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| <b>Report of:</b> | Rob Brown - Director of Education, Prevention and Partnerships<br>Councillor Mieka Smiles - Executive Member for Communities and Education |
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| <b>Submitted to:</b> | Executive - 22 December 2020 |
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| <b>Subject:</b> | Final Report of the Children and Young People’s Learning Scrutiny Panel - Addressing Poverty Issues and the Impact on Learning - Service Response |
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**Summary**

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| <b>Proposed decision(s)</b>   |
| That the Executive approves the cross-departmental response, and accompanying action plan, to the Children and Young People’s Learning Scrutiny Panel’s final report on Addressing Poverty Issues and the Impact on Learning. |

| <b>Report for:</b> | <b>Key decision:</b>                      | <b>Confidential:</b>             | <b>Is the report urgent?<sup>1</sup></b>                              |
|--------------------|---|----------------------------------|---|
| Executive          | Yes - more than 2 wards will be affected. | This report is not confidential. | For the purposes of the call-in procedure, this report is not urgent. |

| <b>Contribution to delivery of the 2018-22 Strategic Plan</b> |                              |   |
|---|------------------------------|---|
| <b>Business Imperatives</b>                                   | <b>Physical Regeneration</b> | <b>Social Regeneration</b>  |
|   |                              | The proposed recommendations are in line with the ambitions of the social regeneration strategy |

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| <b>Ward(s) affected</b> |
| All                     |

**What is the purpose of this report?**

1. The report provides the cross-departmental response, and accompanying action plan, to the Children and Young People’s Learning Scrutiny Panel’s final report on Addressing Poverty Issues and the Impact on Learning.

## Why does this report require a Member decision?

2. There is a requirement for the Executive to formally consider the final reports of the Council's scrutiny panels and agree departmental service responses and accompanying action plans.

## Report Background

3. During 2019/2020, the Children and Young People's Learning Scrutiny Panel investigated the topic of Addressing Poverty Issues and the Impact on Learning.

The purpose of the scrutiny panel's review was to examine whether effective and successful models of support are in place, in Middlesbrough, to:

- tackle the root causes of poverty; and
- mitigate the effects of disadvantage on education.

Child poverty is on the rise. There are over 4 million children living in poverty in the UK, and the Institute for Fiscal Studies expected this to rise to 5 million in 2020. The Social Metrics Commission recently estimated that 2.3 million children are affected by persistent poverty, that is, they have been living in poverty for at least two of the previous three years. The profile of child poverty has also changed over time, with almost three-quarters of children in poverty now living in households where at least one adult is working.

Research and data also states that:

- In schools, poverty/deprivation is measured using a range of criteria, including the proportion of children eligible for Free School Meals (FSM) and those eligible for the Pupil Premium (PP).
- In January 2019, in respect of eligibility for FSM:
  - In Middlesbrough's primary schools, 26.1% of pupils were eligible (national average = 15.8%)
  - In Middlesbrough's secondary schools, 26.9% of pupils were eligible (national average = 14.1%)
  - In Middlesbrough's special schools, 52.0% of pupils were eligible (national average = 37.5%)
- Middlesbrough's schools are also well above the national average for eligibility for Pupil Premium. The national average for Pupil Premium in primary schools is 23%. Only 12 primary schools have numbers lower than the national average. The highest percentage of pupil premium in a Middlesbrough primary school is 75% eligibility. The national average for Pupil Premium in secondary schools is 28%; all schools are above national average, as are all Special Schools.
- Poverty is rarely caused by a single factor. There are often multiple issues in play including low wages, job insecurity or unemployment, lack of skills, ineffective benefits system, high costs of housing, family problems, poor health, debt and addictions.
- Inadequate income can lead to poor health because it becomes more difficult to feel in control and avoid stress, access material resources, adopt and maintain health behaviours and feel supported by a financial safety net.
- Initiatives to address to consequences of poverty including food banks, provision of sanitary products and support for fuel payments are a crucial part of our response and should be clearly linked to approaches that address the underlying causes of poverty outlined above, for example job creation and inclusive growth. Whilst education creates opportunities for better health, poor health can put educational engagement at risk and so create a cycle of poor health and poor educational outcomes. The interconnectivity of education, health and poverty means that in order to address the educational impacts of poverty a whole system

approach is needed which:

- Involves a clear whole council strategic approach to addressing the underlying causes *and* mitigating the consequences of poverty aiming to break cycles of poverty and linking to the Council's ambitions for inclusive growth and job creation
- Has multi-agency partnership working at its heart
- Takes action at civic, service and community level

#### **What decision(s) are being asked for?**

4. That the Executive approves the cross-departmental response, and accompanying action plan, to the Children and Young People's Learning Scrutiny Panel's final report on Addressing Poverty Issues and the Impact on Learning.

#### **Why is this being recommended?**

5. The Children and Young People's Learning Scrutiny Panel's final report and subsequent action plan on Addressing Poverty Issues and the Impact on Learning will be used as a springboard to explore a whole council approach to poverty accounting for underpinning causes and mitigating consequences to be developed and signed up to across directorates including consideration of dedicated staffing resource to drive and coordinate this important work

#### **Other potential decisions and why these have not been recommended**

6. No alternative decisions were considered as the recommendation by the Children and Young People's Learning Scrutiny Panel. Actions are straightforward to implement and there are no significant resource implications.

#### **Impact(s) of recommended decision(s)**

7. Following from the Children and Young People's Learning Scrutiny Panel's greater understanding of the key issues, concepts and impact surrounding the impact of poverty on learning outcomes actions will be considered that secure improvement.
8. The action plan will be implemented in partnership with Public Health.

#### **Equality and Diversity**

9. There will be no negative, differential impact on diverse groups and communities associated with this report.

#### **Legal**

10. None Identified

#### **Financial**

11. None Identified

#### **Policy Framework**

12. The proposed action has no impact on the Council's policy framework.

#### **Equality and Diversity**

13. The purpose of the Children and Young People's Learning Scrutiny panel's report is to consider the effects of poverty on children and young people with a focused aim to reduce disadvantage experienced by all protected characteristics and to mitigate the effects of poverty across the town.

14. No Equality Impact Assessment is required.

**Risk**

15. The implementation of the Children and Young People’s Learning Scrutiny panel recommendations will support the Council in ensuring that our children and young people will be afforded opportunities and support enabling to succeed.

**Actions to be taken to implement the decision(s)**

16. Progress on implementation of the identified actions will be provided.

**Appendices**

17. There are no appendices.

**Background papers**

| <b>Body</b>   | <b>Report title</b>  | <b>Date</b>     |
|---|--|-----------------|
| Children and Young People’s Learning Scrutiny Panel | Final Report -Addressing Poverty Issues and the Impact on Learning | 12 October 2020 |

**Appendices**

18. There are no appendices to this report.

**Background papers**

19. There are no background papers to this report.

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