

## **BARNSELY 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 CHILDREN'S SERVICES TO CABINET**

#### **NATIONAL TAKEOVER CHALLENGE 2020**

#### **1.0. PURPOSE OF THE REPORT**

- 1.1 To inform Cabinet of Barnsley's successful organisation and participation in the first virtual Takeover Challenge for 2020 with the largest number of young people participating to date.

#### **2.0. RECOMMENDATIONS**

- 2.1 **That Cabinet acknowledges the achievements of Young People in the most recent Takeover Challenge across all service areas.**
- 2.2 **That Cabinet continues to highlight and identify future opportunities to build on this success.**

#### **3.0 INTRODUCTION**

- 3.1 Takeover Challenge gives young people across the country the chance to work with adults and get involved in organisational decision-making. Young people benefit from having their views heard, having fun and being inspired whilst employers and services are able to get a fresh, unique and creative perspective on important issues. Takeover Challenge is a national event originally created in 2006 by 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. Since 2018 the children's newspaper 'First News' have hosted this event.
- 3.2 Takeover Challenge promotes youth voice and participation of young people. This is in line with the Council's commitment to all children and young people, their Pledge to children in care and the Local Offer for care experienced young people, all ensuring that young people have a right to have their views heard on the decisions that affect their lives and for these views to be taken seriously.
- 3.3 Barnsley's participation in Takeover Challenge in recent years resulted in Barnsley receiving Silver (2015) and Gold (2016) Commendations from the Children's Commissioner. Commendations from the Children's Commissioner ceased in 2017 however Barnsley has continued to demonstrate a high level of participation utilising all opportunities that Takeover Challenge offers young people. It is an event that has grown significantly since Barnsley's first contribution alongside elected members and schools in the first year (2006)

with increased interest, participation and partnership working across the People and Place directorates providing a wider variety of matches and increased participation of young people. The planning and organisation of Barnsley's contribution to Takeover Challenge is undertaken jointly by The Targeted Youth Support Services Youth Voice and Participation Team, Children's Social Care and the Young People's Skills and Enterprise Team.

- 3.4 Like many things in 2020, Takeover Challenge was different due to the Covid-19 pandemic and for the first time the event in Barnsley moved from a primarily physical event to an online and virtual catalogue of opportunities for young people to participate in. Services involved worked hard to ensure that young people had a range of available opportunities open to them and that they could take part in their chosen sessions virtually either at school or in their own homes.
- 3.5 Takeover Challenge took place on Friday 27<sup>th</sup> November 2020. This report highlights how young people took part in a range of opportunities offered to them by Barnsley Council, the NHS, Henry Boot Construction and many other external organisations building on the success of previous years.
- 3.6 All partners worked hard to improve the planning for this event by working across the Council and its partners and sought opportunities based on the types of jobs and interests that young people told us they wanted to learn more about in previous years. This year due to the virtual offer we had a significant increase in providers offering something for young people to take part in which resulted in a huge choice available to them. The interest and willingness in providers coming forward to take part in Takeover Challenge continues to develop and evidences their commitment to the event for future years. The virtual offer also allowed young people to take up more than one opportunity in the day and in essence they were able to create a menu of taster sessions to suit their interests and needs which in turn allowed providers to see more young people in their sessions, adding value to what they offered.
- 3.7 Takeover Challenge also 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. It also takes into account the aspirations of young people and the Aspirations Audit which previously undertaken.

The aims and outcomes of Barnsley's involvement in Takeover Challenge were;

- To involve at least 50 Young People aged 14 to 24yrs. This year saw a record number of 355 young people accessing virtual opportunities.
- To integrate children in care and care experienced young people with their peers by enabling them to participate together in the Takeover Challenge. This aim was achieved as at least 14 participants in this year's Takeover Challenge were children in care or care experienced and they participated in workshops alongside their peers.
- Provide young people with a chance to have a say in the decisions that are made about them. A number of members of the Youth Council, Care4US

Council and SEND Forum were involved in this year's Takeover Challenge and have since given feedback on their experience. This feedback will be used as part of the evaluation to develop future planning.

- Enable young people to attend and contribute to the annual joint Children's Trust Executive Group (TEG) and Safeguarding Board event. The report notes that an historic outcome of Takeover Challenge was a pledge from Barnsley's previous Executive Director (People) that the date for the joint TEG/ BSCB event should coincide with Takeover Challenge in order to include the contribution that young people make in this event and the outcomes it generates. This pledge is something that is further supported by the current Executive Director (Children's) and therefore continued this year. Young people from the SEND Forum and Youth Council attended the event and participated in discussions on post Covid-19 recovery and the delivery of the Children and Young Peoples Plan. The SEND Forum also gave feedback on how they are working with members of the partnership to develop an Anti-Bullying Strategy – an ongoing approach to cultural change. Young people present at the event further contributed to the wider agenda giving feedback from their perspective.
- Provide opportunities for our organisations and businesses to hear young people's views. All of the organisations who participated in Takeover Challenge were encouraged to listen to the views of young people, seeking their feedback about how to improve services and how they involve children and young people in service delivery.
- Allow young people to gain an insight into our working world. Many of the young people who took part in Takeover Challenge have fed back that they enjoyed the experience and that it has given them a chance to think about their future education and employment choices, inspiring or challenging young people by their experience on the day.

### 3.8 Barnsley's 2020 Takeover Challenge virtual catalogue of activities/sessions included;

- Attendance and contributions at the annual Joint Trust Executive (TEG) and Safeguarding event
- The Mayor of Barnsley
- Henry Boot Construction
- Public Health – Post Covid-19
- Communications and Marketing
- Recruitment and HR
- Barnsley Museums and Social Media
- Aspects of Social Work
- CAMHS
- NHS CCG
- Remedi – Targeted Youth Support Service
- Social Work Q&A

- Public Health
- Hey Sunny – Media production company
- Museum Q&A
- The Environment
- The Young Apprentice
- Employability
- Former Travel Editor – Financial Times
- Life as an Elected Member
- IDAS
- Communities
- Smart Working

3.9 In Barnsley this year 355 individual young people participated in Takeover Challenge with representatives from Children’s Social Care, The Care4Us Council, Youth Council, SEND Forum, Astrea Dearne, Darton Academy, Outwood Academy Shafton and Barnsley College. The breakdown of the 355 participants was as follows;

- 14 young people in care and care experienced young people
- 10 young people from Barnsley Youth Council
- 11 young people from the SEND Forum
- 25 x students from Astrea Dearne
- 17 x students from Darton Academy
- 15 x students from Outwood Academy Shafton
- 263 x students from Barnsley College
- 8 of these young people also attended the annual Joint Trust Executive Group and Safeguarding Board event

3.10 Young People’s participation in the opportunities available to them gave local leaders and decision makers a fresh perspective on their services and it was a great opportunity for young people to find out first-hand what happens in services and roles such as Public Health, Social Care, Museums etc.

#### **4.0 PROPOSAL AND JUSTIFICATION**

4.1 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 and it is crucial that this is a joint initiative with involvement across the business units.

4.2 This report respectfully requests that all areas of the Council identify how they can use the feedback from Takeover Challenge to inform future opportunities for Young People’s participation in organisational decision making

#### **5.0 CONSIDERATION OF ALTERNATIVE APPROACHES**

5.1 Not applicable

## **6.0 IMPLICATIONS FOR LOCAL PEOPLE AND SERVICE USERS**

- 6.1 The overall aim of Takeover Challenge is to raise aspirations for Young People in Barnsley. This is in line with Future Council's Vision and Values in regard to young people achieving their potential and making a positive contribution.
- 6.2 Participation in Takeover Challenge work shadowing ensures that more young people including those in care and care experienced young people for whom we have a Corporate Parenting Responsibility across all communities in the Borough are able to have the opportunity to participate in this event. Takeover Challenge enables service users to have their voices heard.
- 6.3 The feedback derived from last year's Takeover Challenge will be an integral component in planning and preparation for the next Takeover Challenge later this year.

## **7.0. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

- 7.1 There are no direct financial implications arising from participation in the annual 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 and Young People particularly those in care and who are care experienced.

## **9.0. COMMUNICATIONS IMPLICATIONS**

- 9.1 The success of involvement was published in the press release below and also featured on the Council's official Facebook, Twitter and Instagram accounts. <https://www.barnsley.gov.uk/news/takeover-challenge-sees-another-successfulyear/>

## **10.0. CONSULTATION**

- 10.1 The involvement of all areas of Young People's services is commended.

## **11.0. KEY POLICY CONSIDERATIONS**

### Corporate Plan

- 11.1 The National Takeover Challenge (2019) forms one of a range of initiatives, including 'Ambition Barnsley (2019)' and 'Pathways to Employment' programme with the objective of supporting and equipping young people (including disadvantaged young people) with the skills and insight to access the employment market in line with the strategic priorities of our Jobs and Business Plan and More and Better Jobs Plan.

- 11.2 In terms of the Council's own Corporate Plan, this accords with the Corporate Priority of developing a Thriving and Vibrant Economy through Increasing Skills To Get More People Working. Moreover, Improving Education, Achievement and Employability is one of the six strategic priorities of the Barnsley Children and Young People's Plan (2019-22)
- 11.3 As well as equipping young people with such skills through these Plans it should not be forgotten that the foundations for success must be laid through enabling all children in the Borough to attend a school which is judged to be 'Good' or 'Outstanding'. This is an ambitious objective but it is one which all local children deserve as part of our Education Improvement and Inclusion Strategy which was recently considered by Cabinet
- 11.4 Involvement in Takeover Challenge contributes to the Council's corporate priorities
- People Achieving their Potential
  - A Thriving and Vibrant Economy

The Takeover Challenge 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 CONSIDERATIONS**

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

## **15.0. COMPATIBILITY WITH EUROPEAN CONVENTION ON HUMAN RIGHTS**

- 15.1 All of the Children's 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 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 Young People that relate to disability, culture, religion, gender or sexual orientation.

## **17.0. REDUCTION OF CRIME AND DISORDER**

17.1 The commitment towards keeping Young People 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 [governance@barnsley.gov.uk](mailto:governance@barnsley.gov.uk)

**Nina Sleight (Service Director: Education, Early Start and Prevention)**  
**Deborah Mercer (Service Director: Children's Social Care and Safeguarding)**

Financial Implications/  
Consultation



Joshua Amahwe (10/02/2021)

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*(to be signed by senior Financial Services officer  
where there are no financial implications)*