

Report to the Schools, Children and Families Overview & Scrutiny Committee

Report of:	Councillor Tristan Chatfield Cabinet Member for Community Safety & Equalities, Councillor Robert Alden (Con) and Councillor Roger Harmer (Lib Dem), Jacqui Kennedy, Corporate Director Place (CLT Lead)
To:	Schools, Children and Families Overview and Scrutiny Committee
Date:	17th January 2018

Progress Report on Implementation: The Birmingham Child Poverty Commission Recommendations

Purpose of the Report

To brief the Committee on progress of the Birmingham Child Poverty Commission's recommendations to reduce levels of child poverty.

Recommendation

That Members note the information contained in this report.

Contact Officer Details

Name :Suwinder Bains
Job title: Cohesion and Partnerships Manager
Tel: 0121 303 0268
Email: suwinder.bains@birmingham .gov.uk

Background

In July 2016, the Birmingham Child Poverty Commission published its findings including a series of recommendations for the Council and other agencies to take forward to reduce levels of child poverty.

A cross party group has been overseeing the implementation of the recommendations for the Council : chaired by Cllr Tristan Chatfield, Cabinet Member for Community Safety and Equalities , Cllr Robert Alden (Con) , Cllr Roger Harmer (Lib Dem) and Jacqui Kennedy, Corporate Director Place. On 8th February 2017, the cross party group presented progress on the recommendations for the Council to this Committee. Members of the Committee noted progress and asked that a further progress report be presented in six months.

In addition to the above, a number of multiagency partnerships are in place to combat child poverty, including the independent multi agency Birmingham Child Poverty Action Forum, supported by the Council. The Forum has been monitoring progress to ensure the City continues to promote and support citywide responses to combat child poverty. Also, the Financial Inclusion Partnership chaired by Cabinet Member for Community Safety and Equalities has developed a strategy and interventions to support families build their financial capability.

Key Issues:

Since the last update significant progress has been made to progress the Commission's recommendations as set out in Appendix 1.

The Committee is asked to note that while action has been taken to progress recommendations for the Council, there are number of recommendations included in the Commission's report that are not the direct or sole responsibility of the Council. Therefore, these recommendations will require action by the relevant organisations.

In early 2018, the Cross Party group will present the Council's progress on its recommendations to a reconvened meeting of the Child Poverty Commission. Following this meeting the Group would have completed its monitoring role of the recommendations.

Conclusions

Addressing the drivers of child poverty is a collective challenge for the whole city. The City Council alone cannot eliminate child poverty that blights so many lives. Instead, a citywide response is required as outlined in the Commission's report. Combating child poverty and reducing the levels of children and families living in poverty remains a

priority for the Council and we will continue to work with the private, voluntary, educational and wider public sector organisations within Birmingham to give the best life chances to all children.

Similarly, the Birmingham Child Poverty Forum will continue to provide awareness and promote activity, debate, campaigning and a lobbying role on combating child poverty.

Appendix 1

Progress on the recommendations of the Birmingham Child Poverty Commission

No1	Recommendation	Responsibility	Original Date For Completion
	Birmingham City Council should work with Jobcentre Plus and employment support providers to ensure that parents of two year olds taking up funded early education are specifically targeted with employment and skills support that encourages starting work or training, and that wrap-around childcare is sufficiently affordable and flexible to enable those parents to sustain and increase their employment opportunities.	<p>Councillor Carl Rice Cabinet Member for Children, Families & Schools</p> <p>Councillor Brett O'Reilly Cabinet Member for Jobs & Skills</p> <p>Lindsey Trivett</p> <p>Interim Head of Early Years, Childcare and Children's Centres</p> <p>Early Years and Childcare Service</p> <p>Children and Young People Directorate</p>	<p>December 2016</p> <p><i>Revised date April 2018</i></p>
<i>Evidence of Progress</i>			
	Early Years Strategy will include a focus on employment and skills support to parents of two year olds who have		

	<p>taken up funded early education.</p> <p>The recently commissioned Early Years Health & Wellbeing System (June 2017) has both health and early years providers partnering to improve the health & wellbeing of children 0-5 years and their families. They will be jointly and severally accountable for enabling larger proportions of children being ready for school. It includes a focus on supporting skills to employment for parents of two year olds who are eligible for and take up the targeted Early Education Entitlement. This will be extended to the parents of any three year old who take up the universal Early Education Entitlement. A partnership at local level with Jobcentre Plus is being developed in order to develop a systematic approach.</p> <p>The Early Years Team has renewed efforts to maximise the uptake of the targeted 2 year old Early Education Entitlement offer. There is a renewed focus in Children's Centres to offer the parents of these children an opportunity for Jobcentre Plus advice in the Children's Centre as well as the local Job Centre.</p> <p>The availability and sufficiency of places for childcare is monitored routinely by a central Council based team from contacts with the Private, Voluntary, and Independent providers of childcare and Early Education. They attempt to balance places with local numbers of children in the appropriate age groups, although have no direct commissioning levers to influence the capacity of this sector. Attempts to stimulate the provider market are undertaken across the City and in areas where there is an identified need to do so. The cost of this childcare is governed by the market place and mostly driven by staff cost which is a balance between numbers and skills.</p> <p>These local efforts are aligned with the intention of the recommendation, namely to increase the likelihood of parents being able to work and hence reduce the impact of poverty in the short and medium term.</p> <p>The measure is still collected for central monitoring purposes and the trends over time will be used to judge progress.</p>		
No 2	Recommendation	Responsibility	Original Date For Completion

	Adult education providers to provide data for all Birmingham City Council courses so that the reach and impact of adult education in the city can be appropriately analysed.	Councillor Brett O'Reilly Cabinet Member for Jobs and Skills Maria Gilling, Interim Head of BAES, Place Directorate	January 2017 COMPLETED
<i>Evidence of Progress</i>			
	<p>The Skills Funding Agency's allocation to Birmingham providers is over £60m, including 19+ apprenticeships (excluding 16-18 apprenticeships), community funding and learner support funding for the academic year 2014/15. Birmingham Adult Education and Skills has analysed this data and identified 81,390 enrolments for Birmingham citizens of which 66% of these were undertaken by females, 56% of these enrolments were at level 1 or below and 42% were at entry level. Nearly half of all enrolments were Preparation for Life and Work subjects i.e. maths, English, ESOL (English to Speakers of Other Languages), employability and provision for adults with learning disabilities.</p> <p>The data suggests that the majority of women, studying English or ESOL at entry level are utilising SFA funding/investment. It was highly likely that this learning was not directly linked to an actual employment opportunity and therefore the impact of this learning on an individual's income would have been limited due to the distance of the learners from the labour market. However, the nature of this learning is critical in moving the learners forward, both socially and economically. What is not known from the SFA data is the propensity of learners to progress either between learning levels or into employment. The overall Skills Funding Agency adult education budget has been reduced by over £23 m over the last 2 years, which means providers will be under more pressure to decide how they invest SFA funding in the city, going forward.</p> <p>The data analysis of postcodes of learners shows that there are two main groups that access ESOL that stand</p>		

out significantly: Pakistani and Black African. These account for large numbers of learners who are studying ESOL or English.

The top 5 wards for the Pakistani community take up are:

1. Washwood Heath
2. Springfield
3. Bordesley Green
4. Sparkbrook
5. Hodge Hill

Black African community take up are:

1. Nechells
2. Aston
3. Lozells and East Handsworth
4. Sparkbrook
5. Soho

	<p>There is some evidence to suggest that faced with funding cuts providers continue to prioritise ESOL provision. This is borne out by BAES who maintained learner numbers in ESOL for 2015/16 despite losing a dedicated funding stream called ESOL Plus which targeted unemployed claimants with language barriers to take ESOL programmes and support them into the labour market. BAES replaced this funding stream with a mainstream funded programme with similar aims and objectives and it has been successful with 250 learners recruited in 2015/16 and approximately 20% of these gaining employment.</p>		
No 3	Recommendation	Responsibility	Original Date For Completion
	<p>The DWP (Department for Work & Pensions), working closely with schools, Birmingham City Council and the voluntary sector, should rotate benefits and other financial advisers around those schools/children's centres with high levels of need offering an outreach financial inclusion service.</p>	<p>Councillor Tristan Chatfield Cabinet Member for Community Safety & Equalities</p> <p>Antonina Robinson</p> <p>Think Family Lead, Birmingham, Department for Work and Pensions</p> <p>Chris Jordan Head of Service Integration</p> <p>Neighbourhoods & Communities Division, The Place Directorate</p>	<p>December 2016</p> <p>Revised date May 2018</p>

Evidence of Progress			
	<p>Following discussions with Department of Works & Pensions (DWP) and City Council Advice Services a number of actions have been agreed to support low income families with advice and information to improve financial capability, including:</p> <p>DWP Jobcentres have Community and Complex Needs plans in place which support Job Centre staff to identify and work with local community agencies and Local Authority partners. Flexible Support Funding bids are invited continually from agencies to DWP Birmingham and Solihull District so that DWP can commission bespoke local support for vulnerable claimant's journey to employability/employment. DWP have put in place a number of interventions including Troubled Families Programme, Jobcentre Support to Schools, Community Partners, Small Employer Advisers and Disability Employment Advisers all working across the community and with employers to support vulnerable claimants and those with health conditions. DWP Partnership managers have delivered Universal Credit awareness sessions to third sector, Voluntary and LA partners. Presentations continue to be delivered on request.</p> <p>City of Birmingham and Pathfinder SEMH (social emotional mental health) Pilot schools engaged with DWP for parental engagement to support employability – North and South Birmingham. Lumen Christi Primary schools engagement launched in September 2017 supported by DWP Think Families Adviser.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Neighbourhood Advice Information Service and third sector providers will jointly provide advice on welfare benefits and financial assessments, with a focus on income maximisation and debt prevention in Saltley, Aston and City Centre locations. In addition, Personal Budgeting Support (PBS), funded by the DWP, is now available to citizens transitioning onto Universal Credit at 5 city locations. • a web based service will provide access to advice and information on a wide range of financial advice services. This service can be accessed from children's centres. 		

In addition to the above actions, the Birmingham Financial Inclusion Partnership is running a pilot in St Georges to work closely with schools and Children's Centres to deliver financial inclusion advice and raise awareness of the risks of illegal money lending; and to advise and support parents in becoming digitally included and accessing training and employment. Promoting financial inclusion will help: increase tenancy sustainability, reduce the risk of homelessness, mitigate against the impact of welfare reform and improved health and wellbeing and help reduce child poverty in the neighbourhood. Phase 1 of the work commenced January 2017 providing targeted support to low income families impacted by the Benefit Cap.

The Financial Inclusion Partners are working with local stakeholders to:

- Build resilience through increased Credit Union membership and take up of social housing contents insurance.
- Delivering digital and financial literacy training (DCLG funded & delivered by Catalyst CIC)
- Create a St Georges residents forum
- Providing briefings to community orgs on welfare reform changes that impact children and families (for example 2 child policy)
- Deliver an employment pilot for young people, an outreach programme for 15 – 29 year olds in partnership with People Plus (YPP funded) targeting young people from St Georges. BFIP are also negotiating trainee and apprenticeship opportunities for this cohort providing development opportunities for the young people.

No 4	Recommendation	Responsibility	Original Date For Completion
	All Birmingham City Council-approved	Councillor Paulette Hamilton Cabinet	January 2017

	strategies should include a mandatory section on the public health and health inequality implications of the issue under consideration.	Member for Health and Social Care Adrian Phillips Director of Public Health	COMPLETED
Evidence of Progress			
	<p>The new Cabinet Governance on reporting has included a section on the Council Priority of a Healthy Place to Live.</p> <p>Public Health function has developed a team to implement a <i>Health in all Policies</i> resource, the Council Collaboration Team.</p> <p>Council collaboration takes a 'health in all policies' approach to integrate health and wellbeing principles across Birmingham City Council plans, policies and programmes, as well as within communities and partner organisations. With a specific understanding of, and focus on, the wider determinants of health and working in partnership, the team supports BCC, partners and communities to develop a Healthy City for everyone.</p> <p>Key areas of work include: links with planning, housing and the built environment to develop healthy places and with employment to support training, skills and jobs for the most vulnerable; developing health based approaches to licensing; support for the work of the Mental Health Commission of the West Midlands Combined Authority and the Birmingham Health and Wellbeing Board; championing workplace health and wellbeing; developing approaches to food and activity to combat obesity and promote sustainability; and leading on Council business continuity and resilience.</p>		
No 5	Recommendation	Responsibility	Original Date For Completion

	<p>An audit should be completed on the number of schools that have access to counselling support and do a cost analysis of providing outreach counselling service to schools with the highest proportion of pupils in receipt of pupil premium.</p>	<p>Councillor Paulette Hamilton Cabinet Member for Health and Social Care</p> <p>Councillor Carl Rice, Cabinet Member for Children, Families and Schools</p> <p>Dr Dennis Wilkes</p> <p>Assistant Director</p> <p>Public Health</p>	<p>March 2017</p> <p>COMPLETED</p>
Evidence of Progress			
	<p>The New Start programme, a partnership of Birmingham Education Partnership (schools), Birmingham City Council Education teams, Forward Thinking Birmingham (NHS 0-25 years mental health service), and Public Health (School Health Advisory Service & Early Years Health & Wellbeing offer commissioning) are developing a programme of school development and responsiveness based on the impact of Adverse Experiences in Childhood and the use of the Academic Resilience programme to transform the school culture, preventative approach and response to children in difficulty. The New Start programme is governed and financially supported through the NHS 0-18 Mental Health Transformation Programme.</p> <p>The programme is a systematic response to the collection of Head Teacher concerns about the difficulty knowing what 'counselling service' to approach (free, often long waiting times, and more specialist than the young person might need) or buy in to work alongside or as part of the staff numbers. A formal survey was never needed to quantify the strength of the concerns and the methodological difficulties of such an exercise are</p>		

	<p>too great for the exercise to have been valuable.</p> <p>The programme is already underway and will roll out to all secondary schools over a three year time frame. The cost, financial and expertise, has been constrained but is sustainable. A more formal cost benefit analysis is not planned although an evaluative component of benefit to students is planned.</p> <p>This approach moves our city's schools towards a better place for students to engage and achieve more productively and hence take some significant steps towards breaking their way out of the poverty cycle that this recommendation was intended to achieve.</p>		
No 6	Recommendation	Responsibility	Original Date For Completion
	Where required, parents should be encouraged to take up ESOL classes, particularly for groups whose language is a barrier to the labour market. These should be scheduled in schools around pick up/drop off times for children.	<p>Councillor Carl Rice, Cabinet Member for Children, Families and Schools</p> <p>Councillor Brett O'Reilly Cabinet Member for Jobs and Skills</p> <p>Maria Gilling, Interim Head of BAES, Place Directorate</p>	<p>April 2017</p> <p>Revised date: Spring term 2018</p>
Evidence of Progress			
	Birmingham Adult Education Service will continue to work with schools to encourage take up of adult learning		

	<p>including a Curriculum Leader with responsibility for ESOL and a family learning team including Family Learning Organisers to teach and set-up family learning programmes in schools. A Teaching and Learning Manager liaises with schools to set-up provision, with particular emphasis on improving English and Maths skills. The large ESOL programme runs in BAES centres and community settings.</p> <p>From April 2017 Birmingham established a Parent Ambassador programme. The Parent Ambassador programme has been successfully delivered in Harrow and Wolverhampton. BAES is working in partnership with the City Council's Pupil and School Support team with the aim to recruit Parent Ambassadors through schools. The course parents undertake will equip them with an accredited certificate called 'Become a Parent Ambassador'. They will then volunteer in a school or cluster of schools supporting other parents, such as newly arrived parents, with many aspects of the British education system. The long-term goal for the volunteer ambassadors would be to gain employment. PSS have not managed to successfully engage any schools in this programme so far. This project will be re-launched in January 2018. A list of 48 schools that Family Learning currently works with has been given to PSS to contact in the new year.</p> <p>Additional information :</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • In the 2016/17 academic year, BAES had 2478 enrolments and 1150 residents undertook ESOL programmes, with 55% progressing to higher levels in 2017/18. There were 1480 enrolments for courses taking place in schools and Children's centres and classified as Family Learning. In addition, 314 residents were recruited, following a referral from the Job Centre, onto the ESOL and English for Works programme and 11% of these went on to find employment following the course. 380 adults undertook GCSE Maths and over 65% gained a grade A* to C. There were 239 GCSE English students and of these 75% gained a grade A* - C. • ESOL provision is most concentrated in areas of multiple deprivation: 28% (353) of ESOL learners were from Hall Green district with 14% from Springfield and 12% from Sparkbrook. 17% (193) of ESOL learners were from the Ladywood district with 10% from Aston. Hodge Hill district had 17% (196) of ESOL learners, 10% of whom were from Washwood Heath ward. All other districts ranged from less than 1% in
--	---

	<p>the Sutton district to 7% in the Yardley district.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Despite a general reduction to Adult Education funding year on year for the last 5 years BAES has maintained ESOL provision with 1366 learners in 2016/17. 		
No 7	Recommendation	Responsibility	Original Date For Completion
	<p>Birmingham City Council should adopt a local 'breathing space' placing council tax accounts on hold for 21 days when a family gets in touch with them so as to enable the family time to seek independent debt advice. The Council should also adopt an explicit policy of not engaging bailiffs for families in receipt of Council Tax Support.</p>	<p>Councillor Brigid Jones , Deputy Leader</p> <p>Tim Savill</p> <p>Assistant Director</p> <p>Revenues, Benefits and Rents</p>	<p>April 2017</p> <p>COMPLETED</p>
Evidence of Progress			
	<p>In respect of progress the Revenues Service continues to adhere to guidance issued to staff instructing them to apply a 21-day hold to accounts in the circumstances outlined in this recommendation.</p> <p>As at the end of November 2017, over 11,000 citizens have been in contact with the Revenues Service and currently have their council tax accounts put on hold. The code used to place a hold on a particular account depends on the stage the case has reached in the collection process, so it is not possible to identify separately those wishing to seek financial advice. In addition, a 21 day hold has not been made in all cases as the citizen</p>		

	<p>has been contacted and special payment arrangements have been made, or the citizen has received independent financial advice from a support agency, which has resulted in a hold being for a shorter period of time.</p> <p>The Council no longer passes any accounts with a council tax support (CTS) profile to its enforcement agents (EAs), and parameters are set within the council tax system to prevent this. Wherever possible, the Department for Work and Pensions (DWP) is requested to make deductions from the citizen's benefit. If this cannot be done because the citizen is in receipt of a benefit from which deductions cannot be taken, or there are other deductions that take priority, the council will look to agree a payment arrangement. Over 4,000 accounts that might otherwise have been subject to EA action for this year's council tax have been held back while we determine a more appropriate course of action.</p> <p>As a number of citizens become entitled to CTS after their arrears were passed to the EA, Revenues now has in place a process to identify these and recall them. The EAs supply a list of all their live cases to Revenues, who then match it to a report listing all cases showing on the council tax system as currently in receipt of CTS. The EAs are then instructed to return all those where there is no active payment arrangement in place.</p> <p>The Revenues Service undertakes quarterly audits with the EAs and undertakes a sample check to ensure compliance with all this process.</p> <p>The Revenues Service is in the process of transferring its knowledge base to an enhanced knowledge base system called Sheldon, which will allow staff too easily and quickly search for the most appropriate way to support citizens suffering difficulties in payment and deal with account queries appropriately.</p> <p>The Revenues Service also now meets quarterly with Citizens Advice, and will continue to build on this relationship to ensure that independent financial advice is readily available to families and other citizens who need it.</p>		
No 8	Recommendation	Responsibility	Original Date For Completion
	Birmingham City Council should exempt	Councillor Brigid Jones , Deputy	April 2017

	care leavers from Council Tax up to, and including, the age of 25.	<p>Leader</p> <p>Chris Gibbs</p> <p>Assistant Director</p> <p>Change and Support Services</p>	
<i>Evidence of Progress</i>			
	<p>A policy for the awarding of this scheme is in place within the Revenues Service and is adhered to. To date, the Council has supported 113 care leavers with an award of this discount, with a total value to date of £38,821. The most common annual award is to those who are a single adult resident on council tax support living in a Band A property throughout the year. Some care leavers are classed as vulnerable and receive 100% council tax support, so do not require this discount.</p> <p>The Revenues Service has implemented the care leaver's exemption in compliance with the requirements that were provided, and continues to provide this exemption to Birmingham care leavers. The Council has no authority to reduce council tax charges for care leavers who now reside outside of Birmingham.</p> <p>The Council does not hold information in relation to care leavers from other local authorities who move into Birmingham and cannot, therefore, identify who they are to exempt them from council tax. This would breach data protection guidelines and this information cannot be requested.</p> <p>However, it is worth stating that it is most likely in both circumstances that care leavers would be entitled to local council tax support and, therefore, this issue is at the margins in terms of impact.</p> <p>The Care leavers discount has only cost the Council a very small amount and has had minimal impact upon child poverty as the vast majority of these citizens were already in receipt of council tax support to the value of 80% of their liability.</p>		

No 9	Recommendation	Responsibility	Original Date For Completion
	Birmingham City Council and Birmingham Education Partnership should assist schools to establish formal partnerships with universities, both in the UK and abroad. The purposes of doing so include: raising students' awareness and aspirations of the opportunities for higher education; enhancing partnerships between schools and universities for professional development; and influencing standards of teaching and learning.	<p>Councillor Carl Rice, Cabinet Member for Children, Families and Schools</p> <p>Anne Ainsworth</p> <p>Assistant Director</p> <p>People Directorate</p>	<p>June 2017</p> <p>Revised June 2018</p>
	Evidence of Progress		
	<p>The Council is continuing to work closely with schools, colleges and universities to create opportunities and address barriers that hinder young people from reaching their aspirations, including :</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To continue to build on its work with the Aim Higher West Midlands Partnership (consortium of local Universities) to raise aspirations and provide mentoring for students to KS4 and 5 pupils, identified at risk by schools; • Additional funding from Higher Education Funding Council for England has been allocated to target mentoring opportunities in areas with low participation in Higher Education (HE) including the following wards: Shard End, Kingstanding, Kings Norton, Bartley Green and Tyburn. The Education Service is a strategic partner in a four year programme linked to an additional funding proposal for the National Collaborative Outreach Programme. The project is in its first year and will be reporting on outcomes in 		

	<p>the spring;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Facilitate other Coaching and mentoring organisations to disseminate their offer locally (eg Coachbright) and enabling universities outside of the city to disseminate their offer (e.g. Durham and Keble College Oxford); • Targeting young people from disadvantaged backgrounds to enrol onto courses run by the National College for High Speed Rail which had a 'soft' launch in September 2017 and provides specialist training, skills and qualifications into the rail industry; • Supporting schools to deliver their careers duty through the Enterprise Advisers project (funded externally through the Careers and Enterprise Company). Half of secondary schools have already signed-up to the project in its first year. Strategic support to develop a Careers Plan for each school, using the Compass Tool to self-assess progress against the Gatsby Benchmarks. Brokerage with a business partner from industry is also facilitated to develop a long-term relationship with business; • Continuing to commission Birmingham Education Partnership to provide School Improvement Services to the maintained school sector, including support to implement the new Department for Education Careers Strategy (launched November 2017); • Linking schools and colleges to STEMNET and the science , technology, engineering and mathematics (STEM) Ambassador Network to take advantage of the support and resources, industry and HE links available through the programme; • Ensuring all young people in Year 9 have access to information about 14-19 Academies and University Technical Colleges in the region, through a personal mail-shot, issued once a year directly to young
--	---

	<p>people;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Improving transition from Year 11 to Year 12, support and guidance has been provided to schools to underpin this: • A programme of events and programmes to promote Apprenticeship pathways and Higher Apprenticeships has been on-going. For example, promotion of the Skills Show at the NEC in November; an Apprenticeship Show is planned for February 2018 and regular transition events for SEND young people; • Supporting the development of the new Institute for Technology (IoT) which is a new technical college offering Level 3 and 4 qualifications around advanced manufacturing. A consortium of three local Further Education colleges and the four universities are leading this with support from the Council, GBSLEP and the Chamber of Commerce; <p>The current Building Birmingham Scholarship programme is an example of engaging young people and outlining the opportunities available within FE and HE in relation to studies in the Built Environment.</p> <p>Outputs:</p> <p>Ongoing – 50% of secondary schools will be signed up to the Enterprise Advisers programme by the end of Year 1.</p> <p>Data from Year 1 of the NCOP project delivered by Aim Higher will be released in the Spring.</p>		
No 10	Recommendation	Responsibility	Original Date For Completion

	Birmingham City Council should explore potential for subsidised transport for young people within city localities, using Merseytravel's 'My ticket' scheme as a model.	Councillor Stewart Stacey, Cabinet Member for Transport and Roads	April 2017 COMPLETED
<i>Evidence of Progress</i>			
	<p>In September 2017, the West Midlands Combined Authority launched a scheme providing apprentices and trainees aged 18yrs or under half price travel on buses, trains and trams.</p> <p>Young people aged 16yrs and under can buy child rate tickets and passes to cut the cost of travel. A photocard will need to be shown as proof of eligibility.</p> <p>16-18 card for those in full-time education eligible to continue to pay child rate fares. Workwise travel support gives eligible jobseekers and apprentices 50% off Network West Midlands travel passes for up to three months when they start a new job.</p>		
No 11	Recommendation	Responsibility	Original Date For Completion
	Birmingham City Council should establish the School Food Trust to provide free school meals for all school pupils whose families are in receipt of working tax credits, child tax credits and universal credit (when rolled out), with the ultimate aim of providing universal free school meals.	<p>Councillor Ian Ward , Leader</p> <p>Jacqui Kennedy, Corporate Director Place</p>	December 2016

Evidence of Progress			
	Although it's an ambition of the Council to implement this recommendation, however due to financial constraints it is unlikely to be implemented in the near future. The key priority is ensuring maximum take-up of free school meals of those children who are eligible. The Free School Meals Task and Finish group is focusing its work in maximising take up of Free School Meals and Pupil Premium.		
No 12	Recommendation	Responsibility	Original Date For Completion
	Birmingham City Council should have reviewed how improved data sharing processes could be used to automatically enrol children for free school meals in order to increase take up.	<p>Councillor Carl Rice, Cabinet Member for Children, Families and Schools</p> <p>Cllr Straker Welds Free Schools Meals Ambassador</p> <p>Colin Diamond</p> <p>Interim Corporate Director</p> <p>Children and Young People Directorate</p>	<p>June 2017</p> <p>Revised date June 2018</p>
Evidence of Progress			
	With support from the Cabinet Member for Community Safety & Equalities a Task & Finish group chaired by Cllr Straker Welds, Free School Meals (FSM) ambassador has been working with officers to identify and understand		

	<p>the scale of under registration of FSM and Pupil Premium across Birmingham schools.</p> <p>The Task and Finish (T & F) group is exploring auto- register of eligible children onto free school meals without the need for their families to fill out additional forms. The objective of having an auto enrolment system is not only likely to increase FSM take up, but also bring additional funding for schools through the Pupil Premium Grant to children in greatest need.</p> <p>The T & F group has looked at other local authorities (L.A) across the country that have sought to make it easier for families to claim FSM by offering a system of auto-registration using eligibility criteria data held by their revenue and benefits department to process FSM meal applications. Those LA's that implemented an auto-registration policy used the Revenue and Benefits Management System as identifying eligibility from claimants housing benefit application. The T & F began to explore a similar system to be adopted by the Council. However, since the roll out of Universal Credit has meant that Housing Benefit will no longer be processed by the Council's Revenue and Benefits Service. Instead housing cost will now incorporated within Universal Credit along with FSM. The T & F Group is continuing to work with officers to analyse data to identify the current gaps in FSM take up to understand the scale of the challenge with a view to explore options with partners and DWP.</p> <p>In addition, the Chair of the T & F is engaging the Birmingham Child Poverty Forum to work with our partners to promote the take up of FSM and the introduction of auto registration. Furthermore, the Child Poverty Forum has responded to the Government's consultation on the eligibility of FSM and Early Years Pupil Premium under Universal Credit calling for auto registration of FSM and Pupil Premium.</p>		
No 13	Recommendation	Responsibility	Original Date For Completion
	The tendering process should be used to ensure that new projects over £500,000 encourage greater numbers of quality	Councillor Majid Mahmood Cabinet Member for	June 2017 COMPLETED

	<p>apprenticeships offered to young people from low-income families in Birmingham and the wider West Midlands.</p>	<p>Commercialism, Commissioning & Contract Management</p> <p>Shilpi Akbar</p> <p>Assistant Director</p> <p>Employment & Skills</p>	
Evidence of Progress			
	<p>The Council will continue to work with its Procurement Policy Framework for Jobs and Skills, harnessing the City Council's buying power to take positive and tangible actions to secure greater access to jobs and training opportunities for local people, especially those that are disadvantaged in the labour market. This policy makes local employment a mandatory element of supplier contracts; an effective lever to ensure that Birmingham low-income families benefit from the employment opportunities generated by the major construction developments in Birmingham.</p> <p>The policy is embedded into construction contractors operating under the Constructing West Midlands Framework. Birmingham City Council and Construction Industry Training Board (CITB) Joint Investment Project in Birmingham addresses local skills gaps and creates employment and skills opportunities for construction employers which reflect the specific skills of the Birmingham area. An early example of the success of this policy was linked to the construction of the new Library of Birmingham where 308 unemployed people secured an employment opportunity (226 jobs / 82 Apprenticeships). The policy is also embedded within BCC's construction contractors operating under the Constructing West Midlands Framework contract where to date, 481 unemployed people have secured an employment opportunity such as a job, apprenticeship or work placement. The new Repairs and Maintenance, Gas and Capital Investment contract commenced in April 2016 and supported a total of 216 individuals into employment opportunities including 28 jobs, 19 apprenticeships and 169 work experience placements.</p>		

	<p>To date over 300 unemployed people have taken part in accredited construction related training and 153 people have secured employment as a result of this training. The project is currently supporting a group of 9 young people who are care leavers and/or young offenders. This is in partnership with Kier who are one of City Council construction contractors. The young people have participated in team building activities and are experiencing a variety of construction trades as well as improving their key skills. 2 of the young people have secured an Apprenticeship with Kier and will shortly start working towards an NVQ Level 2 in their trade.</p> <p>Birmingham and Solihull YPP is currently live and runs to December 2018. The project aims to support 16,610 Birmingham and Solihull young people who are NEET. The outcomes are to upskill participants and support them into pathways to sustainable employment including Apprenticeships.</p>		
No 14	Recommendation	Responsibility	Original Date For Completion
	Registered Social Landlords should commit to introducing a minimum of 3-year tenancies, allowing for greater stability for tenants and landlords. This information should be made available for families on Birmingham City Council's website.	<p>Councillor Peter Griffiths Cabinet Member for Housing and Homes</p> <p>Rob James Service Director, Housing Transformation Place Directorate</p>	<p>June 2017</p> <p>COMPLETED</p>

	Evidence of Progress		
	<p>Birmingham City Council has not changed its policy to date and still offers lifetime tenancies. This may change with the Housing and Planning Act regulations when enacted but it is unlikely that any tenancy will be less than three years.</p> <p>All other RSLs who have adopted fixed term tenancies have done so on the basis of 5 years.</p>		
No 15	Recommendation	Responsibility	Original Date For Completion
	An annual or biennial 'Best of Birmingham' event should be introduced to showcase and celebrate outstanding children, young people and the adults that support them.	<p>Councillor Tristan Chatfield cabinet Member for Communities Safety and Equalities</p> <p>Councillor Kerry Jenkins</p> <p>Youth Ambassador</p> <p>Suwinder Bains</p> <p>Partnership & Engagement Manager</p> <p>Place Directorate</p>	<p>July 2017</p> <p>October 2018</p>
Evidence of Progress			

	A planning group has been established chaired by Cllr Kerry Jenkins (Youth Champion). This cross party group is working with young people to design and plan event in 2018. The event will celebrate and recognise the positive contribution young people make to their peers and communities and the City.		
No 16	Recommendation	Responsibility	Original Date For Completion
	All schools should adapt their school uniform policy to ensure affordability is a primary consideration.	<p>Councillor Carl Rice, Cabinet Member for Children, Families and Schools</p> <p>Anne Ainsworth</p> <p>Assistant Director</p> <p>People Directorate</p>	<p>July 2017</p> <p>COMPLETED</p>
Evidence of Progress			
	It is the role of the school governing body to decide and determine the school uniform policy. Therefore, the Council cannot enforce schools to adapt their school uniform policy to ensure affordability. Department for Education guidance to School Governing Bodies advises that 'the governing body should be able to demonstrate to parents how best value has been achieved and keep the cost of supplying the uniform under review. It should also bear in mind that sustainable sourcing can be part of the action a school can take to support sustainable development'.		

	Co-Chairs of the Birmingham Child Poverty Forum have written to school governing bodies include affordability in their school uniform policy.		
No 17	Recommendation	Responsibility	Original Date For Completion
	<p>The Birmingham Secondary Schools Forum working with Birmingham City Council, Birmingham Education Partnership and Business leaders should develop a specific offer for disadvantaged pupils at KS4 (14 – 16yrs) to provide intensive support to narrow the attainment gap between disadvantaged and non-disadvantaged children at this level.</p> <p>There is the potential that this could be funded through the pupil premium. It is proposed that a mentoring scheme with local businesses could be run alongside or be part of this specific offer for KS4 pupils.</p> <p>The roll out of this scheme should focus</p>	<p>Councillor Carl Rice, Cabinet Member for Children, Families and Schools</p> <p>Anne Ainsworth</p> <p>Assistant Director</p> <p>People Directorate</p>	<p>September 2017</p> <p>Revised September 2018</p>

	initially on the lowest performing groups at KS4.		
Evidence of Progress			
	<p>Good progress is being made to ensure young people transition from Key Stage 4 (Year 11 to Year 12). <i>NEET figures for December for Year 12 are particularly low. On 1 November, there were 1.1% NEET in Year 12 (150 young people)</i></p> <p>The Councils focus has been on delivering the £40m investment in the Birmingham Youth Promise Plus (YPP). This offers personalised employment and skills support to young people aged between 15 – 29 years old who are not in employment, education and training (NEET). This is funded by a major investment of European Social Fund and Youth Employment Initiative. Support includes outreach, intensive mentoring, coaching and employer engagement leading to pathways to jobs and apprenticeships.</p> <p>Approx. 10,000 young people are being supported through the YPP. A range of external providers have been commissioned within localities to provide intensive mentoring. In addition, specialist providers have been commissioned to support SEN, LAC and young people facing mental health difficulties.</p> <p>The Local Authority has also been invited to tender for the next round of ESF to support NEET young people. The proposal is being developed to target disadvantaged pupils at KS4 (15 – 16yrs) to help narrow the gap to include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identifying eligible young people by using the Risk of NEET Indicator (RONI) to target support to Key Stage 4 pupils; • Allocating a mentor to the young person to work with them to raise aspirations; 		

	<p>The European Social Fund full tender is due by 6th February 2018.</p> <p>The City Council with its partners including schools, colleges and providers has continued to promote a web based platform called Cog. This website supports young people into employment and skills opportunities by linking young people to job opportunities, apprenticeships and work-experience with employers and training providers. The Portal is accessed by schools to support career advice and guidance including CV writing. There is further potential for Cog. to promote mentoring opportunities for pupils at KS4, however this has not been developed as yet and may be included in future upgrades to the system.</p>		
No 18	Recommendation	Responsibility	Original Date For Completion
	A targeted obesity programme in primary schools to reduce the rise in childhood obesity should be in place.	<p>Councillor Paulette Hamilton Cabinet Member for Health and Social Care</p> <p>Dennis Wilkes Assistant Director Public Health</p>	<p>September 2017</p> <p>Revised date: June 2018</p>
Evidence of Progress			
	The Birmingham Childhood Obesity Partnership is leading a coordinated effort to impact on childhood obesity at all levels, which includes policy change, partnerships, and communications as well as advocating or evaluating		

	<p>specific interventions.</p> <p>In order to enable systematic changes the partnership has: secured Childhood Obesity as one of the outcomes in the citywide Early Years System Health & Wellbeing Offer; expanded the Early Years prevention programme in the Early Years System offer to enable universal delivery of both nutrition and physical opportunities in Early Years settings; and been successful with a National Institute of Health Research fellowship funding application to undertake a comprehensive economic evaluation of all school based childhood obesity services across Birmingham.</p> <p>The Child Obesity Strategy is being refreshed to take into account any new evidence of impact or benefit that has developed and any changes in local need or challenge identified.</p>		
No 19	Recommendation	Responsibility	Original Date For Completion
	The new city centre hub Pause should be advertised in services accessed by children and families, including the School Health Advisory Services and Children's Centres.	<p>Councillor Paulette Hamilton Cabinet Member for Health and Social Care</p> <p>Dennis Wilkes</p> <p>Assistant Director</p> <p>Public Health</p>	<p>September 2017</p> <p>COMPLETED</p>
Evidence of Progress			
	<p>Forward Thinking Birmingham has an active programme of communication in all these settings and schools to increase awareness and access to the Pause.</p> <p>The establishment of Forward Thinking Birmingham and the Pause is monitored by an implementation group.</p>		

	The evidence suggests that there is increasing awareness and usage of the Pause.		
No 20	Recommendation	Responsibility	Original Date For Completion
	Birmingham City Council should adopt to undertake a formal review of their housing standards enforcement, with a view to introducing a landlord accreditation scheme such as that in operation in Newham.	<p>Councillor Peter Griffiths Cabinet Member for Housing and Homes</p> <p>Pete Hobbs</p> <p>Service Head, Private Rented Services and Tenant Engagement</p> <p>Place Directorate</p>	January 2018
Evidence of Progress			
	<p>The Council is reviewing its housing standards enforcement by consulting with communities and business over Selective Licensing in target wards with high levels of PRS (over 19%) and affected by issues of low demand, poor property conditions, or anti-social behaviour. Data sharing with Homelessness, Housing Benefit, Police and Fire Service is taking place to overlay against data on where in the key wards to PRS is located to determine the first Wards in a phased approach</p> <p>Selective licensing consultation is underway in Stockland Green and extended until 31 December 2017. Series off promotional events have taken place in these areas and officers have attended a range of meetings and local groups to discuss the licensing proposals.</p> <p>Soho Ward consultation was launched in October 2017 and due to close on 31 January 2018. Meetings held so far with Ward Committees, BID management, Soho First CDT and West and Central LCSP to discuss the</p>		

	<p>proposal and agree best routes into the communities in the area.</p> <p>The Council is supportive of tackling rogue landlords and improving standards in the PRS and have submitted a bid to DCLG for circa £900k over 2 years under the Controlling Migration Fund (CMF). DCLG CMF Board is to meet on 15 January to consider all bids. The Councils bid included element to support accelerating licensing consultation across target wards.</p> <p>Extension of Statutory HMO licensing</p> <p>The Government has advised local authorities of the proposal to extend the scope of existing HMO licensing to include all properties occupied by 5 or more people of more than one household who share facilities. This may add up to another 4,000 HMOs to the licence register</p> <p>The Council is working with relevant partners through HOMESTAMP to ensure a decent housing standards framework for all PRS (Private Rented Sector) properties. The Council supports the Midlands Landlords Accreditation Scheme (MLAS) to ensure tenants can identify responsible landlords who provide decent homes. BCC will review this framework to determine how the standards can be enforced</p> <p>The Council only have discretion as a local authority to introduce Selective Licensing for up to 20% of PRS stock or geographical area. Above this requires Sec of State approval. This restriction was introduced in 2015 after local authorities such as Newham and Waltham Forest were able to set up selective licensing for all PRS properties borough wide. At present the Council only has data from the 2011 Census that shows the overall level of PRS in the city is less than the 19% limit set by Government as the threshold for an area with a high proportion of PRS. This means there would not be a robust case for city wide licensing if a case was presented to the Secretary of State.</p>		
No 21	Recommendation	Responsibility	Original Date For Completion
	There should be a planning restriction in place preventing new fast food outlets	Councillor Paulette Hamilton Cabinet Member for Health and Social Care	January 2018

	within 250 metres of schools.	Keith A Watson Public Health Planning & Regeneration, Economy Directorate	Revised date: September 2018
Evidence of Progress			
	The City Council is looking to add a further policy on hot food takeaways in to the emerging <i>Development Management in Birmingham</i> policy document. The document is seeking views on a number of planning related issues including further restrictions of hot food takeaways near schools. The policy document, when finalised, will be used to inform decisions on planning applications. Planning to consult on a draft in the first half of 2018.		
No 22	Recommendation	Responsibility	Original Date For Completion
	Birmingham City Council should use its powers as a commissioner and champion of Birmingham to work with local businesses and the Living Wage Foundation to make Birmingham the first Living Wage City where all employers pay this minimum amount.	Councillor Brigid Jones, Deputy Leader Councillor Majid Mahmood Cabinet Member for Commercialism, Commissioning &	January 2019

		<p>Contract Management</p> <p>Nigel Keltz, Director of Procurement, Change and Support Services</p>	
Evidence of Progress			
	<p>The Council is an accredited Living Wage (LW) employer. Contracted suppliers and their subcontractors will pay the Living Wage to employees servicing Council contracts as part of their commitments under the Birmingham Business Charter for Social Responsibility (BBC4SR).</p> <p>There are currently 426 charter signatories undertaking to pay the LW. The spend with these organisations represents 39% of Council spend. The Council works closely with the LW Foundation to encourage all employers to pay the LW and 96 of those organisations are accredited to the Charter on a voluntary basis (i.e. not contracted by the Council) and pay the LW.</p> <p>When the Council became LW accredited organisation, over 3000 employees were uplifted to the LW. These are mostly part time cleaners and lunch time assistants at schools.</p> <p>The Council revised the BBC4SR and its Social Value Policy in December 2016 with its Living Wage Policy being reviewed in March 2017. One of the main changes is the introduction of thresholds in applying the BBC4SR; however the LW Policy is still applied to all contracts regardless of value.</p> <p>The council works with the WMCA to raise awareness and promote adoption of the Living Wage and is also</p>		

	<p>working with the Social Value Portal and Social Value + who both promote best practice and support organisations to deliver greater social value.</p> <p>The LW is not the same as the National Living Wage which is a statutory requirement as a minimum wage for over 25s. The LW is based on the cost of living and is promoted by the Living Wage Foundation. It was uplifted in November 2017 to £8.75 (to be implemented by April 2018).</p> <p>It should be noted that work to encourage local employers not contracted by the Council to pay the Living Wage will continue past the final implementation date of January 2018 recommendation.</p> <p>The LW is not the same as the National Living Wage which is a statutory requirement as a minimum wage for over 25s. The LW is based on the cost of living and is promoted by the Living Wage Foundation. It is currently (Jan 2017) £8.45 and is revised every November.</p>		
No 23	Recommendation	Responsibility	Original Date For Completion
	<p>Birmingham City Council should adopt a policy that no low-income family with children can be declared intentionally homeless.</p>	<p>Councillor Peter Griffiths Cabinet Member for Housing and Homes</p> <p>Rob James</p> <p>Service Director, Housing Transformation</p> <p>Place Directorate</p>	<p>April 2019</p>

Evidence of Progress

The Housing Act 1996 Part 7 places a duty upon local authorities to investigate and make decisions upon homeless applications. This includes a decision as to whether or not the applicant was found to have become homeless intentionally. Although the decision is based upon the judgement of the local authority there is clear guidance and case law to support the consistent and fair approach to decision making.

Full circumstances of the family will be taken into consideration before an intentional decision is made. The household have the right to a review, and given appropriate advice and support including the provision of temporary accommodation for a short period and are also entitled to a reasonable preference on the local authority's housing allocation scheme.

However, preventing children and families from becoming homeless is a key policy priority for the Council. Therefore, ensuring everything that can be done to keep the family in their home is undertaken, including use of discretionary housing payments and support. The council has a number of early interventions to prevent families from becoming homeless including:

November 2016, the Council's Rent Service established an officer led anti eviction prevention panel. The panel which meets weekly is set up to support tenants including families who are facing eviction; the aim is to prevent them from becoming homeless. Each case is reviewed in detail to identify the tailored support needed to help prevent an eviction.

- early intervention to prevent families affected by the benefit cap falling into debt and rent arrears. Support includes home visits to build financial capability and referrals to neighbourhood office for debt advice and guidance; DWP for advice on employment and Think family programme;
- the Rent Service issuing letters to tenants affected by the benefit cap. Home visits will take place with

	<p>tenants where non- payment as a result of the benefit cap could result in escalation recovery process;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • supporting new tenants through the Council's Letting Suites, these are a one stop shop for all housing issues. A key aim of this service is to ensure new tenants have the financial capability and support to prevent them from falling into debt and becoming homeless. New tenants are provided with a dedicated officer for the first 12 weeks of the tenancy to help them successfully settle into their new home. A further 12 weeks of support is provided to vulnerable tenants; • a Pre-tenancy Strategy will provide early intervention support to prevent homelessness. The aim of the strategy is to provide support and guidance to families, care leavers and young people before they take up their tenancy.
--	--