

BARNSELEY METROPOLITAN BOROUGH COUNCIL

This matter is not a Key Decision within the Council's definition and has not been included in the relevant Forward Plan

Report of the
Executive Director People
to Cabinet
31st May 2017

NOTIFICATION OF GOLD AWARD TO BMBC FROM CHILDREN'S COMMISSIONER FOR TAKEOVER CHALLENGE

1.0. Purpose of the Report

- 1.1 To inform Cabinet that the Council have achieved a Gold Commendation from the Children's Commissioner for work carried out for the Takeover Challenge in November 2016

2.0. Recommendations

- 2.1 **That Cabinet acknowledges this achievement across all service areas and continues to highlight future opportunities to build on this success**

3.0. Introduction to the Report

- 3.1 Takeover Challenge gives children and young people across the country the chance to work with adults and get involved in organisational decision-making. Children benefit from having their views heard, having fun and being inspired and the adult world gets a fresh, unique and creative perspective on important issues.
- 3.2 The event is organised under the Office of the Children's Commissioner which champions, promotes, protects, raises awareness of and prompts others to respond to the rights, views and interests of all of England's children.
- 3.3 Takeover Challenge promotes participation, is in line with Barnsley's Pledge to Children in Care and Care Leavers and ensures that children have a right to have their views heard on the decisions that affect their lives and for these views to be taken seriously.
- 3.4 Takeover Day, and the aspect of the challenge this brings, forms part of 'Pathways to Success' - the Council's programme to support young people's work readiness and employability as part of the Borough's Employment and Skills Strategy
- 3.5 The aim of Barnsley's involvement in Takeover Challenge was to:
- Put our children in care and care leavers into decision-making positions
 - Provide opportunities for our organisations and businesses to hear their views
 - Allow young people to gain an insight into our working world
 - Inspire our young people by their experiences
- 3.6 Barnsley Council's Takeover Challenge 2017 activities included:
- Work shadowing opportunities offered from Directorates across the council, involving senior members of staff and external organisations (South Yorkshire Police and NPS Barnsley). Placements were matched based on the requests of the young people.

- Author Nik Perring ran a session for a group of primary-school children to take over the Experience Barnsley museum.
 - An Open Meeting of the Barnsley Youth Council for other young people interested in standing for election and Barnsley Members of the UK Youth Parliament attended the debate in the House of Commons on 11th November.
 - A group of young people created a film for the joint Trust Executive Group and Barnsley Safeguarding Children Board (TEG/BSCB) annual meeting.
 - A school-to-school visit was arranged so that pupils could share their learning on achieving an Anti-Bullying Charter Mark.
- 3.7 For the work shadowing element, we contacted all our Children in Care (from year 9 up) and Care Leavers to encourage their involvement and followed this up by ensuring the young person's social worker or personal advisor followed up the invitation with the young person. We had 28 young people involved during the day and over 100 young people involved in Takeover Challenge activities altogether.
- 3.8 We had held a consultation session with young people who had participated in 2015 in order to implement any ideas, learning and feedback from our previous events. The conclusion of this consultation was that we needed to build on our previous success (where we achieved a Silver commendation) by encouraging more young people; wider participation and following up on any learning and evaluation from the event.
- 3.9 In order to achieve the Gold award, we demonstrated that, during 2016:
- We held Takeover activities over two or more months, which included planning meetings to shape the shadowing experience. Young people's expectations were collected, which were shared with the colleagues who were offering the shadowing opportunities.
 - We involved a high profile person in our Takeover activities –Short story writer and author Nik Perring was involved in the Experience Barnsley Museum takeover. In addition, the Mayor of Barnsley, as well as members of the Senior Leadership Team, were shadowed by a young person.
 - We are doing ongoing work to engage children or young people in our work. The Care4Us Council will continue to meet to ensure young people in care and care leavers have their views heard on the decisions that affect their lives. The Pledge will continue to be reviewed annually and is now part of the Continuous Improvement Plan involving children and young people in care being consulted and contributing to the review and services providing evidence of implementing the Pledge. The newly-elected Youth Council has started a new two-year term and will continue to represent the views of young people, supported by the Youth Voice and Participation Team. The joint Trust Executive Group and Barnsley Safeguarding Children Board (TEG/BSCB) annual meeting will now be held to coincide with the Takeover Challenge, to ensure young people can continue to contribute directly into this meeting.
 - We have held a Takeover Challenge over the two previous consecutive years
 - We have developed and are implementing a plan which engages children and young people in our work over the longer term. We are currently developing the Pathways to Success model that will ensure all departments across the Council offer appropriate opportunities for young people and adults. Offering shadowing opportunities with decision makers as part of the Takeover Challenge will form part of the Council's work experience offer under the Pathways to Success model.

4.0 Consideration of Alternative Approaches

4.1 Not applicable.

5.0 Proposal and Justification

5.1 Participation in Takeover Challenge is increasing year after year and it is imperative to continue to develop and maintain this opportunity and build upon this event, throughout the Council.

6.0 Implications for Local People and Service Users

6.1 Participation in Takeover Challenge work shadowing will ensure that more children in care and care leavers across all communities in the Borough are able to have the opportunity to participate in this event. Takeover Challenge will enable service users to have their voices heard.

7.0 Financial Implications

7.1 There are no direct financial implications arising from participation in Takeover Challenge.

8.0 Employee Implications

8.1 There are no direct employee implications arising from on-going involvement in Takeover Challenge. The Council will be expected to be aware of the Takeover Challenge and its significance in improving outcomes for children in care and care leavers.

9.0 Communications Implications

9.1 The success of achieving the Gold Award will be communicated through media Resources, including the Children's Commissioners own Facebook page.

10.0 Consultations

10.1 In particular, please see paragraphs 3.8

11.0 Key Policy Considerations

11.1 Involvement in Takeover Challenge contributes to the Council's corporate priority of People Achieving their Potential and a Thriving and Vibrant Economy. The Takeover Day component forms part of Pathways to Success, and as such contributes to the delivery of the borough's Employment and Skills Strategy.

12.0 Tackling Health Inequalities

12.1 There are no implications for tackling health inequalities through this report.

13.0 Consideration of Risks

13.1 The report relates to the Council's obligation in providing opportunities to ensure full participation in Takeover Challenge in the future. This would entail no identifiable risk(s) for the Council.

14.0 Health and Safety Implications

- 14.1 There are no implications for the health and safety of the public or employees arising through the report.

15.0 Compatibility with the European Convention on Human Rights

- 15.1 All of the commissioner's work is underpinned by the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child and in particular, Article 12 which states that children have a right to have their views heard on the decisions that affect their lives and for these views to be taken seriously.

16.0 Promoting Equality, Diversity and Inclusion

- 16.1 Participation in Takeover Challenge includes a commitment to ensuring the Council, understands and meets the specific needs of children in care or care leavers that relate to disability, culture, religion, gender or sexual orientation.

17.0 Reduction of Crime and Disorder

- 17.1 The commitment towards keeping children in care and care leavers involved in Takeover Challenge, fosters their aspirations and aims to improve their physical and emotional wellbeing. This can make a crucial contribution towards diverting them from risky and harmful behaviour that can not only impact upon them but also upon their communities.

18.0 Conservation of Biodiversity

- 18.1 There are no implications for the conservation of biodiversity emerging through the report.

19.0 Glossary of Terms and Abbreviations

- 19.1 Not applicable

20.0 List of Appendices

- 20.1 None

21.0 Details of Background Papers

- 21.1 Background papers used in the production of this report are available to view by contacting Jon Banwell, Interim Head of Service (Children in Care Services), People Directorate, Barnsley MBC, PO Box 639, Barnsley, South Yorkshire, S70 9GG.

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Financial Implications/ Consultation (to be signed by senior Financial Services officer where no financial implications)
