



# Doncaster Council

Date: 12<sup>th</sup> June 2018

To the Chair and Members of the  
Children and Young People Scrutiny Panel

## A Youth-led Commission on Child Poverty In Doncaster

Relevant Cabinet Member(s)	Wards Affected	Key Decision
Councillor Nuala Fennelly, Cabinet Member for Children, Young People and Schools	All	None

### EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

1. The purpose of this report is to provide an opportunity for Members to give consideration to the reports and presentation which give an outline of the Child Poverty Commission and a summary of findings before the final report is published and launched. This report gives an overview of the methodology applied throughout the Commission, the key themes identified and the subsequent recommendations. This report also starts to offer the next steps, and Doncaster Council's response to the recommendations made.

### EXEMPT REPORT

2. There is no exempt information contained in the report.

### RECOMMENDATIONS

3. That the Panel: -
  - i. Considers the information presented on the Child Poverty Commission.
  - ii. Provides their views on the outline report and its recommendations.
  - iii. Provides their views on the next steps and Doncaster Council's response.

### WHAT DOES THIS MEAN FOR THE CITIZENS OF DONCASTER?

4. The Overview and Scrutiny function has the potential to impact upon all of the Council's key objectives by holding decision makers to account, reviewing performance and developing policy.

### BACKGROUND

5. In early 2018 Doncaster Council commissioned The Children's Society to oversee a child poverty commission. Through this a youth-led commission was developed and

a group of young commissioners identified to direct an investigation into how poverty impacts the lives of children and young people in Doncaster.

6. The commission took evidence from a range of local witnesses, including decision makers and agencies responsible for planning and delivering services to children and young people, and for tackling child poverty.
7. The Young Commissioner's identified four themes that they felt were the most important to focus on:
  - Debt and benefits
  - Jobs, work and skills
  - Mental health
  - Moves and changes in young people's lives ("life transitions")
8. Seven evidence sessions took place in February and March 2018. At these sessions representatives from organisations and services both in and outside of Doncaster Council were invited to present about the work they did, answer the Young Commissioner's questions and also provide written evidence to the commission.

This evidence informed the development the report and the recommendations made.

9. The Commission makes 19 recommendations in total across the four themes. These include:
  - By April 2019, Doncaster Council (working with local transport providers) should help young people in poverty with travel cost by providing free or discounted bus passes to those claiming benefits.
  - By April 2019, Doncaster Council (alongside local advice providers) should help secure funding for local benefits and money advice charities to regularly visit Doncaster's schools, colleges and youth centres. Local schools should be encouraged to allow these external advisors to visit, and to proactively incorporate sessions in the curriculum.
  - Doncaster schools and college, supported by Doncaster Council, should improve the provision of careers information, advice and guidance. They should do this by ensuring that by September 2019 all secondary school and colleges are providing careers information, advice and guidance that meet local standards which build on the new national guidance but go further.
  - By September 2018, Doncaster's new "local Office of the Children's Commissioner" should be leading efforts to ensure that Doncaster Council and its related services are listening and responding to young people in poverty. It should do this by (a) providing an independent complaint service for young people (b) being responsible for recommending improvements to Doncaster services based on the feedback from young people, with Doncaster Councils services required to consider these.
  - By September 2019, all schools and colleges in Doncaster should review their rules, policies, procedures and environment to make sure they do not contribute to any young person feeling punished or bullied as a result of being poor.

10. A presentation giving further details on the context of the commission, its methodology, key themes, recommendations and next steps will be provided to the Panel at its meeting on the 12<sup>th</sup> June 2018.

## OPTIONS CONSIDERED

11. There are no alternative options within this report as the intention is to provide the Committee with an opportunity to note and consider the information presented.

## REASONS FOR RECOMMENDED OPTION

12. There are no specific risks associated with this report.

## IMPACT ON THE COUNCIL'S KEY OUTCOMES

13.

	<b>Outcomes</b>	<b>Implications</b>
	<p><b>Doncaster Working:</b> Our vision is for more people to be able to pursue their ambitions through work that gives them and Doncaster a brighter and prosperous future;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Better access to good fulfilling work</li> <li>• Doncaster businesses are supported to flourish</li> <li>• Inward Investment</li> </ul>	<p>The work of Overview a Scrutiny has the potential to have an impact on all the Council's key objective.</p> <p>A number of the recommendations of the child poverty commission are completely aligned to the outcomes of Doncaster Working, and the opportunities to increase access to work and opportunities.</p>
	<p><b>Doncaster Living:</b> Our vision is for Doncaster's people to live in a borough that is vibrant and full of opportunity, where people enjoy spending time;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The town centres are the beating heart of Doncaster</li> <li>• More people can live in a good quality, affordable home</li> <li>• Healthy and Vibrant Communities through Physical Activity and Sport</li> <li>• Everyone takes responsibility for keeping Doncaster Clean</li> <li>• Building on our cultural, artistic and sporting heritage</li> </ul>	<p>The 4 themes of the commission impact on Doncaster Living and by acting on the recommendations we will be working towards ensuring more people are living in good quality, affordable homes.</p>
	<p><b>Doncaster Learning:</b> Our vision is for learning that prepares all children, young people and adults for a life that is fulfilling;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Every child has life-changing learning experiences within and beyond school</li> <li>• Many more great teachers work in Doncaster Schools that are good or</li> </ul>	<p>The impact of poverty on children and young people's life chances, from outcomes at school to lacking aspiration and opportunity huge. The Commission highlighted a number of recommendations that if implemented would</p>

	<p>better</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Learning in Doncaster prepares young people for the world of work</li> </ul>	<p>improve the life chances of young people and their access to opportunity.</p>
	<p><b>Doncaster Caring:</b> Our vision is for a borough that cares together for its most vulnerable residents;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Children have the best start in life</li> <li>• Vulnerable families and individuals have support from someone they trust</li> <li>• Older people can live well and independently in their own homes.</li> </ul>	<p>Families in poverty are amongst our most vulnerable in the Borough. This recommendations of this commission aims to address some of the inequalities in life chances through the improvement of services delivered to these families.</p>
	<p><b>Connected Council:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A modern, efficient and flexible workforce</li> <li>• Modern, accessible customer interactions</li> <li>• Operating within our resources and delivering value for money</li> <li>• A co-ordinated, whole person, whole life focus on the needs and aspirations of residents</li> <li>• Building community resilience and self-reliance by connecting community assets and strengths</li> <li>• Working with our partners and residents to provide effective leadership and governance.</li> </ul>	<p>Through addressing the impact of poverty on our children, young people and their families we can ensure we are offering value for money services which are more proactive in their response to families.</p>

## RISKS AND ASSUMPTIONS

14. There are no specific risks associated with this report.

## LEGAL IMPLICATIONS [Officer Initials KDW Date 04.06.18 ]

15. There are no specific legal implications associated with this report

## FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS [Officer Initials: DB Date 04.06.18 ]

16. There are currently no specific financial implications with this report

## HUMAN RESOURCES IMPLICATIONS [Officer Initials MLV Date 04/06/18]

17. There are no specific HR implications associated with the content of this report. It is possible that there may be implications related to some of the specific recommendations but these will be picked up at the appropriate time through the relevant governance arrangements.

## **TECHNOLOGY IMPLICATIONS [Officer Initials..PW Date..04/06/18]**

18. There are no specific technology implications in relation to this decision.

## **HEALTH IMPLICATIONS [Officer Initials RS Date 04.06.18]**

19. Child poverty has a direct impact on the health and wellbeing of children, young people and families. Members will want to consider how these recommendations have been developed through the evidence gathering sessions and how the recommendations address the concerns of children and young people as a whole and the concerns of the most vulnerable children and young people. Members will want to consider how implementable the recommendations are including the evidence base, cost and impact of the proposed recommendations. Further detail should be available in the presentation.

## **EQUALITY IMPLICATIONS [Officer Initials RM Date 01.06.18]**

20. There are no significant equality implications associated with this report. Within its programme of work Overview and Scrutiny gives due consideration to the extent to which the Council has complied with its Public Equality Duty and given due regard to the need to eliminate discrimination, promote equality of opportunity and foster good relations between different communities.

## **CONSULTATION**

21. There is no consultation required for this report.

## **BACKGROUND PAPERS**

22. None

## **REPORT AUTHOR & CONTRIBUTORS**

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