

BARNSLEY METROPOLITAN BOROUGH COUNCIL

This matter is a Key Decision within the Council's definition and has been included in the relevant Forward Plan

REPORT OF THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR (PEOPLE) TO CABINET

TERMS OF REFERENCE OF THE BARNSLEY ALLIANCE AND THE BOROUGH EDUCATION IMPROVEMENT STRATEGY

1.0 PURPOSE OF REPORT

- 1.1 To inform Cabinet of the role and proposed terms of reference of the Barnsley Alliance, responsible for driving standards in the quality of teaching and learning in schools and academies in the Borough.
- 1.2 To seek Cabinet's approval for the adoption of the Borough's Education Improvement Strategy (2019-21).

2.0 RECOMMENDATIONS

- 2.1 **That Cabinet notes the proposed terms of reference of the Barnsley Alliance, including those of the Alliance's Board, Executive Group and Sub-Groups, together with the role of the Local Authority.**
- 2.2 **Cabinet approves for adoption, the Education Improvement Strategy for the Borough (2019-21)**

3.0 INTRODUCTION

- 3.1 The Barnsley Alliance was formally established in April 2015 as the strategic partnership for driving school improvement in the Borough. In October 5th 2016, Cabinet endorsed the adoption of the Barnsley Alliance's School Improvement Strategy (2016-18) and its underlying principles.
- 3.2 As part of the Council's corporate priority of 'People Achieving Their Potential' and, in particular, that *"Every child in the Borough should be able to attend a good school and is successful in learning and work"* the Barnsley Alliance has formulated and developed, for implementation, its Education Improvement Strategy (2019-21) which is attached as Appendix 1 to this report.
- 3.3 At the core of the Strategy is a sector-based, peer-led approach to developing and sustaining the performance of local schools and academies as the catalyst for driving improvements in pupil outcomes and in which the Council is a crucial partner (*Please see Appendix 2*)
- 3.4 The document combines the proposed terms of reference of the Barnsley Alliance Board with its responsibility, firstly, for evaluating any risks to the performance of

individual schools or academies, together with the provision of tailored support, with a view to enabling them to be judged 'Good' or better by Ofsted at their next inspection and to retain this judgement in subsequent inspections (*Please see Appendix 3*).

- 3.5 Secondly, the Strategy places inclusion and improving the attainment and life chances of all disadvantaged groups of pupils as an overriding objective. In particular, the Strategy will aim to enhance the life chances of three vulnerable sets of pupils, namely those with special educational needs (including a disability or impairment); pupils from families impacted by the effects of austerity and who are in care or are eligible for pupil premium funding and those who have been or are at risk of exclusion from their school or setting.
- 3.6 The Barnsley Alliance's strategic priorities, during the period 2019-21 are summarised as follows:
1. To build upon recent improvements in pupil attainment at each of the Key Stages of the National Curriculum with a view to driving further continuous improvement.
 2. To use evidence based and applied good practice in order to improve the quality of teaching and leadership in schools and academies and for this to be consistently judged as 'Good' or better by Ofsted.
 3. To close the gap in achievement between vulnerable groups of pupils and their peers (*please see Paragraph 3.5*)
 4. To improve attendance and engagement through developing better access to alternative education provision, for pupils at risk of permanent or fixed-term exclusion from schools and academies.
 5. To build leadership capacity within schools and academies which will empower a generation of school leaders to develop a sustainable model of continuous improvement in teaching standards across the Borough.
 6. To meet the aspirations of young people and promote access to greater employment and training opportunities through supporting the aims of the More and Better Jobs Strategy.
 7. To improve inclusion and drive social mobility through education, particularly through focusing upon development practice to support children and young people with special educational needs (SEN(D))
- 3.7 The key strategic priority of improving the progress and attainment of pupils with (SEN(D)) will be informed by the following set of actions:
1. Developing the quality of practice within schools to help identify SEN(D) at the earliest stage of a child's journey, as part of promoting effective early intervention and support.
 2. The quality of practice in schools concerning the improvement of outcomes for pupils with SEN(D) will form part of the Barnsley Alliance's criteria for assessing

risks to schools' performance and the provision of targeted support. This will be supported by the deployment of skilled co-ordinators (SENDCOs) and through secondments to the Local Authority's Education Inclusion Service.

3. To continue to nurture and provide local mainstream placement provision for such pupils via the Borough's School Placement and Sufficiency Strategy for children and young people with SEN(D).
4. To develop a robust, sector-led 'appreciative challenge' approach to improving the quality of schools' practice through peer reviews.
5. The development of a commonly understood and agreed approach towards reducing the percentage of permanent and fixed-term exclusions experienced by pupils with SEN(D) to be based upon forthcoming revised statutory guidance, following the recent, national independent review of school exclusions.

3.8 As a partner within the Barnsley Alliance, the Council, through its continuing statutory education functions and as leader of its communities and place-shaper, will have a crucial role in developing a local education system which offers opportunities to and engages all children, including through early help and targeted support, thereby building social capital and benefit the employment market. Achieving progress against the Strategy will be overseen by the Cabinet and the Barnsley Children and Young People's Trust Executive Group, including via the Council's corporate performance reporting framework.

4.0 PROPOSAL AND JUSTIFICATION

4.1 In particular, please see Paragraphs 3.2 – 3.3, together with Paragraph 3.8 and Paragraphs 5.1- 5.2 of this report.

5.0 CONSIDERATION OF ALTERNATIVE APPROACHES

5.1 Whilst other forms of fostering improvement in the quality of teaching practice and pupil progress exist in other parts of the country, including regional and sub-regional partnerships and consortia of schools and academies, none have been tried and tested in the Borough. This has, primarily, been due to Barnsley's proud history of collaborative working between the Council and its partners within the Borough in delivering high quality local public services, together with the Barnsley Alliance's track record in helping bring a transformational improvement in results at every Key Stage of the National Curriculum, in recent years.

5.2 To consider an alternative approach at this stage would risk losing the rich local knowledge of our schools and academies and professional expertise which the Barnsley Alliance has accumulated and used to beneficial effect in recent years, for the overall good of all schools, academies and other settings.

6.0 IMPLICATIONS FOR LOCAL PEOPLE/SERVICE USERS

6.1 The Education Improvement Strategy, together with the risk evaluation framework and the 'championing' of vulnerable children, will support schools, academies and other settings, in all areas of the Borough, towards the objective of being perceived and judged as a good or outstanding school, within a local landscape that promotes

the life chances of all disadvantaged or vulnerable children regardless of their post code.

- 6.2 Local *cluster groups* comprising of school leaders will be integral in helping to mainstream best practice within schools in their area as part of raising standards on a consistent basis across the Borough (*Please see Appendix 3*).

7.0 FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- 7.1 There are no direct financial implications for the Council arising from the proposed terms of reference of Barnsley Alliance or from adopting the Education Improvement Strategy for the borough.
- 7.2 The role of the Barnsley Alliance is facilitated and supported within the Council by the School Improvement / Evaluation Service (in People Directorate). The Service is funded by the following: Dedicated Schools Grant (£439k); other government grant (£80k); and core council resources (£538k).

8.0 EMPLOYEE IMPLICATIONS

- 8.1 There are no direct implications for the Council's workforce emerging through this report.

9.0 LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

- 9.1 There are no legal implications for the Council arising through its involvement in the Barnsley Alliance or its role in helping achieve the objectives of the Borough's Education Improvement Strategy.

10.0 CUSTOMER AND DIGITAL IMPLICATIONS

- 10.1 No implications are anticipated concerning customer access to the Council's services or for digital transactions, through consideration of this report.

11.0 COMMUNICATIONS IMPLICATIONS

- 11.1 Subject to Cabinet's adoption, the new Strategy will be published and promoted, including via the Children, Families and Education domain of the Council's Web Site and through schools' communication networks

12.0 CONSULTATIONS

- 12.1 The Borough's Education Improvement Strategy has been developed through consultation with school leaders, governing bodies and the boards of academy and multi-academy trusts, together with the Children and Young People's Trust's Executive Group and the Council's Senior Management Team.

13.0 THE CORPORATE PLAN AND THE COUNCIL'S PERFORMANCE MANAGEMENT FRAMEWORK

- 13.1 The aims of the Strategy will directly support the Council's corporate priority of 'People Achieving Their Potential' and the outcome that 'Every child attends a good

school and is successful in learning and work'. This policy priority also correlates with the overall vision and one of the six strategic priorities of the Children and Young People's Plan, considered by Cabinet earlier this year.

- 13.2 A set of key performance indicators has been developed for both primary and secondary schools which will form the basis of the Barnsley Alliance's risk evaluation framework and subsequent appreciative challenge and tailored support (*graduated offer*) activity. These indicators are detailed at the end of Appendix 1.

14.0 PROMOTING EQUALITY, DIVERSITY AND SOCIAL INCLUSION

- 14.1 An overriding objective of the Education Improvement Strategy will be the championing and promotion of the needs of vulnerable and disadvantaged groups of children as part of improving their life chances and driving social mobility through education.
- 14.2 In particular, the Strategy will focus upon improving the attainment of children and young people with SEN(D) and those in need of care, together with vulnerable pupils who are the subject of the pupil premium grant or are excluded from their school or setting, either permanently or on a fixed-term basis.

15.0 TACKLING THE IMPACT OF POVERTY

- 15.1 The Education Improvement Strategy will build upon recent year on year improvements in education performance through the development of a local system which enables every child in the Borough to achieve their potential and to equip them to access the employment market within sustainable, skilled jobs that will ensure they are resilient to the impact of poverty and deprivation, whilst also improving social capital in our communities.

16.0 TACKLING HEALTH INEQUALITIES

- 16.1 Please see Paragraph 15.1.

17.0 REDUCTION OF CRIME AND DISORDER

- 17.1 In particular, a local education system which improves the participation and engagement of and fulfils the aspirations of all young people will make them less vulnerable to the risk of criminal exploitation and its impact upon the lives of individuals and communities.

18.0 RISK MANAGEMENT ISSUES

- 18.1 The risk evaluation of schools' performance and the instigation of any required support that will enable them to ultimately achieve a 'Good' judgement, will be a cornerstone of the new Strategy. Please see Paragraphs 3.2 and 13.2, together with Appendices 3-4 of this report.

19.0 HEALTH, SAFETY AND EMERGENCY RESILIENCE ISSUES

19.1 There are no implications for the health and safety of the public or workforce and for the resilience of the Borough to a serious or major incident, arising through this report.

20.0 COMPATIBILITY WITH THE EUROPEAN CONVENTION ON HUMAN RIGHTS

20.1 The aims of the Strategy are compatible with the Articles and Protocols of the EU Convention concerning the rights of the child.

21.0 CONSERVATION OF BIODIVERSITY

21.1 There are no implications for the local environment, climate change or the conservation of biodiversity emerging through the report.

22.0 GLOSSARY

22.1 None, applicable.

23.0 LIST OF APPENDICES

23.1 Appendix 1: Barnsley Alliance Education Improvement Strategy (2019-21)
Appendix 2: Terms of Reference of the Barnsley Alliance and Constituent Bodies (2019-21)
Appendix 3: Configuration of the Barnsley Alliance (2019-21)
Appendix 4: Education Improvement Strategy: Risk Assessment Framework (2019-21)

24.0 BACKGROUND PAPERS

24.1 If you would like to inspect background papers for this report, please email governance@barnsley.gov.uk so that appropriate arrangements can be made

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Financial Implications/Consultation



.....1 Oct 2019.....
(To be signed by senior Financial Services officer where there are no financial implications)