



Work Outline

Period Poverty

Health and Social Care Overview and Scrutiny Committee

Our key question:	How can a sustainable supply of free sanitary products be made available to females in educational establishments and council run buildings and, through engagement with our partners, more widely in buildings/venues across the City?
1. How is O&S adding value through this work?	<p>Currently, 42% of the children in Birmingham are living in poverty and period poverty is a very real challenge facing many girls across the City. A survey undertaken by Plan International UK last year found that:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• 1 in 10 teenage girls had been unable to afford sanitary products and• 56% of teenage girls would rather be bullied at school than talk to their parents about periods. <p>This is particularly problematic for girls from low-income families who see their parents struggling to meet household bills and feed their families and feel reluctant to ask them to add sanitary products to the weekly shop. As a result, period-related health and wellbeing has an impact on educational outcomes. In many cases, girls from low-income families may lose a significant number of days of schooling or be unable to take part in school activities. The same survey found that:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• 49% of girls have missed an entire day of school because of their period, of which 59% have made up a lie or an alternate excuse and• 64% of girls have missed PE or sport because of their period, of which 52% of girls have made up a lie or excuse. <p>This inquiry would use relevant current research and examples of good practice from elsewhere to inform the way forward and explore ways of finding a long term solution to reducing period poverty in Birmingham.</p>
2. What needs to be done?	<p>Key lines of enquiry:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Establish why the provision of period products is important to the health and wellbeing of female pupils and the impact of period poverty on educational attendance and potentially on educational attainment.• Ascertain the current position with regard to supplying free sanitary products to females in educational establishments in Birmingham.• Investigate what information is available to establishments regarding sourcing free sanitary products and accessing central government funding.• Identify areas and receive evidence of good practice nationally and locally.• Ascertain what Birmingham City Council can do, by working and co-ordinating with partner organisations in the public and private sector and sponsors, to improve and widen provision locally.



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3. What timescale do we propose to do this in?	Evidence gathering sessions will be held in May and July 2019, with a view to taking a report to City Council in October/November 2019.
4. What outcomes are we looking to achieve?	A report with recommendations to the Executive which identifies options to be pursued with key partners with the aim of reducing period poverty across the City.
5. Proposed Witnesses	<p>Birmingham City Council:- Cabinet Member for Education, Skills and Culture Cabinet Member for Children's Wellbeing Cabinet Member for Health & Social Care Director of Public Health Joint Head of Youth Services, Soulla Yiasouma</p> <p>Birmingham Community Leisure Trust. The Always #EndPeriodPoverty Campaign. Birmingham Primary and Secondary Schools currently registered with the Always #EndPeriodPoverty Campaign. Hey Girls UK. Red Box Project South West Birmingham. Birmingham Colleges and Universities. Aston Villa Football Club. Birmingham City Football Club. Girl Guides/Brownies. The Birmingham Community Healthcare Foundation NHS Trust.</p>