 23
Agreed Action:	Map out what current subsidies are available Explore whether these can be better targeted, streamlined, extended etc. as part of wider support offer
Agreed Measure:	Success Increased take up of subsidies
Evidence of Progress (February 2023):	Care experienced common (local) offer work is underway across the region, so we have a consistent offer across the North East. This work will also be picked up as part of the wider Cost of Living Scrutiny review taking place at present.
Assessment of Progress (February 2023): (include explanation if required)	On track
Evidence of Impact (February 2023):	Details of impact currently being collated.
Evidence of Progress (November 2023):	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Working in line with Powering our Future and the ABCD approach, to support communities and gather information through those with lived experience. Information gathered will feed through the Anti-Poverty Strategy action group and shared with the Child Poverty project group.
Assessment of Progress (November 2023): (include explanation if required)	1 - Fully Achieved

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Evidence of Impact
(November 2023):

Notes from Anti-Poverty Stakeholder Project group

Assessment of Progress Gradings:	1 Fully Achieved	2 On-Track	3 Slipped	4 Not Achieved
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