

**CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE'S LEARNING SCRUTINY PANEL**

A meeting of the Children and Young People's Learning Scrutiny Panel was held on 16 December 2019.

**PRESENT:** Councillors J Platt (Chair), C Dodds, L Garvey, A Hellaoui, T Higgins, S Hill and J McTigue (As Substitute)

**PRESENT AS OBSERVERS:** J Cain

**ALSO IN ATTENDANCE:** L Bramhall and L McNicoll

**OFFICERS:** C Elliott and G Moore

**APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE** Councillors M Nugent, P Storey and G Wilson.

**DECLARATIONS OF INTERESTS**

There were no Declarations of Interest made by Members at this point in the meeting.

1 **MINUTES - CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE'S LEARNING SCRUTINY PANEL - 21 OCTOBER 2019**

The minutes of the previous meeting of the Children and Young People's Learning Scrutiny Panel, held on 21 October 2019, were submitted and approved as a correct record.

2 **MINUTES - CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE'S LEARNING SCRUTINY PANEL - 18 NOVEMBER 2019**

The minutes of the previous meeting of the Children and Young People's Learning Scrutiny Panel, held on 18 November 2019, were submitted and approved as a correct record.

3 **ADDRESSING POVERTY ISSUES AND THE IMPACT ON LEARNING - EVIDENCE FROM MIDDLESBROUGH ACHIEVEMENT PARTNERSHIP (MAP)**

The Manager of Middlesbrough Achievement Partnership (MAP) was in attendance to provide the scrutiny panel with:

- An overview of the work that MAP was undertaking in respect of its strategic priority to address poverty issues and the impact on learning.

The Manager of MAP explained that MAP worked closely with schools and key partners, in Middlesbrough and beyond, to remove barriers to learning. It was added that MAP had been set up in 2012 to support school improvement. At that point, the partnership focussed on key Ofsted priorities around leadership and teaching and learning outcomes. The Manager for MAP was appointed in 2015 to develop the partnership. At that time, there was one teaching school in Middlesbrough, however an additional five schools became teaching schools providing school to school support across the area. Consultation was carried out with head teachers and in 2017 MAP developed a new set of priorities to address unmet need in Middlesbrough schools. Members heard that MAP involved strong partnership working in collaboration with a range of agencies and partners.

The Manager of MAP advised that the strapline for MAP was 'Together we will secure a brighter future for all Middlesbrough children and young people'.

Context

The scrutiny panel was advised that Middlesbrough had high levels of deprivation and disadvantage, high levels of unemployment and increasing mental health issues for children

and adults. In terms of the Index of Multiple Deprivation (IMD), Middlesbrough had been ranked the 5th most deprived local authority area in England and had the most deprived ward in Tees Valley. It was also added that:

- 27% of Middlesbrough's students were eligible for Free School Meals (FSM) (15.4% nationally)
- 37% of children in Middlesbrough were living in poverty (17% nationally)

It was explained to Members that those issues could result in:

- lower starting points for children;
- lack of aspiration;
- lack of parental engagement;
- social, emotional and behavioural challenges; and
- poor attendance.

#### Identifying Priorities

Members were advised that MAP had previously been led by a board, which had been disbanded in January 2019, when MAP became part of the Achievement Team. The board had involved representation from primary schools, secondary schools, special schools, Public Health, SEN and other key partners and there was a need to maintain that link. Therefore, a Removing Barriers Strategic Group was established.

It was advised that MAP consulted with schools through cluster groups, one-to-one meetings, attendance at the Secondary Head Teachers Forum and input via Local Authority colleagues.

In response to a Member's query, the Manager of MAP explained that the group's Local Authority representatives included the four members of MAP team, the Head of Achievement, the SEN 0-25 Manager and the Advanced Public Health Practitioner. The scrutiny panel was in agreement that the group would benefit from having elected member representation. A discussion ensued and it was commented that elected members could add value to the work of MAP by speaking to individuals and groups in their communities to raise awareness of the initiatives, interventions and training being offered by MAP. It was also added that a number of elected members sat on school governing boards, which would assist in improving collaboration and engagement. The Manager of MAP confirmed that elected members would be given the opportunity to become involved with MAP delivery groups.

Members heard that a School Improvement Board had been set up, which had an independent Chair. It was advised that the board oversaw the work of MAP. The work of MAP included linking to local strategies such as Middlesbrough's Inclusion Strategy, Parenting Strategy, EMPOWER etc; establishing and managing delivery groups with a wide range of multi-agency partners, analysing local data and using evidence-based research.

#### Key Priority Areas

The scrutiny panel was advised that the priorities, identified through consultation with schools in 2017, were:

- removing barriers to learning;
- parental partnership; and
- careers and employability.

Members heard that the priorities addressed the needs of schools and linked to the wider social issues, including - poverty, deprivation and removing barriers that children and young people faced in succeeding in life.

#### Removing Barriers to Learning

Members heard that MAP delivered a range of support to address child poverty and support schools to be better placed to poverty proof the school day. It was also advised that MAP

offered a wide range of opportunities to children, young people and their families. It was added that parental engagement was key to the work of MAP.

It was explained that MAP:

- offered bespoke support to schools to address needs. It was commented that MAP team would meet with school staff to discuss and identify needs and develop measures/strategies/interventions to address those needs, for example - MAP could link parents to Middlesbrough Community Learning where they could gain access to free courses and training, offer sessions to raise awareness of the support and range of services available etc.
- provided multi-agency team around the school support to collectively develop action plans and monitor the implementation of those actions.
- led on the roll-out of restorative practice in schools. It was advised that restorative practice involved building positive relationships and empowering individuals to resolve issues. Members heard that 20% of schools had accessed whole-school training. It was explained that, as a result of implementing restorative approaches, one school had experienced a 40% reduction in fixed-term exclusions, one school had seen a 33% decrease behavioural incidents and one school had achieved a 75% reduction with regards to children and young people on behavioural management plans. MAP had also developed a multi-agency restorative practice network to develop best practice.
- offered whole school training and conferences, which linked to MAP's priorities.
- led a Poverty Proofing Working Group, the group was undertaking work to poverty proof the school day by developing a best practice guide.
- provided a weekly update to schools to share a wide range of support and services.
- supported schools to access funding. MAP had arranged Find a Funder training for school staff.
- was currently leading on the development a Cultural Passport, part of the Empower programme. It was advised that the Cultural Passport aimed to improve social capital and enable children, young people and families to enjoy cultural experiences.

The scrutiny panel was advised that previous work included Pupil Premium events and funding three pilot schools to access the Poverty Proofing the School Day audit.

A Member queried how many schools had accessed the different training sessions and interventions offered by MAP. The Manager of MAP advised that a copy of MAP's Annual Review 2018/19 would be circulated. It was commented that the document demonstrated the impact of the work of MAP and how it was benefiting children, young people and families across Middlesbrough.

A Member commented that a school had recently arranged training for parents on restorative practices, which had been extremely beneficial. The Manager of MAP commented that delivering restorative practice training for parents had been identified as a future priority for MAP.

A Member commented that parents being issued with fines (due to their child's low attendance rates) and the cost of uniforms were the biggest areas of concern for those families living in poverty. A discussion ensued and the Manager of MAP commented that, as part of the poverty proofing work MAP undertook, it could liaise with schools in respect of the school uniform issue. In terms of attendance, it was advised that MAP had considered the issue of fines with the Local Authority's Attendance Team. Members heard that, prior to fines, there had been parenting orders in Middlesbrough and rather than being issued with a fine, parents would be requested to attend a parenting course. That proposal had been recommended for inclusion in the Parenting Strategy's action plan, which was fed into the Children's Trust. A Member expressed concern that parents were no longer contacted to discuss low attendance, they were just issued with a fine. The Manager of MAP advised that the issue would be referred to the Local Authority's Head of Access to Education and the Attendance Manager.

### Parental Partnership

The Manager of MAP advised that MAP worked closely with parents. It was commented that supporting parents and families enabled schools to receive vital information that could improve family lives and the lives of children, addressing a range of issues for those families living in poverty.

It was explained that MAP:

- commissioned training for a multi-agency team of 17 individuals to deliver Family Links Nurturing Programme. The programme was a 10 week parenting programme. 2018/19 had been a pilot year and 4 programmes had been delivered throughout the year. Parents had reported that the programme had a positive impact on relationships and increased aspirations. It was commented that Middlesbrough would benefit from having a specific team to support parents and deliver ongoing parenting programmes.
- commissioned Talking Teens programme, which was a short programme for parents / carers of teenagers that helped parents and carers to understand teenagers and develop a positive parenting style. As a result of MAP delivering training, a parenting hub had been developed at one school.
- arranged informal coffee morning sessions for parents to support progression. Those sessions included attendance from Welfare Rights, CAB, NHS, Job Centre Plus, Middlesbrough College and Middlesbrough Community Learning. The initial session had taken place at Middlesbrough College, however, due to low attendance rates, the sessions would now be delivered in the same venue as the training programmes.
- provided bespoke support to schools - family learning, wellbeing sessions for parents and delivery of multi-agency support.
- developed a Parent Support Advisor (PSA) Network, regularly attended by approximately 40 members of staff. Meetings were held every two months. Those meetings facilitated multi-agency training and awareness raising sessions to upskill PSAs and enable them to support parents and families. The network had previously received information on food power, holiday hunger, Fare Share, keep warm campaign, help through crisis, substance misuse, benefit take up campaign, the DWP and parental conflict programmes.
- had strong links with the Financial Inclusion Group (FIG), Middlesbrough Environment City, Early Help and many others.

### Careers and Employability

The Manager of MAP commented that MAP worked with schools, children, young people and families to increase aspiration and key employability skills needed to succeed and achieve the best outcome in life.

It was explained that MAP:

- worked with Globalbridge, which was a digital profile connecting students to employers. It was commented that 2,300 secondary school student had developed profiles on the portal. Members heard that MAP continued to work with Globalbridge to improve engagement with employers. 60 employers had signed up to the portal, those included - Middlesbrough Council, Middlesbrough College, Royal Navy, BT, NHS, Cleveland Police, TTE Technical Training, Via Creative, Tad Web Solutions Secondary Careers etc.
- facilitated a Secondary Leaders Network. MAP provided a newsletter, resources and access to funding through Tees Valley Combined Authority (TVCA) .
- set up a Primary Careers Network and delivered a primary careers pilot to increase aspirations and employability skills.
- offered bespoke support, reviewing the vocational and alternative curriculum offer in schools.
- worked with TVCA to enable the schools to access TVCA funding.
- engaged with schools during Global Entrepreneurship Week in respect of food poverty and encouraging schools to set up eco shops.

MAP Annual Review 2018/19

Members heard that an annual review was undertaken in 2018/19 to demonstrate the positive work undertaken by MAP.

The review concluded that:

- MAP offered a wide range of much needed support, which was delivered across Middlesbrough schools, students and parents.
- There was a clear impact of work and support to improve life chances of children, young people and families.
- 'The value of MAP support for poverty proofing and other initiatives should not be underestimated' - York St John University Evaluation.
- Feedback from parents - 'the parenting programme has changed my life'
- Feedback from pupils - 'I have learned that it is busy, very tiring and there are lots of jobs to pick out of and to find out what you could be'
- Feedback from schools - 'I have supported families to access services with confidence that they will provide appropriate interventions and have a positive impact. We have increased parental engagement in our school from building links with services that have been promoted via MAP'.

Some statistical information highlighted in the report included:

- Parental survey data in one school showed that 96% of parents had said that behaviour had improved in the school.
- On completion of the Family Links Nurturing Programme, 67% of parents reported that their children were showing less emotional and behavioural difficulties.
- 100% of parents would recommend the course to others.

The scrutiny panel was advised that MAP had clear links to the local and national agenda and key strategies, including:

- New Ofsted Education Inspection Framework (EIF) - as the funding for MAP was due to end in March 2020, it was advised that MAP had recently developed a service offer for schools to enable schools to commission services from MAP;
- Middlesbrough Social Regeneration Strategy - MAP was involved in eight of the Empower projects such as better outcomes, local learning, reduced exclusions, low attendance, health promotion, parenting support, locality working and the cultural passport;
- Middlesbrough Parenting Strategy - MAP had previously written a Parenting Strategy, the strategy was further developed by Public Health and an action plan was created and MAP was delivering a range of actions within the plan;
- Middlesbrough Inclusion Strategy 2019-2021 - MAP worked to engage with parents, reduce exclusions and improve attendance through the implementation of interventions and delivery of training;
- Tees Valley Unlocking Potential;
- Tees Valley 'Inspiring our Future' Strategy;
- Middlesbrough Strategic Plan 2018-22; and
- Middlesbrough Joint Strategic Needs Assessment for Children and Young People 2018.

Opportunities

The Manager of MAP commented that further work could be undertaken to:

- develop further links to Local Authority priorities and key issues, such as - poverty, exclusions, attendance and behaviour;
- explore closer links to wider Social Regeneration;
- explore links to locality working in areas of high deprivation (targeted approach to addressing poverty); and
- consider addressing wider poverty issues beyond MAP remit with schools, potential

joint working for Children's Trust partners.

A Member requested further information in respect of the costs associated with service delivery. The Manager of MAP explained that the Member would receive details of the costs associated with delivering the service and delivering the training.

A discussion ensued regarding the future funding for MAP. The Manager of MAP commented that work was being undertaken to develop the service offer and develop funding bids with external partners, it was therefore hoped that the delivery of the support, which was currently offered by MAP, could be sustained.

In response to a Member's query regarding engaging with parents, the Manager of MAP advised that mechanisms would be developed to target those parents who would benefit most from the parenting programmes. It was added that those mechanisms could be developed through liaison with Early Help and Social Care.

It was commented that the work undertaken by MAP could provide invest to save opportunities and a proposal was currently being developed to explore how the work of MAP providing early preventative support could reduce referrals to Early Help and Social Care.

**AGREED** as follows:

That the information presented at the meeting be considered in the context of the scrutiny panel's investigation.

#### 4 **ADDRESSING POVERTY ISSUES AND THE IMPACT ON LEARNING - EVIDENCE FROM CHILDREN NORTH EAST**

The School Research and Delivery Lead and the School Research and Delivery Practitioner from Children North East were in attendance to provide the scrutiny panel with:

- an overview of the aims and objectives of Poverty Proofing the School Day;
- information on the school evaluation and audit process undertaken by Children North East;
- an outline of the key areas of concern identified by the Poverty Proofing approach;
- an overview of the measures and strategies that schools could implement to mitigate the effects of poverty on learning; and
- case studies demonstrating the impacts of Poverty Proofing the School Day.

The School Research and Delivery Lead explained that Children North East was a regional charity, which was established in 1891 when a philanthropist was working with street children on the banks of the River Tyne.

It was explained that the charity aimed to tackle the effects of poverty and the issues associated with inequality and disadvantage.

#### Context

It was explained that the Government used the less than 60 per cent of median household income as the poverty 'threshold'. Members heard that the definition used by the Child Poverty Action Group and the Joseph Rowntree Foundation (JRF) was 'Individuals, families and groups in the population can be said to be in poverty when they lack resources to obtain the type of diet, participate in the activities and have the living conditions and amenities which are customary, or at least widely encouraged and approved, in the societies in which they belong'.

#### Child Poverty Statistics

The School Research and Delivery Lead advised that there were currently 4.1 million children living in poverty (30%). It was also commented that the levels of child poverty were predicted to increase. Currently, across the north east, 35% of children were living in poverty. Middlesbrough was reported to have the second highest levels of child poverty in the north

east, after Newcastle. It was commented that areas had pockets of affluence and pockets of deprivation.

### Challenges

The School Research and Delivery Lead advised that the challenges associated with poverty included:

- poor health outcomes, for example - children living in poverty were more likely to be admitted to hospital and suffer from diabetes and asthma;
- bad housing;
- food Insecurity;
- low social mobility;
- in-work poverty;
- poverty trap - 1 in 8 children were currently escaping the poverty trap; and
- low educational attainment.

### Educational Attainment

In respect of education, it was explained that for children, household income was the biggest predictor of educational attainment. Members heard that low income was a strong predictor of low educational performance. Members were advised that, by the time children started school, poor students could lag as much as 11 months behind their better off peers. It was also commented that the gap between children from richer and poorer backgrounds widened especially quickly during primary school.

The scrutiny panel was provided with information on the size of the disadvantage gap, reported by the Education Policy Institute in 2018. It was advised that for those pupils who were eligible for Free School Meals (FSM), the attainment gap between those pupils and their peers was reported as follows:

- 4.5 months in the early years;
- 9.2 months at primary school; and
- 18.1 months at secondary school.

It was also explained that for those pupils eligible for FSM, for at least 80% of their time at school, the attainment gap was reported as follows:

- 12.1 months at primary school; and
- 22.6 months at secondary school.

The scrutiny panel was advised that those statistics clearly demonstrated the impact of poverty on educational attainment.

### Poverty and Shame

Members heard that Walker et al (2013) had stated that 'Schools broadened horizons but the stark differences it exposed were a source of shaming: smartly dressed or not, more than one set of uniform or not, hungry or not, pocket money or not, calculator or not, the list was endless'.

The scrutiny panel was also advised that Reay (2017) had stated that 'In my research in English schools over a period of 25 years, working-class children have often said that they feel stupid, rubbish, 'no good' or even that they 'count for nothing' in the school context. For working class children, classrooms are often places of routine everyday humiliation and slights.'

Members heard that Nelson Mandela had also commented that poverty was not an accident. The School Research and Delivery Lead advised that poverty was policy responsive.

### Poverty Proofing the School Day

It was explained that 'Poverty Proofing the School Day' looked at the confines of the school day to identify measures and strategies that schools could implement to overcome the barriers to learning that children and young people from families with less financial resources face. Members heard that by reviewing school policies, practices and procedures, the effects of poverty could be mitigated within the school gates.

The scrutiny panel was informed that around eight years ago, Children North East had conducted a survey with 1000 children across the region. Members heard that disposable cameras were given to the children and the children were asked to take photographs of what they viewed poverty to be. As a result, 1100 photographs were received. It was explained that the children who had taken part in the survey identified that the one place where children living in poverty were most miserable, was school.

Following on from that, a piece of work was undertaken with a group of young people across the region. The group had created a fictional character called Hope and developed a drama piece, which was presented at Westminster. An excerpt from the drama piece, which summarised how children living in poverty felt when they attended school, was as follows:

'Look there's Hope, she's got holes in her shoes, pays nothing for dinners, and holds up the queues, going home with a face full of sorrow, but don't worry Hope, we'll get you tomorrow'.

A Member made reference to the Dispatches programme, which had recently been aired. With 4.1 million children growing up in poverty, Dispatches had followed three families to show what life was like if there was not enough money for life's essentials. It was commented that everyone would benefit from watching the programme.

### Food and FSM

It was advised that Children North East had initially worked with four schools, two primary schools and two secondary schools to unpick and understand the experiences of children living in poverty. It was commented that pupils had a great awareness of which peers were from disadvantaged backgrounds. Through discussion, it was explained that the register identified those pupils who were receiving FSM. Biometric systems used by schools also identified pupils who were eligible for FSM. It was commented that for school trips, children eligible for FSM were given a particular colour bag with a packed lunch in, which could also identify them. In terms of breakfast clubs, one school was allocating each pupil who was eligible for FSM a payment of £1.20 towards breakfast. That was seen as positive, however, in order to access the funding they were required to provide their name at the till, instead of hand over money.

### Resources

In terms of resources, having the latest pencil case was identified as a big issue. In one particular primary school, Year 4 children had Smiggle pencil cases and swapped pencil cases with other children in the class. It was commented that children could not participate if they did not own a Smiggle pencil case. That activity caused a segregation in class.

Homework was another issue, which had been identified by students. It was commented that when students were requested to create artwork at home, on occasion, the students were unable to complete the homework due to a lack of resources. A failure to complete the homework led to more embarrassment. It was explained that a lack of resources could restrict students from engaging in activities that were undertaken by classmates.

### Charity and Fundraising

The scrutiny panel was advised that charity and fundraising events had a cost implication. Simple things, such as the way the pound was collected for a non-uniform day, needed to be reconsidered. It was also commented that non-uniform days brought significant challenges for those students from deprived backgrounds, as some had access to limited clothing.



Members heard that, in terms of sponsorship money, it was always those pupils from the more affluent areas that received the most generous donations.

### Uniform

A key area of concern, for the scrutiny panel, was the increasing cost of uniform in some schools and the requirement to use a particular supplier.

A discussion ensued regarding accessibility of school uniforms, expectations around PE kits and having branded items. One particular school had identified that, in order to participate in outdoor activities, there was a requirement for students to wear branded tracksuit bottoms. It was advised that if a student did not have the branded tracksuit bottoms, which cost £40, the student was unable to take part in outdoor PE and the student would get a warning and then detention.

### Bullying

A discussion ensued regarding how living in poverty could affect a child's mental, physical, emotional and spiritual development.

One secondary school had identified that pupils needed to wear the extra-curricular kit to become a member of the school football team. It was advised that, measures such as those, prevented children from deprived backgrounds engaging in sports and other activities. In that instance, the fear of bullying caused the student to disengage.

A Member commented that it was important to raise awareness of the issues that affect students.

The School Research and Delivery Lead explained that no activity or planned activity in schools should identify, exclude, treat differently or make assumptions about those children whose household income or resources were lower than others.

### School Audit

The Poverty Proofing audit consisted of a whole-school evaluation, a written report and action plan and training for staff and governors.

It was explained that what was most distinctive about the approach was that all pupils in a school were interviewed in focus group sessions. The audit involved engagement with staff, parents and governors through conversations. It was also commented that all parents, staff and governors were invited to fill out questionnaires. The audit was therefore based on a whole-school consultation, hearing directly from children living in poverty about their experiences.

Members heard that the voice of the child was extremely important in influencing the decisions of schools' senior leadership teams. The audit provided a rare opportunity, which enabled schools to provide a voice to its most disadvantaged pupils and their families and see their practices through the eyes of all pupils, parents and staff.

Most of the issues raised in the action plans were generic across the schools. Those included extensive issues around ability/behaviour and setting, bullying, uniform, exams, extra-curricular activities, support for parents and families, food, homework, resources, transport, tutor groups/support for pupils, and school leadership and governance. Those generic issues were routinely, if unintentionally, stigmatising children living in poverty and contributing to the increasing cost of the school day.

It was commented that the culture, procedures and practices of schools could vary greatly, even those with similar levels of deprivation. Therefore, there was a need to assess each school in order to uncover the specific institutional and cultural practices, which stigmatised pupils.

A Member commented that the use of vocabulary was important.

Members heard that there were numerous benefits for the school as a result of going through the process, including a shift in whole school ethos and culture and the opportunity to make changes in response to the action plan, with maximum impact on pupils. It was advised that viewing all practices through the lens of poverty, did play an important part in eradicating barriers to learning for pupils that were economically poor.

A Member queried whether the Ofsted Inspection Framework assessed schools in terms of mitigating the impact of poverty on students. It was explained that although the framework did not contain a measure regarding poverty, there were several themes that ran concurrently throughout the Ofsted Framework and the Poverty Proofing the School Day audit. It was commented that documentation in respect of the audit had been submitted by one school, as supplementary information to Ofsted, during an inspection. It was commented that further work was being undertaken by Children North East to raise awareness, influence national policy and promote the voice of the child.

A Member commented that it would be beneficial for teachers to receive training on the barriers to learning, which existed because of poverty. The School Research and Delivery Lead advised that Children North East had delivered awareness training to some schools in the region.

Members heard that Children North East was currently working with Newcastle University to establish the poverty issues that could be addressed on a wider scale.

In terms of Poverty Proofing the School Day, in 2016, Newcastle University produced an evaluation and development report. The report stated that there was evidence of impacts in relation to the programme aims in many of the schools, including improved attendance and attainment, greater take up of free school meals, more effective use of pupil premium funding, a less costly school day, and an increase in the uptake of school trips and music tuition by the most disadvantaged pupils.

The scrutiny panel watched a video, which contained footage of head teachers. Following the Poverty Proofing a School Day audit, the head teachers explained that the audit had enabled the school to:

- improve attendance;
- develop short, medium and long term plans to address poverty issues;
- become more creative and supportive;
- help raise awareness of the negative impact school practices had on disadvantaged pupils;
- improve social mobility;
- look at things from a different perspective;
- change staff attitudes; and
- assist with ensuring that school was no longer a strain or stress for parents.

A Member commented that all elected members would benefit from receiving information in respect of Poverty Proofing the School Day to enable them to encourage schools to take part in the audit.

The Manager of MAP advised that MAP could arrange sessions for Middlesbrough's schools on Poverty Proofing the School Day. Members heard that MAP could also provide updates to schools on the work undertaken by Children North East. However, Members were advised that there were financial implications for undertaking the audits in schools.

The School Research and Delivery Lead advised that the charity had recently received funding from Hartlepool Borough Council. The funding was utilised to part fund 11 schools, in the borough, to go through the Poverty Proofing the School Day audit. Following completion of the work, the charity was now undertaking work with Hartlepool Borough Council to identify common threads that existed in the schools.

The Manager of MAP advised that MAP could work alongside Children North East to raise awareness of the audit and poverty proofing work.

A Member queried the financial implications for schools, in undertaking the audit. The School Research and Delivery Lead advised that the cost was dependent on the size of the school, therefore it varied. The day rate was £300. It was explained that, for example, for primary schools, in-school consultation would probably equate to three days and then possibly 2.5 days would be required to produce a report.

It was added that Children North East was currently undertaking a pilot to provide support for early years provision. Members heard that Teesside University had been commissioned to undertake an evaluation of that work.

**AGREED** as follows:

That the information presented at the meeting be considered in the context of the scrutiny panel's investigation.

## 5 **OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY BOARD - AN UPDATE**

Since the panel's last update, the Overview and Scrutiny Board (OSB) had met on 14 November 2019. The Chair presented a verbal update on the matters that were discussed at the meeting, including:

- Call In Referral - Executive Response
- Children's Services Update (Item deferred)
- Final Report of the Health Scrutiny Panel - Vulnerable and Fragile Services
- Executive Forward Work Programme
- Scrutiny Panel Progress Report

**NOTED**

## 6 **ANY OTHER URGENT ITEMS WHICH IN THE OPINION OF THE CHAIR, MAY BE CONSIDERED.**

### Money Lending and Loan Sharks

A Member expressed an interest in receiving further updates in respect of where loan sharks were operating and the work being undertaken to promote awareness of alternatives to loan sharks.

### Next Meeting - 20 January 2020

The Democratic Services Officer advised that arrangements had been made for the Director of Prevention and Partnerships and the School Readiness Manager to attend the next meeting, to provide the scrutiny panel with:

- information on the early educational support provided to those children from deprived backgrounds;
- an overview of the measures implemented to prevent the attainment gap becoming entrenched before children start school; and
- examples of the work undertaken by the best quality early years settings to tackle development gaps, especially key early language and literacy skills.

**NOTED**