

BARNSELY 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 (CHILDREN'S SERVICES) TO CABINET ON 16th DECEMBER 2020

MEASURES TO STRENGTHEN AND MAXIMISE SUPPORT FOR BARNSELY'S EXAM COHORT (2020/21)

1.0 PURPOSE OF REPORT

- 1.1 To outline the current context relating to the challenges faced particularly in relation to schools and settings with pupils scheduled to take exams next Summer; to detail the support available to Barnsley pupils in Year 11 and students in Year 13 following consultation between the Barnsley Alliance and schools and FE providers. The report also seeks to inform Cabinet of the range of stakeholder views in relation to the potential for disruption to exams and sets out a summary of the programme which has been developed, from within funding previously allocated, to further support the 2021 exam cohort.

2.0 RECOMMENDATIONS

- 2.1 **That Cabinet notes the current arrangements to support Barnsley's young people due to take exams in the academic year 2020/21**
- 2.2 **That Cabinet endorses the additional measures to mitigate the impact of Covid-19 on the exam cohort as detailed in Paragraph 4.6 of this report.**

3.0 INTRODUCTION

- 3.1 Pupils currently in years 11 and 13 will be expected to sit GCSE and A Level / Level 3 assessments next summer.
- 3.2 The Government and Ofqual have announced that exams will go ahead in summer 2021, with an extended exam season in operation as indicated in the document linked to below

[https://www.gov.uk/government/news/students-to-be-given-more-time-to-prepare-for-2021-exams.](https://www.gov.uk/government/news/students-to-be-given-more-time-to-prepare-for-2021-exams)

The exam schedule has been delayed to that in previous years to allow some additional time to prepare. Clearly, there will need to be contingencies and dispensations in place to allow for the disruption already experienced and likely to be further experienced in the run up to summer 2021. It is important therefore, that we plan for the different eventualities involved in any late change in national policy. As part of this, on 3rd December, the DfE in conjunction with Ofqual announced further measures to support children and young people taking exams in England next Summer and a summary of these measures can be viewed via the link below:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/news/extra-measures-to-support-students-ahead-of-next-summers-exams>

For this reason, the proposals set out in this report to support pupils with preparation for exams would also pivot flexibly, if needed, to focus on how to ensure good outcomes in the event of a move to teacher-led assessments. This would involve focusing on the skills required to produce good quality coursework and assist with techniques to motivate pupils, particularly those most in need, and keep them engaged with the process throughout.

- 3.3 The eventual results will be announced to students between 24th and 27th August 2021 to allow pupils to start the 2021/22 academic year as normal but taking into account the delay to the exam schedule.
- 3.4 The current pandemic presents significant challenges to students and schools / FE providers to ensure they are as ready as they can be for their final assessments. Pupils and students in years 11 and 13 have already experienced significant disruption to their education during the 2019/20 academic year and this is persisting in 2020/21 despite the full return in September 2020, due to 'bubble' closures resulting from a Covid-19 positive case (s).
- 3.5 Cabinet agreed on the 7th October that it was important to ensure that everything that can be done to support students in this respect was being done; that consideration be given to anything further the Council could do or facilitate to add value to the arrangements put in place by the education sector, to ensure our young people are not further disadvantaged as a result of the disruption to their learning caused by the pandemic.
- 3.6 The report sets out the results of an initial consultation with schools and FE leaders to establish the support that is currently in place and scope proposals as to how the Council could enhance and / or support these approaches without duplication and to maximise positive impact.
- 3.7 **Context and Scale of Challenges**
- 3.8 As indicated earlier, the Department for Education (DfE) have advised that GCSE and A levels will go ahead next year, on the basis that exams are the fairest way of judging a student's performance and that contingency planning by the DfE in consultation with the sector will be produced before Christmas.
- 3.9 Notwithstanding this, the impact of coronavirus on children's education and the 2020/21 exam_cohort in areas in the north of England, including Barnsley, have seen increased and high rates of coronavirus, which have significantly affected children's education, many of whom are already from disadvantaged communities.
- 3.10 Since the start of the pandemic there has been a disproportionate impact on children's school attendance due to coronavirus, in the North of England. Between 5 July and 25 October 2020 there have been a total of 217,074 cases in the North, compared with 181,614 for the rest of England. That is despite the North having less than a third of the whole population.

- 3.11 New figures published in response to a Parliamentary question show that on 15 October 2020, 17 out of the 23 local authorities where secondary school attendance had been below 80 per cent were in the North of England. The three regions of the North also have the lowest secondary school attendance in the country. Secondary schools in the North West and Yorkshire and the Humber had the joint lowest attendance rate at 81 per cent, followed by the North East at 83 per cent.
- 3.12 By contrast, secondary schools in the South West had the highest rates of attendance, with 90 per cent of pupils in school, while the South East and the East of England had 89 per cent attendance.
- 3.13 On Thursday 22nd October, according to data submitted to DfE via the daily submission form, attendance in Barnsley secondary schools was 73% in comparison to 83% nationally. Attendance was slightly higher in primary schools at 84% but still well below the 90% reported nationally and 11% of pupils were absent for Covid related reasons in comparison to the estimated 6% to 7% nationally. Local attendance data for the first half term of the 2020/21 academic year showed that attendance for our Year 11 pupils had dropped to 92% in comparison to 94% for the same period in 2019/20. However, this figure does not include the high number of X and Y codes now being used for covid related absences. When these are taken into account, actual attendance for Year11 pupils in the first half term of 2020/21 was 85%.
- 3.14 GCSE and A level Exams 2021
- 3.15 Whilst there is a duty for schools to provide remote education during these periods, there is little available research on the quality of remote education. However, research from the Institute for Fiscal Studies (IFS) reported in '*Learning during the lockdown: real-time data on children's experiences during home learning*' (May 2020) found that:
- Primary and secondary students are each spending about 5 hours a day on average on home learning. However, secondary school children are more likely to have online classes and to spend their leisure time online.
 - Higher-income parents are much more likely than the less well-off to report that their child's school provides online classes and access to online videoconferencing with teachers whilst 64% of secondary pupils in state schools from the richest households are being offered active help from schools, such as online teaching, compared with 47% from the poorest fifth of families. 82% of secondary school pupils attending private school are offered active help, with 79% being provided with online classes.
 - Children from better-off families are spending 30% more time on home learning than those from poorer families. Children in the highest-income quintile of families spend 5.8 hours a day on educational activities, over 75 minutes more than their peers in the poorest fifth of households (4.5 hours). Over the 34 days (minimum) that schools will be closed, students in the best-off families will have done more than 7 full school days' worth of extra learning time. If schools do not go back until September and current rates of home learning continue, the gap would double to 15 full school days. This could have very substantial long-term consequences in light of evidence that even one extra hour a week of instructional time can significantly raise achievement.

- Better-off students have access to more resources for home learning. Within state primary and secondary schools, parents in the richest families are around 15 percentage points more likely than those in the poorest fifth to report that their child's school offers active resources such as online classes, or video or text chatting. More than half (58%) of primary school students from the least well-off families do not have access to their own study space.
- Many parents of both primary and secondary school students report struggling with supporting home learning. Almost 60% of the parents of primary school children and nearly half of the parents of secondary school children report that they are finding it quite or very hard to support their children's learning at home.
- school closures are almost certain to increase educational inequalities. Pupils from better-off families are spending longer on home learning; they have access to more individualised resources such as private tutoring or chats with teachers; they have a better home set-up for distance learning; and their parents report feeling more able to support them.

3.16 The report highlights the inequalities for children from disadvantaged and poorer backgrounds and the risk that for these children, the attainment gap will widen due to coronavirus.

3.17 Summary of Support currently offered through Schools and FE Providers

- Schools and FE providers have worked hard to ensure that students have access to appropriate technology to facilitate remote learning and to enhance learning through the additionality which remote resources can bring.
- In addition, a range of approaches have been / are being applied in respect of Year 11 and Year 13 learners as follows:

3.18 Schools and Academies

- School leaders are confident that current pupil predictions remain broadly in line with trajectories
- Schools' report that most pupils have returned to school with a high level of positive engagement, determination and focus – recognising the work they themselves need to do to avoid falling behind
- Pupils are being frequently assessed to ensure their progress remains on track
- Curriculum delivery has been reconsidered to take account of lost learning time and the knowledge that now needs to be built as a priority focus
- Schools are targeting support to pupils, based on subject trajectory / pupil ability – particularly in the core subjects of Maths and English
- Schools are using a range of interventions to support pupils including where necessary: 1 to 1 support, additional lessons before and after-school, remote learning to enhance what's happening in school and ensuring pupil progress is closely tracked and monitored. Barnsley schools have been supporting each other and drawing from best practice through the regular meetings of secondary head teachers with some really good examples of creative working such as online masterclasses, specific interventions in core areas of the curriculum and the increased use of remote facilities to enhance school-based learning activity.

Some really good examples can be seen by following these links:
<https://www.northerneducationtrust.org/remote-learning-secondary/>
<https://www.dartonacademy.org.uk/online-academy3>

- Resources have been made available by the Government through the ‘catch-up’ Pupil Premium and a National Tutoring Programme, which is intended to support disadvantaged pupils identified by their schools and schools will focus this to ensure maximum impact.
<https://nationaltutoring.org.uk/>
https://www.gov.uk/guidance/coronavirus-covid-19-catch-up-premium?es_c=CB00C9611C363D90552209427917D344&es_cl=64F463847F765BE92A7AB17926EA6188&es_id=9d%c2%a3o3
- In addition to the Government access to technology scheme, some schools have identified pupils who require access to their own, dedicated device (Chromebooks, laptops, tablets) who wouldn’t have qualified under the Government scheme and have distributed devices accordingly. However, not all schools have the resources available to do this so there is likely to be disparity across the borough.
- Schools are working with pupils and partners to identify and respond to any anxieties in respect of the pressures of examinations during this unprecedented time.
- Support to the emotional health and wellbeing of pupils is also being offered through a number of initiatives through the Barnsley Alliance including trauma-informed practice training for schools staff, the Return to Education Wellbeing project which has produced training resources and webinars for schools staff and programmes of support and training developed through the Educational and Community Child Psychology Service.

3.19 **Further Education**

- Students are being assessed on a regular basis to identify gaps in learning with additional staff recruited in Barnsley College to support this
- Interventions include regular reviews, tracking and monitoring of student progress
- Additional sessions have been introduced by the College for some core subjects with these taking place evenings and during holidays
- The College has introduced a new pastoral and enrichment package
- Barnsley College has also ensured Year 13 students have access to appropriate technology and has distributed devices to help with this.
- Additional funding has been made available to post-16 education providers to mitigate the impact of the pandemic
https://www.gov.uk/guidance/16-to-19-funding-16-to-19-tuition-fund?es_c=CB00C9611C363D90552209427917D344&es_cl=027EF797DE4FD25B5271E35D19572D7F&es_id=9d%c2%a3o3

3.20 **Challenge and Rationale**

- 3.21 Given the scale of the challenges experienced so far this academic year, the Winter months and beyond may bring even greater levels of disruption to learning and so

our responses therefore need to be flexible and adaptive to a rapidly changing need among pupils and students.

- 3.22 School and FE leaders have reflected that they have worked hard to ensure disruption to learning is kept to a minimum and that learning can still be delivered when learners are unable to attend physical campus. There remains, however, a continuing concern that learners affected most, may well be those already significantly disadvantaged, and it is therefore potentially helpful to consider how the Council can support these cohorts from a central perspective.
- 3.23 Sector leaders have also reflected that subject-specific support is unlikely to be appropriate or particularly helpful for a variety of reasons including full understanding of pupil ability levels and that the sequencing of the delivery of curriculum objectives is likely to vary from setting to setting.
- 3.24 The proposals set out particularly in Paragraph 4.6 below are therefore intended to maximise the Council's ability to support learning in a way that enables better engagement with learning tools and methods, improves access to study and revision skills tutoring and where necessary, helps to support with digital technology and connectivity.

4.0 PROPOSAL AND JUSTIFICATION

- 4.1 We recognise that not all young people are able to access quiet study facilities, nor do all young people have access to appropriate technology. In addition, some young people struggle to maintain sufficient motivation to ensure they remain engaged fully with their learning.
- 4.2 Exams and other forms of assessment are known to create higher levels of anxiety among young people and this is even more the case currently, with pupils feeling anxious about the impact of the pandemic on their long-term life chances as well as the immediate impact on their family and friends. It is important therefore that support mechanisms are in place for young people to manage their anxieties and not allow this to impede their ability to engage with their education.
- 4.3 The challenge from Cabinet was to explore all possibilities to ensure Barnsley young people are not disproportionately impacted by the effects of the pandemic on their education. While there have been resources and funding made available to schools and FE providers for approaches such as one to one tuition, this is likely to be in high demand and we know that capacity is limited at national level.
- 4.4 The Sheffield Hallam University 'GROW' programme has a strong evidence base in motivating young people to study by using recent graduates from the local area to engage with young people directly, offering a tried and tested approach to ensure a large number of pupils receive the learning support they need. It has the added benefit of recruiting recent graduates locally, enhancing long-term employment prospects for this cohort.
- 4.5 There is the potential to maximise the use of community facilities by encouraging young people to seek out quiet study space as near to their homes and communities as possible. In addition to the proposals below we can work through

our network of public libraries, subject to Covid-secure guidance at the time, to offer:

- Free access to public computers, bookable for 1-2 hours per day
- Free wifi
- Quiet study space – option to introduce as a bookable resource at some libraries
- Free access to a range of online reference resources from home or library with library membership e.g. Encyclopaedia Britannica, Oxford Reference Online, Access to Research, British Newspaper Archive
- Introductory online sessions to resources for mentors and teaching staff

4.6 The following proposals and ideas for development therefore are intended to blend a range of approaches to support pupils and students identified by their settings as in need of specific, targeted support while allowing young people, where appropriate, to self-identify and opt into the support available. In brief, these proposals are summarized as follows:

1. 'Support for Learning' Programme Manager
2. Improve access to facilitated study space
3. Additional Targeted Information, Advice and Guidance
4. Improve access to technology
5. Sheffield Hallam University to implement GROW student mentoring programme for year 11 pupils & develop and implement a programme for year 13 students

| Summary of Proposal | Approach and Summary of Benefits | Resource Requirement | Cost |
|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------|
| 1. Support for Learning Programme Manager | Co-ordinate and support implementation of the programmes to support schools and colleges – ensure resources targeted to right pupils and students | One full-time, temporary post to end of 20/21 academic year | £34,000 |
| 2. Improve access to facilitated study space through a combination of opening dedicated spaces within libraries, family centres, community resource centres and IKIC centres. | Aim to facilitate supported study space within our network of Family Centres and IKIC centres for Year 11 students for a period of 23 weeks between February 2021 and July 2021. Supportive environment that will provide access to the internet and IT equipment, a warm study friendly environment, access to healthy study foods, provision of mindfulness/meditation | Fit for purpose, accessible community venues Bank of suitably skilled sessional staff Rollout of Wifi 1 Grade 9 EIP worker, 1 Grade 3 Outreach Worker and 1 Grade 4 TYS Support per session | £84,703 |

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| | <p>activities, information and advice around specific related issues (e.g. managing stress and emotional wellbeing) provided by suitably trained staff.</p> <p>Six three-hour sessions per week – one in each area council area, hosted at either a Family Centre or IKIC Centre. Each session would be held either on a weekday evening or on a Saturday morning and the sessions would rotate across each area council locality to ensure that there is both a weekend and evening offer available.</p> <p>Provided from alternating spaces / ensure access is equitable across borough – one in each Area Council area – to ensure Covid-secure practice.</p> <p>Installation of corporate Wifi at two sites to ensure access to good, reliable internet</p> | <p>Summary of costs:</p> <table border="1" data-bbox="887 300 1265 792"> <tr> <td>Staffing Costs</td> <td>£30,503</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Facilities Management</td> <td>£7,820</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Catering</td> <td>£1,380</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Public access computers (40)</td> <td>£30,000</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Installation of corporate Wifi at 2 sites</td> <td>£15,000</td> </tr> <tr> <td>TOTAL</td> <td>£84,703</td> </tr> </table> | Staffing Costs | £30,503 | Facilities Management | £7,820 | Catering | £1,380 | Public access computers (40) | £30,000 | Installation of corporate Wifi at 2 sites | £15,000 | TOTAL | £84,703 | |
| Staffing Costs | £30,503 | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Facilities Management | £7,820 | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Catering | £1,380 | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Public access computers (40) | £30,000 | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Installation of corporate Wifi at 2 sites | £15,000 | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| TOTAL | £84,703 | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| <p>3. Improve access to technology including hardware for disadvantage pupils and provide 4G connectivity for those without internet access at home– 4G connectivity addresses barrier to learning where no internet</p> | <p>Schools / college identify additional pupils where access is limited - most schools / academies have already done this – propose a contingency fund for cases where access is limited but pupils wouldn't qualify under the Government scheme and their school / academy doesn't currently have the resources to plug the gap.</p> <p>A Y11 fund that parents / carers can apply to in</p> | <p>£180 - £200 per device (estimate 550 required)</p> <p>Approximately £6 per month per device (7 months x 550)</p> | <p>£50k</p> <p>£25k</p> | | | | | | | | | | | | |

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|-------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------|
| access is available in family home | order to secure Wifi access | | |
| 4. Additional Targeted Information, Advice & Guidance | <p>Focus on the mental health and resilience of young people in Y11 / post – 16 learning and motivations to remain engaged with learning.</p> <p>Build on TIAGs current ESF Pathways offer to schools and young people in Y11. Working alongside schools it has identified and targeted students at risk of becoming NEET and put in place additional IAG to that already delivered. This offer will be extended to provide support for young people in Y11 and Y13 struggling with their emotional and mental health and wellbeing as a result of current covid-19 restricted delivery models of learning.</p> <p>Intervention and support would be provided to identified young people to help them overcome the challenges they face and to re-engage and/or keep them engaged in learning.</p> <p>An additional resource of 2 Advisors experienced in working with young people who have low level mental health issues would be required.</p> <p>The beneficiaries of this would be young people who are likely to fall through current gaps in support but are vulnerable</p> | <p>2 additional TIAG Advisors @ £45k each</p> <p>Term time staff working additional hours in the Feb/Easter break</p> | <p>£90k</p> <p>£15k</p> |

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| | <p>for a myriad of reasons and often go unnoticed.</p> <p>Utilising existing resource within the Education Welfare Service to undertake targeted home visits to families to direct them to study support within the school and community.</p> <p>Good study info guide to be hosted on the family services directory – advice around good study environments, study foods, importance of sleep with tips to getting enough sleep and rest. - aimed at both young people and their parents and carers. To include hints and tips from previous Y11 students. What helped them focus what supported and motivated them.</p> | Commissioned | £20K |
| <p>5. Strategic partnering with Sheffield Hallam University to implement GROW student mentoring programme for year 11 pupils</p> <p>6. Develop and implement GROW programme for year 13 students</p> | <p>7-week programme = 300 pupils x 2 = 600 pupils in total. Pupils mentored by recent graduate. Evidence-based programme already delivered through pilot in some South Yorkshire schools (Horizon in Barnsley). Scale-up and roll-out at pace.</p> <p>Programme currently targeted at year 11 could be quickly developed for year 13. Additional advantage of recruiting graduates from Barnsley, would support Contingent on recruitment of graduates</p> | Detailed costings provided by SHU (£88k to deliver two cohorts) | <p>£88k</p> <p>£88k</p> |

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|--------------|--|--|-----------------|
| | | | |
| TOTAL | | | £494,703 |

5.0 CONSIDERATION OF ALTERNATIVE APPROACHES

5.1 The Council has a proud and proven record of prioritising investment in order to safeguard children from harm and improve the quality of practice and provision both in education and in children’s social care as part of improving the life chances of all children and young people in the Borough. The next steps and investments detailed particularly in Paragraph 4.6 will help in enhancing the support to be given to our cohort of children and young people taking exams at the end of this academic year so they are better equipped and prepared to succeed and achieve their potential.

6.0 IMPLICATIONS FOR LOCAL PEOPLE/SERVICE USERS

6.1 The measures adopted by the schools sector and colleges in the Borough as described in Section 3.0 together with the investment proposals detailed in Paragraph 4.6 of this report will aim to provide support to the entire exam cohort at Years 11 and 13 in all areas of the Borough as part of mitigating the ongoing impact of the Covid-19 Pandemic upon their progress.

7.0 FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

7.1 Consultations have taken place with representatives of the Service Director – Finance (S151 Officer).

7.2 The total estimated cost of the proposals as detailed in para 4.6 above amounts to **£0.495m** and can be analysed as follows:

| Spend | Description | Cost (£) |
|-----------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------|
| Staffing | Programme Manager; 1 Grade 9 EIP worker, 1 Grade 3 Outreach Worker 1 Grade 4 TYS Support Term time EWS staff hours | 79,503 |
| Premises related | Creating study space within network of family centres and IKIC centres | 54,200 |
| TIAG Advisors | 2 additional advisors (Employment & Skills Service) | 90,000 |
| Commissioned contracts | SHU – student mentoring GROW programme (Y11 & Y13) | 176,000 |
| | Family services directory | 20,000 |
| IT devices; connectivity | Access to IT devices for disadvantaged pupils | 75,000 |
| | | 494,703 |

7.3 The above represents non-recurrent costs in 2020/21 and will be funded from £0.5M earmarked reserves set aside by the Council for School Improvement.

8.0 EMPLOYEE IMPLICATIONS

- 8.1 Cabinet will note that the additional investment proposals aimed at maximising the support to the exam cohort includes the recruitment of a set of temporary, additional posts. Subject to Cabinet's approval of the proposals as detailed in Paragraph 4.6, further reports leading to the appointment of these posts will be generated by the Service Director (Education, Early Start and Prevention) in consultation with the Service Director (Business Improvement, Human Resources and Communications) in accordance with the Council's Scheme of Delegation.

9.0 LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

- 9.1 There are no legal considerations emerging through the proposals indicated in this report.

10.0 CUSTOMER AND DIGITAL IMPLICATIONS

- 10.1 There are no implications for accessing the range of Council services or the onus in favour of digital transactions emerging through the report.

11.0 COMMUNICATIONS IMPLICATIONS

- 11.1 There could be a pressing need for the Council and local MPs to lobby central government for additional support, including through the Northern Powerhouse, in order to influence post Spending Review lobbying activity .
- 11.2 In addition, it is conceivable that other local authorities and schools beyond the Borough may be interested in Barnsley's approach to maximising and strengthening support to its exam cohort as part of the dissemination of good practice elsewhere. In such instances, these requests will be met through existing resources. The opportunities presented in the report will be widely communicated as appropriate.

12.0 CONSULTATIONS

- 12.1 Consultation on the measures hitherto adopted to support the Borough's cohort of children and young people taking exams next Summer has been undertaken with the Borough's schools, academies and colleges. The Senior Management Team has been consulted on these measures together with the proposed additional investments and has endorsed the report's proposals.

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

- 13.1 The measures adopted to prepare and support the exam cohort during the ongoing impact of the Covid-19 Pandemic aim to continue the progress made in recent years by the Borough's young people in each stage of the National Curriculum. The proposed approach actively supports Outcome 6 in the Council's Corporate Plan of *"Ensuring child attends a good school and is successful in learning and work."*
- 13.2 The proposals will particularly aim to consolidate progress and achievement against the targets, including closing the gap with the National Average, in a range of performance indicators including the following:

- Percentage of children achieving a strong pass grade in Key Stage 4 Basics
- Number of disadvantaged pupils achieving the average Attainment 8 score at KS4 in comparison to peers
- Average Progress 8 score at Key Stage 4

13.3 Data concerning the latest, provisional and unpublished performance against the targets of these indicators have recently been presented to Cabinet as part of the Quarter 2 Corporate Performance report and provisional education outcomes (2020).

14.0 PROMOTING EQUALITY, DIVERSITY AND SOCIAL INCLUSION

14.1 An overriding objective of the proposals will be to address the gap in attainment for disadvantaged pupils in Years 11 and 13, including those with a protected characteristic, as part of reducing the gap in achievement and improving their life chances.

15.0 TACKLING THE IMPACT OF POVERTY

15.1 A crucial element of our ambition for all children and young people in the Borough is to enable them to achieve their potential and acquire the skills and qualifications that will support them in accessing the employment market via sustainable jobs and improve their resilience to the impact of poverty.

16.0 TACKLING HEALTH INEQUALITIES

16.1 The measures adopted to strengthen the exam cohort's preparedness will include proposals to improve their emotional resilience through initiatives such as the *Return to Education Wellbeing* project referenced earlier in the report.

17.0 REDUCTION OF CRIME AND DISORDER

17.1 There are no direct implications for the Borough's Plan for tackling crime, disorder and anti-social behavior emerging through this report. Attendance levels will need to be improved as infection rates hopefully reduce and there continues to be good engagement with parents and families in re-integrating children and students back into school and college. Our approach has long been that children and young people remain safest in their school or setting and the level of positive engagement should minimize any risk of harm.

18.0 RISK MANAGEMENT ISSUES

18.1 Schools in conjunction with the Barnsley Alliance will continue to review the effectiveness of their Covid-19 risk assessments and recovery plans as part of ensuring children and students across the Borough remain engaged with their learning and are able to achieve the grades necessary to enable them to access further or higher education, employment and additional skills.

18.2 The proposals and investments indicated in the report will help mitigate the impact of the disruption to education as a result of the Covid-19 pandemic in order to meet the needs of the exam cohort.

19.0 HEALTH, SAFETY AND EMERGENCY RESILIENCE ISSUES

19.1 Schools and other settings remain as far as possible Covid-19 secure learning environments, however, should infections occur all education settings have in place contingency and continuity plans to ensure engagement with learning continues off-site.

20.0 COMPATIBILITY WITH THE EUROPEAN CONVENTION ON HUMAN RIGHTS

20.1 The proposals outlined in this report are compatible with the Articles and Protocols of the Convention.

21.0 CONSERVATION OF BIODIVERSITY

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

22.0 GLOSSARY

22.1 None applicable.

23.0 LIST OF APPENDICES

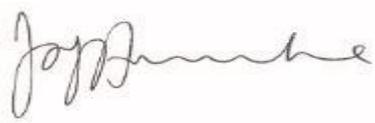
23.1 There are no appendices to this report.

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

Report author: Richard Lynch (Head of the Barnsley Alliance for Schools)

Financial Implications/Consultation



Joshua Amahwe (18/11/2020)

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