

Public Document Pack



EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE TUESDAY, 30 JANUARY 2018

A MEETING of the EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE will be held in the COUNCIL CHAMBER, COUNCIL HEADQUARTERS, NEWTOWN ST BOSWELLS, TD6 0SA on TUESDAY, 30 JANUARY 2018 at 10.00 am

J. J. WILKINSON,
Clerk to the Council,

24 January 2018

BUSINESS		
1.	Apologies for Absence	
2.	Order of Business	
3.	Declarations of Interest	
	Economic Development Business	
4.	Broadband update (Pages 3 - 16)	20 mins
	Economic Development theme additional Membership of Committee:- Mr J. Clark, Mr G. Clark	
	Education Business	
5.	Closing the Poverty-Related Attainment Gap (Pages 17 - 58)	15 mins
6.	Admissions Policy (Pages 59 - 74)	15 mins
	Education Theme Additional Membership of Committee:- Mr I. Topping, Ms C. Thorburn, Mr G. Jarvie, Jeanette Aitchison (Parent Representative), Alison Ferahi (Parent Representative), Pupil Representatives.	
	Other Business	
7.	Minute (Pages 75 - 80) Consider Minute of Meeting held on 5 December 2017. (Copy attached).	2 mins
8.	Annual Taxi Fares Review 2017/18 (Pages 81 - 86)	10 mins

9.	Any Other Items Previously Circulated	
10.	Any Other Items which the Chairman Decides are Urgent	
11.	<p>Private Business</p> <p>Before proceeding with the private business, the following motions should be approved:- “That under Section 50A(4) of the Local Government (Scotland) Act 1973, the public be excluded from the meeting for the following items of business on the grounds that they involve the likely disclosure of exempt information as defined in Part I of Schedule 7A to the aforementioned Act”.</p>	
12.	<p>Private Minute (Pages 87 - 88)</p> <p>Consider Private Minute of Meeting held on 5 December 2017. (Copy attached).</p>	2 mins

NOTES

1. **Timings given above are only indicative and not intended to inhibit Members’ discussions.**
2. **Members are reminded that, if they have a pecuniary or non-pecuniary interest in any item of business coming before the meeting, that interest should be declared prior to commencement of discussion on that item. Such declaration will be recorded in the Minute of the meeting.**

Membership of Committee:- Councillors S. Haslam (Chairman), S. Aitchison (Vice-Chairman), G. Edgar, C. Hamilton, E. Jardine, W. McAteer, T. Miers, S. Mountford, M. Rowley, G. Turnbull and T. Weatherston

Please direct any enquiries to Judith Turnbull Tel:- 01835 826556
 Email:- judith.turnbull@scotborders.gov.uk

BROADBAND IMPROVEMENTS – UPDATE

Report by Executive Director

EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

30 January 2018

1 PURPOSE AND SUMMARY

- 1.1 **This report provides an update to elected members on the progress that is being made in delivering improved broadband services in the Scottish Borders.**
- 1.2 Digital connectivity is critical to the economic development and competitiveness of the Scottish Borders. Scottish Borders Council has contributed significantly to the roll-out of the Scottish Government's Digital Scotland Superfast Broadband (DSSB) programme, spending £8.4M over two years to help extend the roll-out as far as possible in the Scottish Borders. The Council Administration has identified digital connectivity as a key priority in its 'Connected Borders' plan.
- 1.3 More than 130 new superfast broadband cabinets and exchange upgrades have been delivered as part of the roll-out, connecting over 31,800 premises in the Scottish Borders. Figures provided by the DSSB programme indicate that up to the end of September 2017, 82.7% of premises had been connected to fibre enabled cabinets or exchanges. The DSSB roll-out, with added 'Gainshare' funding, will continue until the end of 2018, aiming to connect 94.9% of all the premises in the area.
- 1.4 Although progress is being made in delivering the DSSB programme, there remain a number of challenging issues to be addressed in relation to providing superfast broadband services across the Scottish Borders. One of the key issues is that although a home or business may be connected to the new fibre enabled technology, if they are located too far from the cabinet or exchange) then it is likely that there will be no improvement in their broadband service. This is acknowledged as the 'long lines' issue.
- 1.5 The Scottish Government has announced its commitment to investing £600m to extend superfast broadband access to 100% of premises across Scotland by the end of 2021. The Scottish Government is delivering a national approach to this issue, putting in place a "Reaching 100% Programme" (R100) to cover the remaining premises where the DSSB roll-out will not reach. As well as providing connections for those premises that have not been covered by the DSSB roll-out, R100 will also address the of 'long lines' issue. The R100 programme also raises the superfast broadband speeds being targeted, up from 24Mbps to 30Mbps.

2 RECOMMENDATIONS

- 2.1 **I recommend that the Executive Committee:**
- (a) Notes the progress made on delivering the Digital Scotland Superfast Broadband programme, as set out in Appendix 1;**
 - (b) Welcomes the Scottish Government announcement that the**

R100 tender process is under way;

- (c) Agrees to write to the Cabinet Secretary for Rural Economy and Connectivity to encourage the Scottish Government to maximise the full-fibre coverage in the R100 programme, to promote an 'Outside-In' approach to its delivery and to urge that work on the programme starts as quickly as possible for the Scottish Borders;**
- (d) Notes the delays with Community Broadband Scotland being experienced by local community groups and raises these concerns with the Cabinet Secretary for Rural Economy and Connectivity in the letter agreed above;**
- (e) Asks the Executive Director to work with partners in adjoining local authorities to develop a viable application to the Local Full Fibre Network Challenge Fund, noting that it may be delivered through the City Region Deal partnership or the South of Scotland Economic Partnership;**
- (f) Asks the South of Scotland Economic Partnership to make Digital Connectivity, uptake of digital services and the development of digital skills for businesses and individuals a priority for the Interim Arrangements Workplan;**
- (g) Expresses concern over the range of issues affecting the delivery of superfast broadband in the rural areas of the Scottish Borders and asks that these are raised with The Deputy First Minister and Cabinet Secretary when they meet the South of Scotland Alliance in February 2018;**
- (h) Agrees to the facilitation of a Scottish Borders Digital Network to encourage coordination and information sharing between key local stakeholders with an interest in digital; and**
- (i) Asks the Executive Director to prepare a further update report once the outcome of the initial R100 procurement is available.**

3 BACKGROUND

- 3.1 Good digital connectivity to crucially important to the future economic development and competitiveness of the Scottish Borders. It is clear that robust digital connectivity will be central to the delivery of private and public services and in meeting the needs and expectations of consumers, businesses and visitors. The Council Administration's plan, Connected Borders, highlights the importance it places on improving digital connectivity in the Scottish Borders.
- 3.2 The Council's long-standing ambition is that wherever someone is located in the Scottish Borders, they should be able to access superfast broadband for business or personal use. The Council recognises that this aspiration is still some way from being fulfilled, even though good progress is being made towards superfast broadband coverage in many parts of the area.
- 3.3 Through the South of Scotland Alliance, the Council has expressed concerns to Scottish Government Ministers that there is still a clear inequity between the digital connectivity in more densely populated areas and that available in rural areas like the Scottish Borders. Officers are also concerned that even higher bandwidth services, often already available in city and urban areas, are not being made available in the Scottish Borders, meaning that rural areas are again being left behind in the digital connectivity race.
- 3.4 Scottish Borders Council has made a significant financial contribution to the current roll-out of the Scottish Government's Digital Scotland Superfast Broadband (DSSB) programme, providing £8.4M over two years to help extend the roll-out as far as possible in the Scottish Borders. The DSSB Programme is now in its final stages and this report sets out progress to date, as well as the other digital initiatives that are expected to support digital connectivity in the Scottish Borders in future.

4 DIGITAL SCOTLAND SUPERFAST BROADBAND PROGRAMME

- 4.1 The indicative outcome for the Digital Scotland Superfast Broadband (DSSB) programme was to increase superfast broadband connection to 93.8% of premises in the Scottish Borders. This figure is based on commercial operators completing their plans in full. At the start of the programme, the anticipated commercial coverage of superfast broadband for Scottish Borders was just 39.3% of all premises.
- 4.2 The first new superfast broadband cabinet went "live" in the summer of 2014 and since then a number of localities have been upgraded to fibre broadband. At the moment more than 130 new superfast broadband cabinets and exchanges have been delivered as part of the roll-out, enabling the provision of new services to over 31,800 premises in the Scottish Borders, as of the end of September 2017.
- 4.3 An indication of which settlements have already been upgraded to allow access to fibre broadband is attached at Appendix 1. This DSSB work is complemented by the commercial roll-out that BT Openreach undertook in Galashiels, Peebles, Innerleithen, and latterly, in Hawick and Kelso. Appendix 2 provides a visual representation of the areas in the Scottish Borders that have been covered by the commercial and DSSB roll-outs up until the end of September 2017.
- 4.4 The roll-out of the Digital Scotland Superfast Broadband Programme was supposed to be completed at the end of December 2017. However, up to the end of September 2017, figures provided by the DSSB office indicate that 82.7% of premises had been connected to fibre enabled cabinets or exchanges. In view of this, it is highly unlikely that the target of 93.8% of premises was achieved by the end of December 2017, as originally

specified. The Council needs to continue to press Scottish Government and Openreach to ensure that the coverage envisaged by the DSSB programme is delivered in the Scottish Borders.

4.5 The DSSB programme continues to deliver on a phased basis and further areas will be upgraded during 2018. Appendix 1 also sets out the expected rollout in terms of the exchange areas that will be worked on in the next six months or so (Section B); the more rural areas that will receive some level of coverage later in 2018 (Section C); and the most remote areas where a Superfast Broadband solution is still under evaluation (Section D). It is important to note that engineering plans and delivery timescales to install this infrastructure depend on many factors and can be subject to change. The information in Appendix 1 is based on the best view that Openreach has at present, using their current plans.

4.6 **Limitations of the DSSB Programme**

As the DSSB programme has progressed it has become clear that there are a number of issues with how effectively it delivers in widely dispersed rural areas like the Scottish Borders and Dumfries & Galloway. On-going concerns have been raised by residents in different parts of the Scottish Borders, frustrated over the lack of clarity about when a service will become available and also whether they will actually see an improvement in service.

4.7 The availability of the DSSB website (www.scotlandsuperfast.com)where individuals can check their postcode in the system answers some users' queries. There have been on-going improvements to the interactive map, in particular for those not yet connected. This includes informing enquirers where they may not be connected under the DSSB programme and directing them to alternative solutions.

4.8 The DSSB programme is using fibre optic technology to increase the broadband speeds that are available. However, most premises are connected to this upgraded fibre network through their existing copper telephone lines. Where the premises are reasonably close to the newly installed Superfast Broadband Cabinet, then users should see good broadband speeds when they sign up for a new fibre broadband service. Unfortunately, once homes and businesses are more than 1.2km from the Superfast cabinet, they will experience a much reduced service, with those premises furthest away seeing no benefit at all. This 'long lines' issue may also have an impact close to, and within, towns and villages, as the 1.2km threshold is as measured by the existing cable routing, rather than a straight line to the cabinet.

4.9 Although 93.8% of the premises in the Scottish Borders are expected to be connected to upgraded Superfast Broadband infrastructure, it seems that a proportion of those premises will not be able to take advantage of new services because they are too distant from a Superfast Cabinet. As an indicator of the impact of this, Scottish Government estimates that about 87% of premises in Scottish Borders will receive fibre coverage that delivers 24Mbps or faster connections speeds. This would then suggest that at least 13% of premises in the Scottish Borders will not actually receive a Superfast Broadband service (ie 24Mbps or above), although they may well see some improvement in comparison to the service that they previously received. This is likely to be a very frustrating situation for the businesses and householders affected and it is an issue that must be addressed in the work that is being taken forward by the new Scottish Government for future phases of digital infrastructure development.

4.10 As the DSSB Programme comes to an end, it will be crucial that accurate figures based on the premises that have actually receiving an improved service are provided as part of the outputs of the programme. This is particularly important for Councils such as Scottish Borders and Dumfries & Galloway, which have made significant financial contributions to the DSSB programme. It will be later in 2018 before the Government has final figures and outputs from the Programme and is able to then provide the Council with the results for the Scottish Borders and the associated assessment of value for money for the Council's investment.

4.11 **Take-Up of Superfast Broadband**

It is important to stress that businesses and households need to sign up for new fibre based services in order to take advantage of the upgraded infrastructure. The Digital Scotland Superfast Roll-out requires businesses and households to sign up for a new service or new package. This is not always clear to users in the newly connected community and this has recently been a stronger part of the messaging that has been promoted about the rollout. It is expected that the variable take-up rates of the new service are partly due to lack of awareness of this fact.

4.12 Scottish Government has provided some high level information on the take-up rates for Superfast Broadband. The average adoption rate across the Scottish Borders (in areas that have access to the new service) is about 35%. Coldstream, Earlston, Eyemouth, Melrose, Selkirk, St Boswells and West Linton have been highlighted as high adoption communities. Duns, Jedburgh and Kelso are noted as having lower adoption rates. Overall, it is important that businesses and households take advantage of the improved connectivity wherever they can. Higher take-up rates will help justify and drive further investments in connectivity in the future.

5 ADDITIONAL BROADBAND CONNECTIVITY SUPPORT

5.1 Although the DSSB programme is likely to provide most of the faster broadband coverage in the area, there are additional projects under way to help improve broadband outwith the main programme.

5.2 **Gainshare for DSSB Programme**

A 'Gainshare' clawback mechanism which returns money to the Scottish Government when there has been higher than expected take up of fibre broadband from Openreach will help to extend coverage in the DSSB programme. This has raised about £15.6M for the Rest of Scotland programme and this is being reinvested in providing greater coverage of fibre broadband. The Gainshare Fund has been used to deliver increased coverage to 'new premises'. It uses the principles that 1) all Local Authority areas should benefit on a best value basis; and 2) all 14 contributing Local Authorities should benefit from the gainshare funds to a level proportionate to the sum contributed by that Local Authority.

5.3 In the Scottish Borders this means that 94.9% of premises are expected to be connected to the fibre enabled network by the end of December 2018. This is 1.1% higher than the 93.8% originally specified in the DSSB programme. It means that more than 670 additional premises will be connected to the fibre enabled network.

5.4 The availability of the Gainshare Fund will also ensure that the Scottish Borders will benefit from a speed uplift in certain areas. By the end of December 2018, DSSB is projecting that 89.1% of premises in Scottish Borders will have access to speeds of greater than 24Mbps. This is an extra 2.1% over the figure that would have been achieved without Gainshare. This boost to speed coverage means that a further 1,294 premises in Scottish Borders will have access to speeds of greater than 24Mbps.

5.5 **Reaching 100% Programme**

Building on the success of the joint investment from UK Government, Scottish Government and Local Authorities through the DSSB programme, the Scottish Government announced its commitment to investing £600m to extend superfast broadband access to 100% of premises across Scotland by the end of 2021. The Scottish Government is delivering a national approach to this issue, putting in place a "Reaching 100% Programme" (R100) to cover the remaining premises, mainly in areas of rural Scotland.

5.6 Any home or business that will not have superfast broadband delivered commercially, through DSSB, or other publicly funded projects, will be eligible for investment through the programme. However, Scottish Government will seek to prioritise public investment in the most rural and remote communities, recognising the key role that commercial investment will continue to play in urban areas.

5.7 At the end of December 2017, the Scottish Government launched the first procurement for its R100 programme. It will be split into three separate programmes covering North, Central, and South areas of Scotland. The total investment which has been allocated for this is £600 million, with £133 million of that to be delivered in the 'South' area. This is largely, but not wholly, made up of Dumfries & Galloway and Scottish Borders council areas.

5.8 The challenge for the R100 programme of connecting 100% of premises to Superfast Broadband (speeds of at least 30Mbps) should not be underestimated. It is expected that a number of procurement exercises will be required over time to deliver the full coverage target, especially in very rural areas like the Scottish Borders. It is important that the Scottish Government is able to identify, and share with stakeholders, which premises will miss out in the initial procurement as soon as it practical. This will help to manage expectations of those frustrated to have not yet received an adequate service.

5.9 One option the Scottish Government could consider as it lets the R100 contracts would be to prioritise those communities and premises that are hardest to reach. This 'Outside-In' approach would ensure that the most remote premises and communities are connected first, a reverse of the approach taken for the DSSB rollout. Taking this approach would address the most challenging premises while ensuring that the funding is being spent on those premises most likely to need funding. The network solutions for these premises could then be used to create solutions for the less peripheral premises.

5.10 Scottish Government has also acknowledged that in order for it to deliver its ambition of 100% superfast coverage it will need to make use of a range of technologies. These are: fibre, wireless, 4G and high speed satellite. The Council considers that there should be a strong preference made by the Scottish Government for fibre to be used wherever possible in the R100 roll-out. It is considered that the use of Fibre to the Cabinet

(FTTC) in the DSSB programme has only been effective as a short term fix. Currently the only way to deliver a truly future-proof digital network is to use Fibre to the Premises (FTTP) as widely as possible.

5.11 In particular, it is considered that satellite technology will provide a suboptimal and non-future proofed solution for customers. Using technology such as this will inevitably require further upgrading in future, as digital needs and demands require greater bandwidth and full-fibre solutions. As such, the choice of technology should strongly favour the use of fibre, which should be used wherever possible.

5.12 **Universal Service Obligation**

The UK Government has proposed a universal service obligation (USO) for broadband services in order to ensure provision of a service to all premises. The Government's consultation suggested that the USO would provide a minimum broadband download speed of 10Mbps. Officers responded on behalf of the Council, highlighting that the USO as proposed was a poor solution. The speeds proposed do not come near to matching Superfast speeds. It is important that the government is future-proofing the digital infrastructure across the UK, so that it is not almost immediately obsolete.

5.13 It is considered that the direction of travel for the UK IT infrastructure should be focused on extending fibre networks to cover as many premises as possible. The USO should not prejudice or delay this much needed move from a copper-based infrastructure to full fibre. In Scotland, the R100 Programme aims to deliver 30Mb/s download speeds to 100% of premises. This more ambitious approach provides some additional future-proofing and, if delivered, makes a USO of 10Mb/s much less relevant.

5.14 **Local Full Fibre Network**

Currently all of the investment, activity and effort is focused on ensuring that there is full coverage of Superfast Broadband for all parts of the Scottish Borders. However, as noted above, it is also clear that there needs to be a focus on preparing for the next challenge; it is considered that this is to ensure that there is full-fibre connectivity to all premises. This ambition is likely to be a priority issue for the Borderlands Initiative, which the Council is engaged in with the four other Anglo/Scottish local authorities (Dumfries & Galloway, Carlisle City, Northumberland and Cumbria Councils). This will aim to deliver hyperfast broadband (Gigabit connections – 1,000Mbps) in key settlements and employment sites across the Borderlands area.

5.15 The UK Government launched a Local Full Fibre Network (LFFN) Challenge Fund in November 2017. The LFFN Programme aims to stimulate commercial investment in full fibre networks across the whole of the UK, including rural and urban locations in England, Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland, by demonstrating approaches that encourage additional private investment and by making sustainable commercial deployments viable. Council officers are discussing the opportunities to bid into this fund with colleagues in Midlothian, City of Edinburgh and Dumfries & Galloway Councils. Officers are investigating the potential of making a viable bid to the LFFN for its next round in May 2018.

5.16 **Community Broadband Scotland**

Community Broadband Scotland (CBS) has been working with community groups to develop projects that provide broadband solutions in the areas outwith the Superfast Broadband roll-out programme. CBS aims to fund projects in 'no build' areas, those which are not commercially covered and where the DSSB programme has no roll-out plans.

5.17 The CBS programme has faced complex problems in encouraging rural communities to undertake projects. To address these issues, CBS developed an aggregated approach that brings a number of rural communities together to provide a critical mass of premises that can then form the basis of a commissioning exercise. A strategic programme was developed in the Scottish Borders under the Borders Community Broadband banner. However, this project has been put on hold due to uncertainties around CBS and the impact of the R100 programme. Other CBS activities have also included Foulden, Lammermuir, Stobo and Heriot.

5.18 Significant expectations and burdens are placed on communities to manage and sustain these projects. It is clear that communities need to have the capacity, leadership and skills to do this, so only some communities will be able to undertake these projects. There are also significant levels of revenue and capital funding required, in addition to the funding support from CBS. It is clear that uncertainty around CBS, the DSSB roll-out and the new R100 programme schemes has effectively put even the most advanced community-led schemes on hold whilst they see what will happen.

5.19 **Satellite Broadband**

The Better Broadband Subsidy Scheme has been developed by the UK government. It sets out to provide access to a subsidised broadband installation to homes and businesses that are unable to access a broadband service with a download speed of at least 2Mbps and will not benefit from the current phase of the Digital Scotland Superfast Broadband roll out. If someone takes advantage of the Better Broadband Subsidy Scheme, their household or business will still be eligible for a fibre broadband service in the future when the Digital Scotland Superfast Broadband programme deploys in their area. Applications to the Better Broadband Subsidy Scheme can be made until the end of December 2018. However, it is acknowledged that satellite broadband is not an ideal solution because of the limitations in the capacity of superfast broadband that can be provided. There is a growing number of point-to-point wireless operators who are offering their services in the Scottish Borders and this can also provide an alternative to satellite services, if available.

5.20 **CGI/SBC Contract**

The ICT services contract that CGI will deliver for the Council over the next 12 years may also deliver benefits for digital connectivity in the area. CGI is working with its infrastructure partner, Commsworld, to unbundle some of the exchanges in the Scottish Borders to allow CGI to deliver a superfast broadband offering to the school estate. This could have a positive impact on the services available to businesses and households, and it is hoped that Openreach may respond positively to additional competition in the area. CGI and Commsworld are developing the details and coverage of this work with input from officers.

5.21 **Scottish Borders Digital Strategy**

Looking to the future, it is crucial that the Scottish Borders can benefit

from future digital network improvements. This needs to encompass an inclusive approach so that people, young and old, have the skills and knowledge to use digital platforms in their working, learning and home lives. The Council is considering how best to develop a Digital Strategy that will help to set the strategic direction for the digital infrastructure that is required, both broadband and mobile communications. It will also focus on how the infrastructure can be successfully used by everyone, to make businesses more competitive, to make services more accessible and to make sure that people have access to the digital skills and knowledge that they will require in future.

5.22 **Scottish Borders Digital Network**

In order to encourage the sharing of information and learning in relation to digital connectivity, and to provide a forum for discussion about the key digital issues facing the Scottish Borders, it is proposed that a new Scottish Borders Digital Network is established. This would be convened twice a year and would bring experts and local stakeholders together to discuss key digital topics. It is recommended that the Scottish Borders Digital Network should be facilitated by the Council, with Cllr Rowley, Executive Member for Business and Economic Development taking the role of Chair. The Network would share information and intelligence virtually in the periods between its physical meetings. Stakeholders from the private and voluntary sectors, Community Councils, and Community Planning Partners would be encouraged to engage in the Network. As well as broadband issues, meetings would also consider mobile phone coverage and speeds and other digital issues as they arise.

6 IMPLICATIONS

6.1 **Financial**

There are no direct financial costs as a result of the recommendations of this report. The Council has spent £8.4M of capital funding as part of the Digital Scotland Superfast Broadband roll-out in order to extend that programme to connect as many premises as possible in the Scottish Borders. It is possible that Scottish Government may seek further funding contributions from Local Authorities to support the current R100 roll-out. However, it is recommended that no further Council funding is committed at this time, until the value for money and impact of the DSSB investment has been assessed and proven.

6.2 **Risk and Mitigations**

There is a reputational risk to the Council if the DSSB Programme does not deliver improved services to as many premises as possible. This risk is being mitigated by on-going involvement by Council officers in the programme management of the roll-out. Scottish Government and COSLA are also involved in managing the roll-out contract to ensure that the public funding involved is used as efficiently as possible, thus ensuring that as many premises as possible are served by the technology.

6.3 **Equalities**

It is anticipated there are no adverse impacts due to race, disability, gender, age, sexual orientation or religious/belief arising from this report.

6.4 **Acting Sustainably**

The DSSB and R100 roll-outs will contribute to the sustainability of local businesses and communities as it will facilitate the delivery of digital services and digital business opportunities to a much greater number of premises across the Scottish Borders. For instance, this could help reduce the need for travel and reduce vehicle emissions.

6.5 Carbon Management

The DSSB and R100 rollouts could reduce the need for travel and have a positive impact on carbon emissions.

6.6 Rural Proofing

While this report does not propose any new or amended policy, the DSSB and R100 rollouts will improve digital connectivity in many rural areas. However, there remain significant challenges in providing good, modern broadband services to all the rural areas of the Scottish Borders so it will be important that the Council carefully monitors progress with the delivery of these programmes.

6.7 Changes to Scheme of Administration or Scheme of Delegation

There are no changes to be made to the Scheme of Administration or Scheme of Delegation arising from this report.

7 CONSULTATION

- 7.1 The Chief Financial Officer, the Monitoring Officer, the Chief Legal Officer, the Chief Officer Audit and Risk, the Service Director HR and the Clerk to the Council have been consulted and their comments have been included in the report.

Approved by

Rob Dickson
Executive Director

Signature

Author(s)

Name	Designation and Contact Number
Bryan McGrath	Chief Officer Economic Development, Chief Executives – Tel 01835 826525
Douglas Scott	Senior Policy Advisor, Chief Executives – Tel 01835 825155

Background Papers:

Previous Minute Reference: Executive Committee, 7 June 2016

Note – You can get this document on tape, in Braille, large print and various computer formats by contacting the address below. Bryan McGrath can also give information on other language translations as well as providing additional copies.

Contact us at Bryan McGrath, Council Headquarters, Newtown St Boswells, Melrose, TD6 0SA Tel: 01835 826525, email bmcgrath@scotborders.gov.uk

APPENDIX 1

The current plan for rollout by Openreach under the Digital Scotland Superfast Broadband programme is set out below.

Please note that engineering plans and delivery timescales depend on many factors and can be subject to change. All information is based on the best view Openreach have at present using their current plans.

Scottish Borders

A. Exchanges already Accepting Orders for Superfast Broadband:

Ancrum, Ashkirk, Ayton, Allanton, Birgham, Bonchester Bridge, Bowden, Broughton, Chirnside, Clovenfords, Cockburnspath, Coldingham, Coldstream, Crailing, Darnick, Denholm, Dolphinton, Drochil Castle, Duns, Earlston, Eddleston, Eildon, Ettrick Bridge, Eyemouth, Fountainhall, Galashiels, Gattonside, Grantshouse, Greenlaw, Hawick, Innerleithen, Jedburgh, Kelso, Kirkton Manor, Lauder, Leitholm, Liddesdale, Lilliesleaf, Macbiehill, Melrose, Morebattle, Newtown St Boswells, Oxton, Paxton, Peebles, Reston, Roxburgh, Selkirk, Skirling, St Boswells, Stichill, Stow, Swinton, Upper Burnmouth, West Linton, Town Yetholm, Gifford, Moffat, Innerwick

B. The following Exchange Areas are now "Coming Soon" and anticipated to see a level of coverage by the end of June 2018.

Blainslie, Camptown, Eskdalemuir, Gordon, Heriot, Lempitlaw, Longformacus, Smailholm, Walkerburn, Westruther, Whitsome, Yarrowford, Bentpath

C. The following Exchange Areas are planned and in scope for a level of coverage phased through 2018, subject to survey

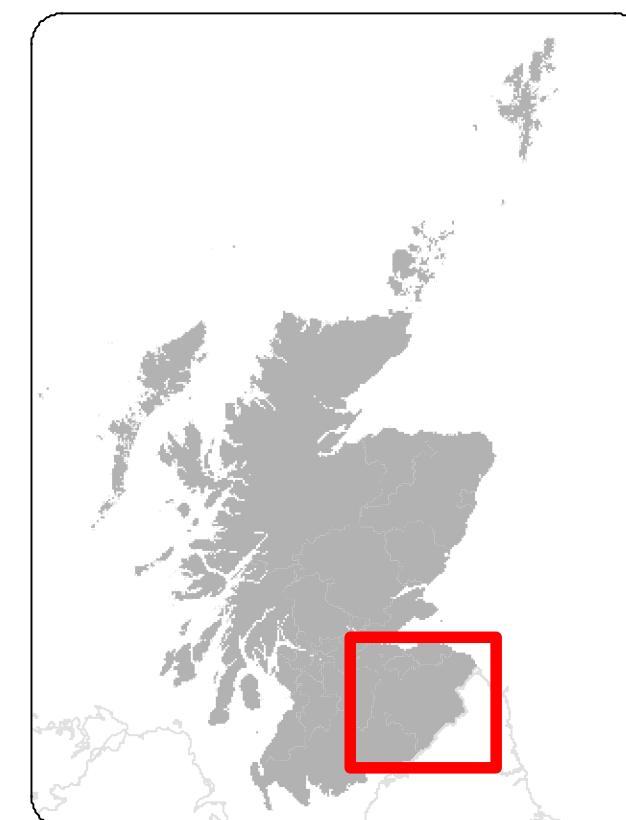
Abbey St Bathans, Borthwick Brae, Stobo, Teviotdale

D. The following Exchange Areas remain under evaluation but Openreach are reviewing detailed plans to determine what coverage is possible, within existing budgets or with new funds.

Cappercleuch, Ettrick Valley, Steele Road, Tweedsmuir, Yarrow, Humberie

This page is intentionally left blank

DSSB Deployment in SCOTTISH BORDERS up to Q2 2017/2018



 Planned Commercial Deployment
(Open Market Review 2012)

 DSSB Deployed Postcodes

Postcodes are marked as 'live' when fibre broadband is available to at least 1 premise in the postcode. Individual postcodes may receive deployment in multiple, non-consecutive phases of the DSSB project

Reproduced by permission of Ordnance Survey on behalf of HMSO. © Crown copyright and database right (2017). All rights reserved. Ordnance Survey Licence number 100024655. Postcode Boundaries: National Records of Scotland (2014).

This page is intentionally left blank



CLOSING THE POVERTY RELATED ATTAINMENT GAP

Report by Service Director, Children and Young People

EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

30 January 2018

1 PURPOSE AND SUMMARY

- 1.1 **Scottish Borders Council has a strong commitment to Reducing Inequalities and works in partnership with a range of partners to address the barriers that families may face in their daily lives. In the newly established vision set out by the Council in 'Connected Borders' there is a strong commitment to 'ensuring that the vulnerable and marginalised are included and considered in every action we take' and that 'together we need to ensure that no-one and no community is left behind but that we grow and develop together'. Within this new vision there are specific themes that provide a focus on improving the lives of the most vulnerable. Communities of wellbeing identifies a commitment to taking a whole community approach to education to raise attainment and 'close the poverty related attainment gap' ,to deliver extensive work on tackling substance mis-use and improving mental health support for the most vulnerable young people. Communities of Caring identifies a commitment to family support services focusing on early intervention, mentoring and parenting.**
- 1.2 There are many existing structures and workstreams that are currently focused on developing support for the most vulnerable in communities in the Scottish Borders. The new vision provides an opportunity for a review of the structures and priorities for action enabling the Council and its Partners within the Community Planning Partnership to set out a new five year plan. Work has already started with an initial workshop involving a broad range of community partners and the creation of the Area Partnerships structure; currently holding community workshops aimed at identifying priorities within the locality forums.
- 1.3 The Children and Young People's Directorate is sighted on Reducing Inequalities developments through the Director's participation in the Corporate Management Team, the Community Planning Partnership Board, the Reducing Inequalities Delivery Team and the Children and Young People's Leadership Group. This broader context of Reducing Inequalities work is a key factor in supporting the 'closing the poverty' related attainment gap priority set by the National Improvement Framework for all

schools.

- 1.4 This report provides an update on current attainment levels between the most and least disadvantaged children in Scottish Borders and the actions being taken to narrow the attainment gap in schools .
- 1.5 This report provides background information on how poverty is defined, the effects of poverty and recent statistics on the levels of children living in poverty within the Scottish Borders. The attainment gap that currently exists between the children living in the most deprived areas compared to the least deprived areas in the Scottish Borders is presented within the report and an analysis provided across the stages of schooling. A key priority is raising attainment in numeracy.
- 1.6 A significant part of the report outlines the extensive work taking place in schools to intervene and address the poverty related attainment gap. Part of the report outlines how the Pupil Equity Fund is being spent in schools in support of this work. Guidance that has been developed and training that has taken place are presented and the work of the Quality Improvement Officers and the Attainment Officers highlighted. Significant work is taking place to address the challenges presented by the impact that living in poverty has upon the attainment and wellbeing of children and their families.
- 1.7 Tackling Child Poverty is not simply a school issue and the work of the Area Partnerships, the Reducing Inequalities CPP Strategic Group and the Children's Leadership Group are noted to signal the broader role being played by partners and Council staff across Directorates; this work will be subject to more detailed reports in other forums.
- 1.8 There is considerable work taking place within and across schools to 'close the poverty related attainment gap'. The work is in its infancy and the challenge is significant. However the approach being taken and the commitment being demonstrated evidences that very robust processes are in place to address this challenge. The work is being closely monitored by Attainment Officers and Quality Improvement Officers and high quality professional learning has taken place so far. This work will be complemented by the work of broader partnership groups moving forward.

2 RECOMMENDATIONS

- 2.1 **I recommend that the Executive Committee:**
 - (a) **Commend the work taking place at all levels to address the poverty related attainment gap in schools;**
 - (b) **Note the significant change in the levels of children living in poverty within the Scottish Borders and agree to the Director, Children and Young People making an approach to the appropriate Ministers and Learning Directorate Senior Officers in the Scottish Government, to discuss the possibility of innovation funding in recognition of the increasing child poverty levels in the Scottish Borders.**

3 BACKGROUND

- 3.1 The Scottish Government and Scottish Borders Council are committed to achieving excellence and equity in Scottish Education. Equity can be achieved by ensuring every child has the same opportunity to succeed, with a particular focus on closing the poverty-related attainment gap. The Government wants schools to interrupt the cycle of poverty and ensure that learners, regardless of background, have the opportunity to succeed.

3.1.1 What is Poverty?

- (a) Before the gap can be closed it is important to understand the barriers that poverty can create for learners. The Joseph Rowntree Foundation Report published in 2016 defines poverty as *"At root, poverty is a gap between resources and needs. To be in poverty is to have resources that are well below minimum needs. Poverty is caused by a lack of resources – most obviously, income – but also by steep prices for minimum needs. Low resources and high costs cause poverty, separately or together."*

"People in poverty experience daily insecurity and uncertainty, and are excluded from the norms of a wealthy society, facing impossible decisions about money, and getting into debt. Poverty causes families significant harm, affecting people's health and well-being, eroding confidence and capability, and damaging life chances. But it also damages wider society and the economy, depriving it of the skills and talents of people who could otherwise contribute."

"Poverty means not being able to heat your home, pay your rent, or buy essentials for your children. It means waking up every day facing insecurity, uncertainty, and impossible decisions about money. The constant stress it causes can overwhelm people, affecting them emotionally and depriving them of the chance to play a full part in society."

260, 000 children in Scotland live in relative poverty; that is more than 1 in 4 of Scottish children. 7 out of 10 children in relative poverty live in working households.

Poverty and Income Inequality in Scotland 2017

- (b) The minimum income standard (MIS) is defined as "having sufficient income to afford a minimum acceptable standard of living", defined as something that "includes, but is more than just, food, clothes and shelter. It is about having what you need in order to have the opportunities and choices necessary to participate in society."
- (c) This has been defined by Scottish Government as:
- (i) Relative poverty (compared with UK figure, after housing costs):

(1) Single person with children aged 5 and 14: £297 per week

(2) Couple with children aged 5 and 14: £401 per week

(ii) Relative poverty (compared with UK figure, before housing costs):

(1) Single person with children aged 5 and 14: £346 per week

(2) Couple with children aged 5 and 14: £441 per week

Children in Families with Limited Resources Across Scotland 2014-2016 (2017)

(d) The factors that cause poverty are complex and structural. It is seldom the result of a single factor, but almost always a combination that include market opportunities, state support, and individual initiative.

3.1.2 **Effects of Poverty**

Poverty creates inequalities in educational outcomes, employment opportunity and security, health and life expectancy and mental and physical wellbeing. It can be the source of stigmatisation and discrimination in a society which has a poor understanding of the causes of poverty and the profile of the 'poor'. Some of the myths around benefit claimants and substance misuse can be dispelled by the following facts:

(i) $\frac{3}{4}$ of children in poverty are in working families.

(ii) 48% of low income families are not claiming benefits.

(iii) 0.3% of households have two generations that have never worked.

(iv) 0.7% of benefit claims are fraudulent.

(v) Less than 4% of benefit claimants have an addiction.

3.1.3 For many children, poverty impacts on their life chances before birth. Gaps in development, learning and opportunities continue to grow throughout their lives.

"In Scotland:

By age 5, the gap in development between children from better-off and disadvantaged areas is 10 – 13 months.

By age 12 – 14 (S2), pupils from better-off areas are more than twice as likely as those from the most deprived areas to do well in numeracy.

By 16 (S4), pupils from better-off areas achieved overall 'tariff scores' about 300 points higher than those from the most deprived areas. This is equivalent to an additional four A-graded in Higher-level exams."

Joseph Rowntree Foundation Report 2016

The impact of poverty

Poverty damages. It damages childhoods; it damages life chances; and it damages us all in society.

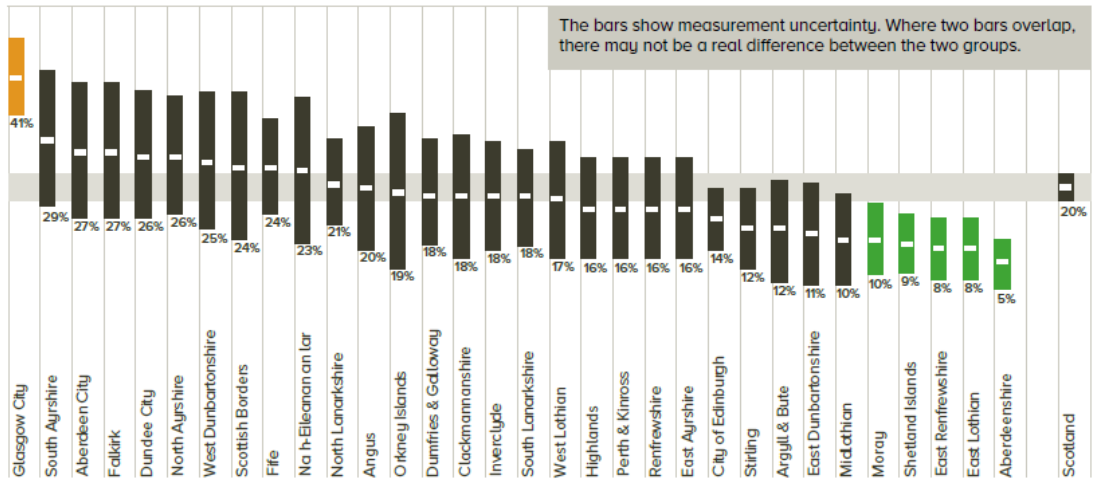


Child Poverty Action Group

3.1.4 Poverty in the Scottish Borders

- (a) The most current data published by Scottish Government in November 2017 features new, evolving statistics on children in families with limited resources, 2014-16. In particular, it looks at children experiencing a combination of low income and material deprivation. These new statistics are provided to help Local Authorities and other local partners think about how much of a problem child material deprivation is in their areas and prioritise actions towards reducing child poverty. It reports on children in families that cannot afford basic necessities (they live in material deprivation) as well as having a low income (70% of middle incomes).

Percentage of children who live in families with limited resources by council area.



Children in Families with Limited Resources Across Scotland 2014-2016 (2017)

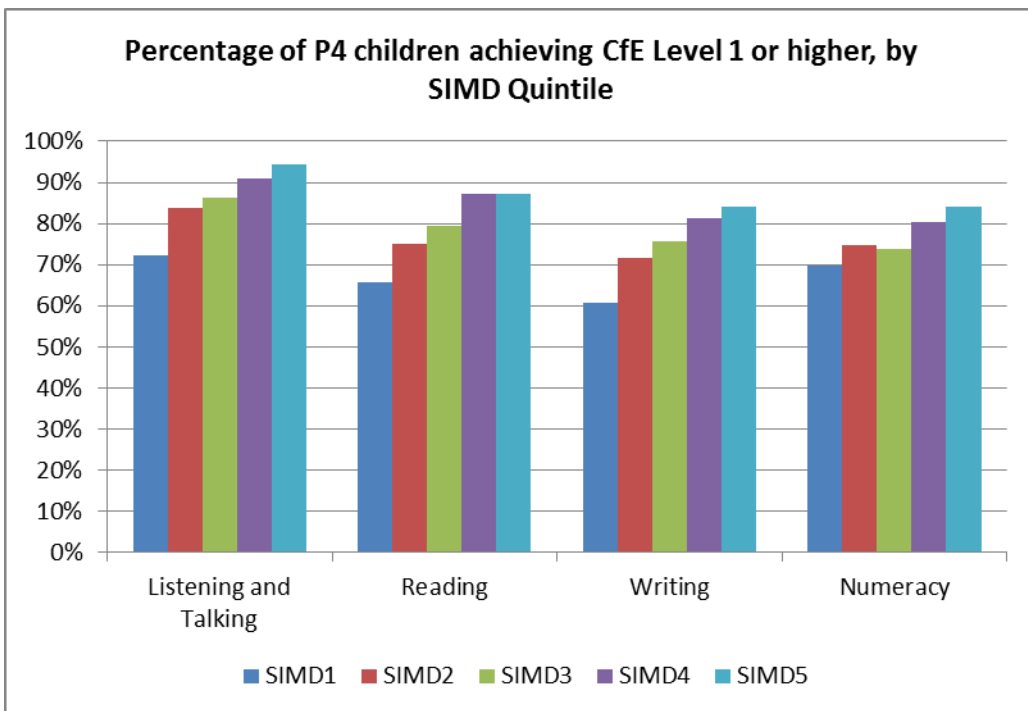
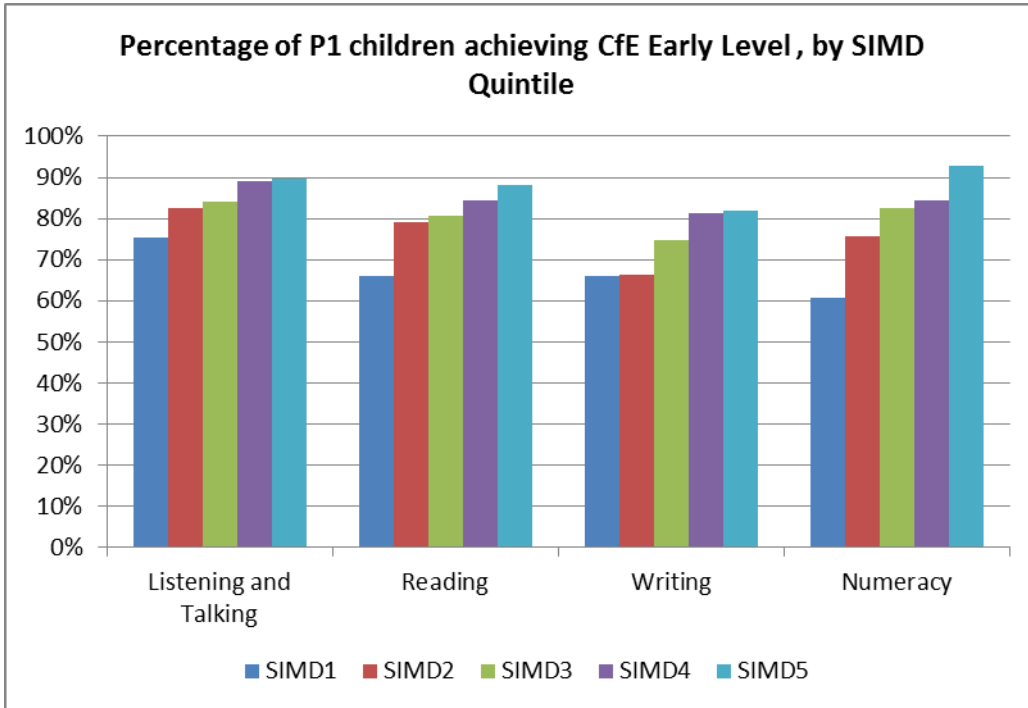
- (b) This data set shows that 20% of children in Scotland live in families with limited resource. Scottish Borders Council sits above this figure at 24%. This places it as 8th highest. This represents 1 in 4 children in the Borders living with material deprivation. That’s equivalent to 7 children in a class of 28. The significant change in the Scottish Borders Council profile is being discussed as a broader issue in other key forums within the Council. In the Community Planning Partnership meetings discussions have considered how the joint delivery teams can work together to mitigate the impact of rising levels of child poverty and what preventative actions must be prioritised to reduce levels of child poverty. It is expected that action plans will evolve in 2018 and within these action plans new structures such as the Area Partnerships with have a key role to play.
- (c) The recently developed Scottish Borders Council CPI takes into account children living in low income families, claiming free school meals, clothing grant and Educational Maintenance Allowance. Burnfoot, Yetholm, Coldingham, Philiphaugh, Greenlaw and Walkerburn Primary Schools score highest across the indicators of poverty. The full data set is attached as Appendix 1.
- (d) In Scottish Borders 9.4% of P1-S3 pupils are in receipt of free school meals, though there is likely to be a significant amount of under claiming due to the statutory provision of free meals for all pupils in P1-3. In almost all schools there are more pupils in receipt of Clothing Grant than Free School Meals. 13.4% of pupils in the Borders receive this financial support.
- (e) Every Headteacher in Scottish Borders Council has undertaken an analysis of the poverty profile in their school using available data. This includes the Scottish Index of Multiple Deprivation (SIMD), Free School Meal claims,

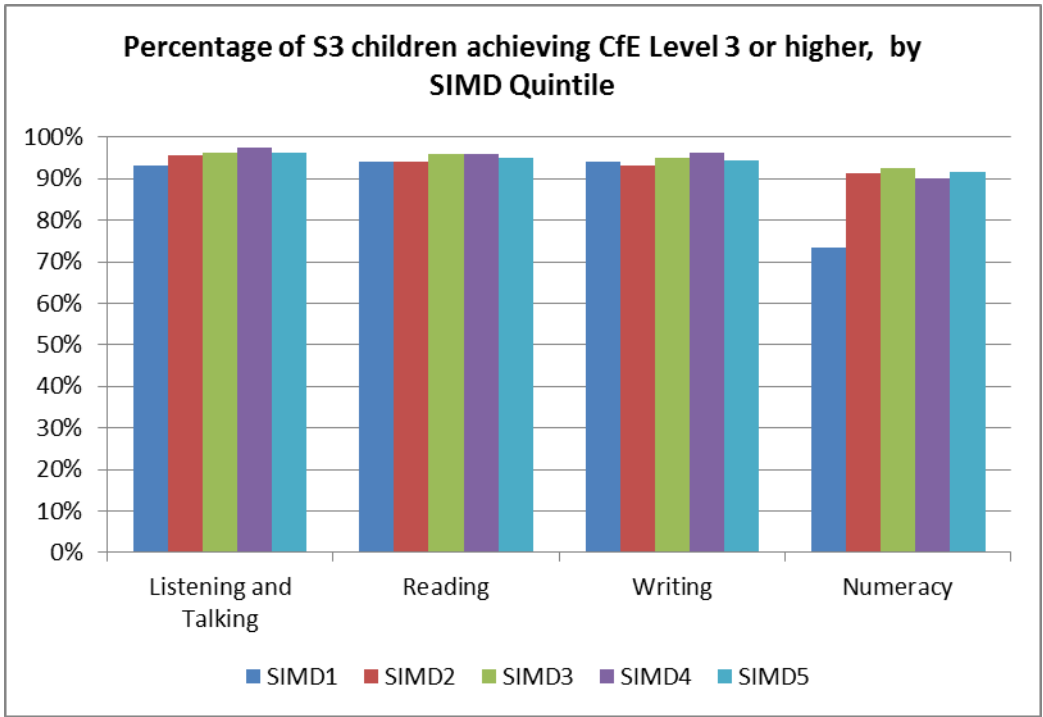
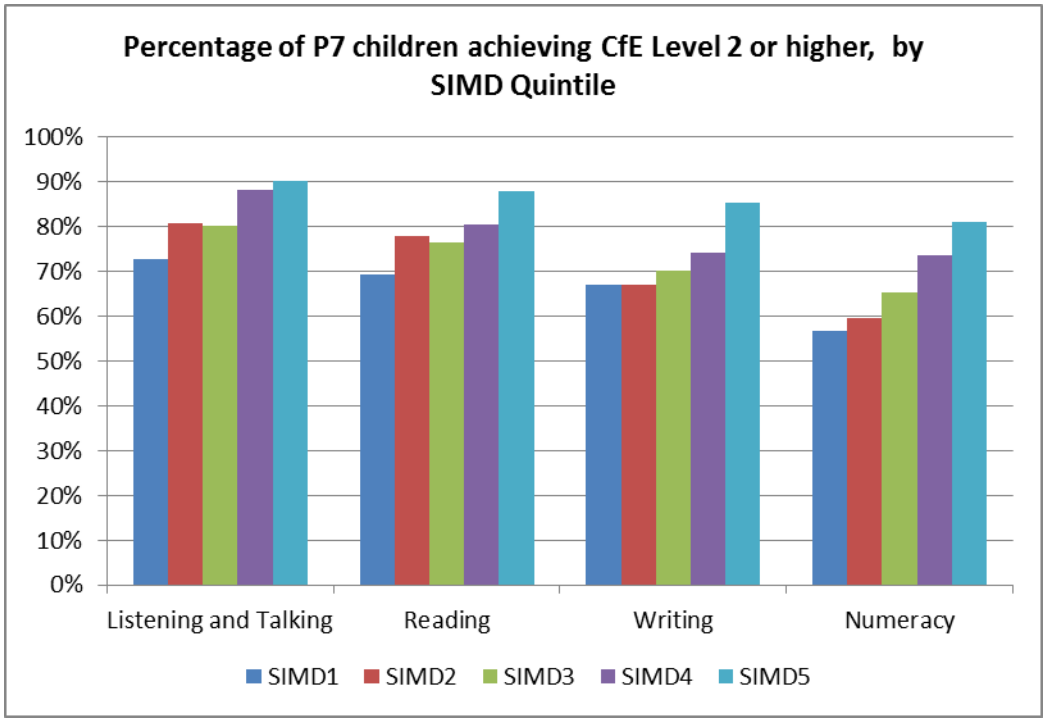
Clothing Grant claims, pupils who are care experienced or previously care experienced and local knowledge of the challenges their children and families face.

- (f) Headteachers also report the challenges of rural disadvantage for many pupils, which affects their wider experiences and opportunities and participation in clubs and activities. This is a particular feature of Scottish Borders Council as a rural Authority. Headteachers find that pupils are unable to attend clubs, after school activities, sporting opportunities and opportunities to socialise, all essential elements of developing children's wellbeing.

3.1.5 **What is the Poverty-related Attainment Gap in the Scottish Borders?**

- (a) Those families living in SIMD deciles 1 and 2 are most deprived and those living in SIMD deciles 9 and 10 are least deprived. There is a moral imperative to ensure that those living in SIMD deciles 1 and 2 achieve as well as those in other deciles.
- (b) The graphs below represent children's achievement of appropriate levels at P1 (Early Level), P4 (First Level), P7 (Second Level) and S3 (Third Level) based on teacher judgement.
- (c) Quintile 1 (SIMD 1+2-most deprived) includes the areas of Burnfoot, Wellogate, Bannerfield and Langlee.
- (d) Quintile 5 (SIMD 9+10-least deprived) includes the areas of Duns East, Peebles South and March Street, Selkirk, Hillside, Melrose High Street and Dingleton, Earlston West, Kelso Maxwellheugh, Lauder South, West Linton Upper, Cardrona and Innerleithen West.
- (e) In numeracy and literacy our pupils from the most deprived areas of the authority achieve less well than those from the least deprived. This is known nationally as the Poverty Related Attainment Gap.
- (f) The greatest gaps exist in Primary 1 (32%) and Primary 7 (24%) Numeracy, P4 (23%) Writing, Primary 1 (22%) and Primary 4 (21%) Reading and in Primary 4 (22%) Listening and Talking.



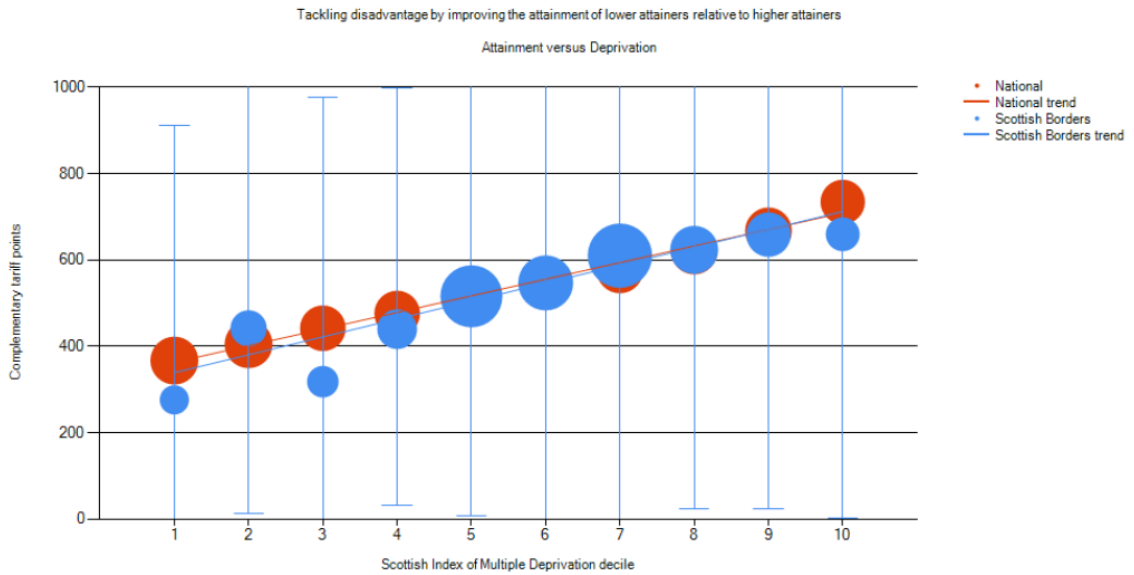


(g) Attainment in the Senior Phase (S4-6) also indicates that those living in deprivation attain less well than those in higher deciles.

S4 Attainment Data (Insight Data, September 2017)

Local Benchmarking Measure: Attainment versus Deprivation

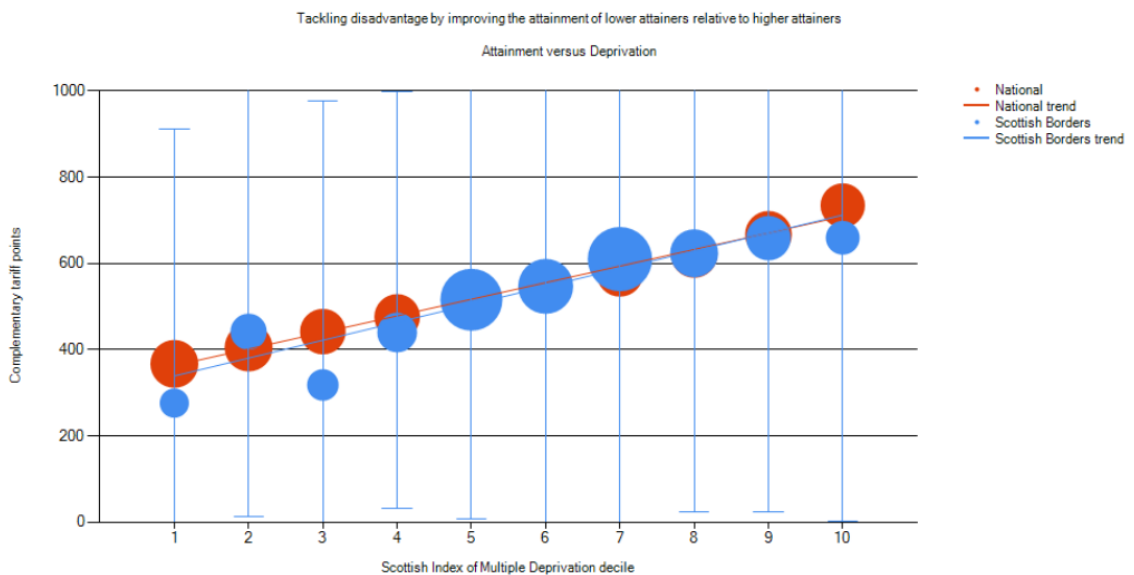
[View Options](#) [Change Options](#)
The selected year is 2016/17



S5 attainment data (Insight data, September 2017)

Local Benchmarking Measure: Attainment versus Deprivation

[View Options](#) [Change Options](#)
The selected year is 2016/17

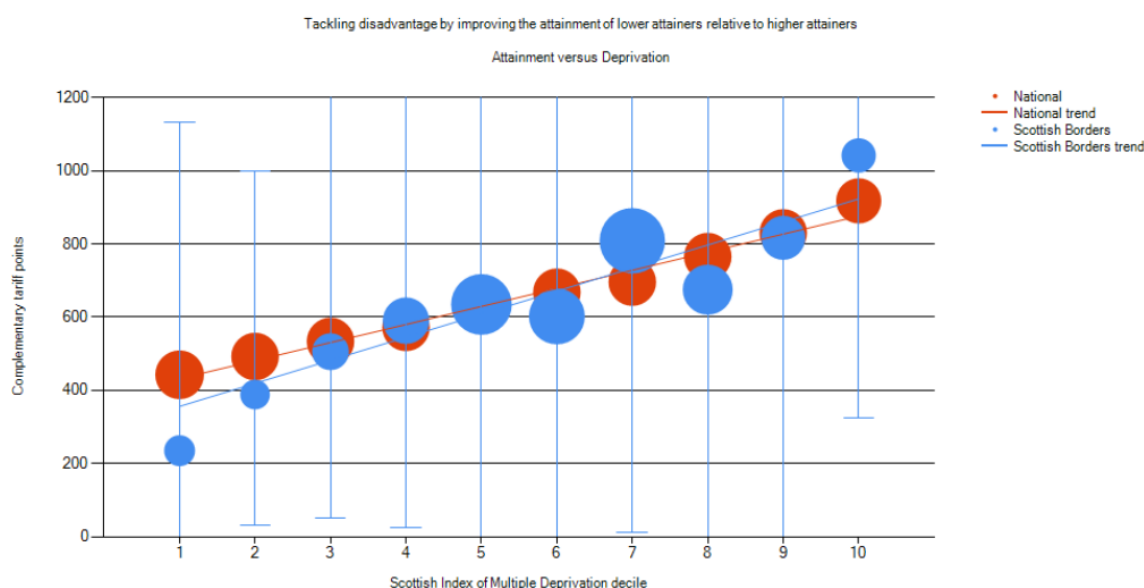


S6 attainment (Insight data, September 2017)

Local Benchmarking Measure: Attainment versus Deprivation

View Options Change Options

The selected year is 2016/17



- (h) The P1-S3 and S4-6 data mirrors the national picture of lower attainment in the most deprived areas of Scotland.

3.1.6 Scottish Attainment Challenge (SAC) and Pupil Equity Funding (PEF)

- (a) Five years ago the Scottish Government launched the Scottish Attainment Challenge (SAC). It focussed on the nine most deprived Local Authorities in Scotland. Additional resources and supports were given to these Local Authorities to help them to break the cycle of poverty. Three years ago this programme was extended to include the most deprived schools in Scotland. As a result Burnfoot Primary School and St Margaret's Roman Catholic Primary School, Hawick were selected. Both schools used the additional resource to focus on improving literacy skills. In 2016 the SAC programme was extended to include Hawick High School. The recent information on children living in poverty in the Scottish Borders as outlined in Appendix 1 would suggest that Scottish Borders Council should now be included as one of the 'challenge authorities' owing to the scale of the challenge the Council faces in tackling child poverty levels, especially within the added pressures of how rurality impacts upon child poverty, ie digital poverty, fuel poverty and accessibility/participation poverty challenges. This report is seeking approval for the Director Children and Young People's Services to approach the appropriate Scottish Government Ministers and senior staff in the Scottish Government's Learning Directorate to share the contents of

this report and open up a dialogue about possible sources of innovation funding to tackle the dramatic increase in child poverty levels through a partnership and whole communities based approach.

- (b) In April 2017 schools were allocated Pupil Equity Funding (PEF). The Pupil Equity Funding was additional funding allocated directly to schools and targeted at closing the poverty related attainment gap. In the Scottish Borders £1.82 million was allocated to schools. Allocations were based on the number of pupils claiming Free School Meals in 2014-15 and took account of changes in school roll. For each eligible pupil the school received £1,200. Two schools in the Scottish Borders did not receive any funding. Two schools received over £100,000 (See Appendix 2 for all allocations). Headteachers must use the fund to provide additional and targeted support for all pupils affected by poverty regardless of their attainment status. Their choice of intervention should be based on evidence of what works in raising attainment.
- (c) Current indications suggest that funding for 2018-19 will be also be based on Free School Meal claims. As already highlighted within wider partnership forums within the Council and in Partnerships the work of the schools is set within the context of a significant increase in child poverty levels in the Scottish Borders (as evidenced in HMRC data in Section 3.1.4 (c) and Appendix 1 of this report). The Council is concerned that the existing Free Schools Meals funding methodologies linked to the Scottish Attainment Challenge is not fully cognisant of the context and scale of challenge within the Scottish Borders in 'closing the poverty' related attainment gap . The Council is committed in its new Connected Borders vision to a focus on the most vulnerable especially within the Communities of Caring and Communities of Wellbeing themes. It is hoped that a discussion with Ministers and Learning Directorate Senior Staff as outlined in 3.16 (a) of this report may support possible opportunities for innovation funding that will complement the work of schools and partners especially in the area of prevention.
- (d) The Scottish Government has set National Stretch Aims which include that 85% of all children from all quintiles will achieve their expected levels of attainment in literacy and numeracy. They expect that by 2020 no gap in attainment will exist between the most and least deprived areas of Scotland.
- (e) The Pupil Equity Fund is provided to disrupt the pattern of low attainment among the most disadvantaged pupils in Scotland.
- (f) In August 2017 two Attainment Officers (AO) were appointed to support schools with their plans for the use of PEF. This has included providing guidance (see Appendix 3), supporting

an analysis of needs, identification of appropriate interventions and designing plans to measure the impact of each intervention. The AO's meet regularly with Headteachers, clusters and school teams to provide support and plan next steps.

- (g) A Headteacher Engagement Day in September was facilitated by the AO's. Headteachers heard from experts in child poverty, Education Scotland colleagues and heard about good practice in other schools and authorities. Subsequent Headteacher meetings have allowed time for further discussion and for colleagues to share their plans and progress.
- (h) Headteachers have also had training and support in considering how they 'poverty proof' their schools and how to use Quality Improvement Methodology to measure impact of their chosen interventions. This has been supported by an Improvement Advisor from the Scottish Government. There have been an additional three opportunities for schools to share and discuss their plans in curricular based groups. Headteachers report that all of these activities have supported them well in their decision making and delivery of targeted interventions.
- (i) In the Scottish Borders, schools have focused on providing additional support to pupils who are in receipt of free school meals and clothing grant, are care experienced or previously care experienced and others who are disadvantaged by poverty. Appendix 4 shows the percentage of pupils in each school who have been identified for targeted support.

3.1.7 **How are Schools Using PEF to Narrow the Poverty-related Attainment Gap?**

- (a) Almost all schools have identified the key areas of Literacy, Numeracy and Health and Wellbeing as the focus of their interventions. Depending on the needs and resources available, schools are delivering one or more of the following areas:

Literacy interventions – 46/70 schools = 66%

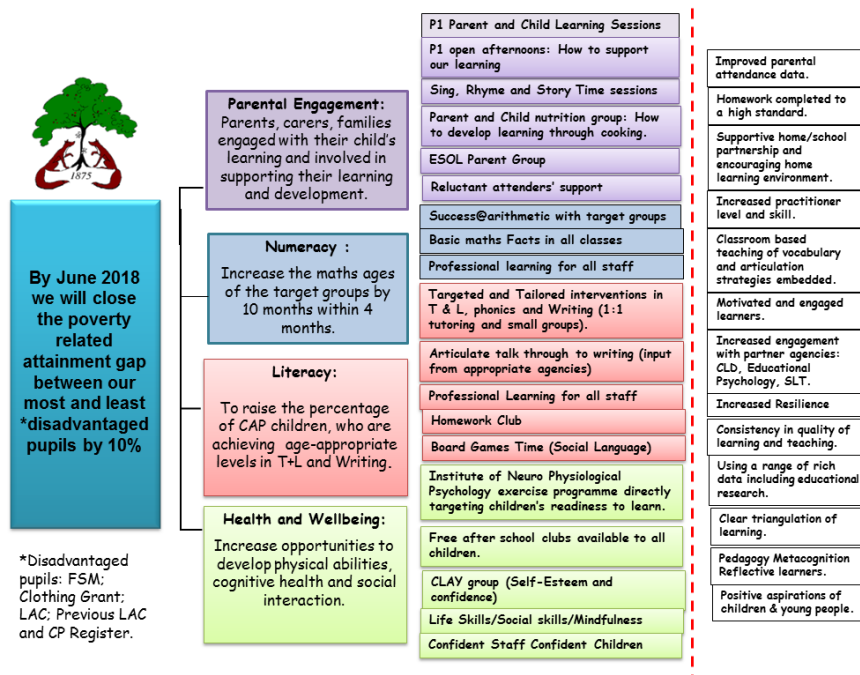
Numeracy interventions 38/70 schools = 54%

HWB interventions 14/70 schools = 20%

- (b) In Literacy there are interventions at all stages of schooling. These include support in developing speech and language, early reading and writing skills, reading strategies and reading comprehension. There are a significant number of literacy interventions which support pupils who are currently attaining well below expected levels.
- (c) In Numeracy, interventions are targeted at those pupils who have gaps in their knowledge and understanding, who are

not attaining at expected levels and who are not on track to achieve. There is a focus on basic numeracy skills and skills for life.

- (d) In Health and Wellbeing schools are addressing the social and emotional wellbeing of pupils by providing nurture groups, 1-1 mentoring, wider experiences and therapeutic groups. These are often provided alongside support in literacy and numeracy. In a number of schools, there is also an increased focus on improving attendance.
- (e) In some schools and clusters they are using well evidenced interventions such as Success@Arithmetic and Corrective Reading. In others they have created bespoke interventions which match the needs of their pupils.
- (f) A number of clusters have pulled together a part of their funds to provide interventions across the cluster schools. Tweeddale and Eildon West are delivering Success@Arithmetic in all of their schools. Tweeddale are also delivering Better Reading Support Partners.
- (g) Earlston cluster are the only cluster to have pulled all of their PEF together. They have used £156, 000 to employ staff to deliver a numeracy intervention to the most vulnerable pupils after their analysis revealed a gap in numeracy. A teacher and 6 assistants work across Earlston High and associated primaries to provide 4 sessions of numeracy every week to each identified pupil. 80 pupils are currently supported in this way. Data being collected is evidence of early, but significant, progress for individual pupils and schools are reporting improvement in pupils' ability in numeracy in class.
- (h) Schools with larger funds are able to deliver a range of interventions. The Driver Diagram below indicates the many interventions being delivered at Burgh Primary to achieve their aim of closing the poverty related attainment gap in their school by 10% by June 2018. The interventions complement and are additional to the improvement work already in place this academic year. This is representative of a number of schools.



3.1.8 How are Schools Measuring Impact?

- Most schools have used baseline assessments at the start of their intervention and progress is being monitored and tracked regularly. Pupils will be assessed at the end of the intervention to measure impact and progress. This may include assessment of reading age, progress in attainment, wellbeing indicators and other assessments designed by the school. Some schools are using Improvement Methodology to structure their measurement plans. This will ensure that all schools are able to evidence the difference the funding has made to individual pupil progress and to the local and national aim of closing the poverty related attainment gap.
- At Local Authority level, National Improvement Framework (NIF) data, Scottish Qualifying Authority data and Positive Destinations data will be used to track progress towards the aim.
- At Local Authority level, the NIF data/ SQA data and participation/positive destinations data will be used to track success. We aim to not only close the poverty related attainment gap, but raise attainment for all so each quintile will have at least 85% of its pupils achieving the benchmark at all stages.

3.1.9 How are Scottish Borders Council Raising Attainment and Aspiration for All Young People?

- The Joseph Rowntree Foundation Report 2016 stated that two of the most important factors in narrowing the poverty related attainment gap are effective leadership and high quality teaching. This would be validated by international educationalists such as Andy Hargreaves and Michael Fullan.

- (b) In Scottish Borders Council there is a drive to deliver this for all children and young people regardless of the quintile they live in or the financial status of their families. The strategic plan for this year includes investment in current and successive leaders, the development of literacy and numeracy strategies and a focus on raising levels of attainment across the board.
- (c) There is a very robust Quality Improvement programme in place between the Children and Young People's Services and schools. This involves Quality Improvement Officers, school staff and link Education Scotland staff analysing pupils' performance data, observing classroom practice, discussing attainment and achievement at length in attainment reviews and creating school action plans that are revisited at regular intervals.
- (d) The Reducing Inequalities CPP Delivery Team is sharing joint data regarding inequalities for families in the Borders. From this analysis an action plan is being developed in response to some key identified issues, eg employability, working with Universal Credit and volunteering support for vulnerable families. The Children's Leadership Partnership Group will be providing a response to the Child Poverty Bill which sets out duties for Local Authorities from 2018. This will include aims to reduce the impact of poverty, action plans and interventions which will be measured and reviewed regularly, ensuring the Council and its partners can evidence change in tackling Child Poverty. There is currently extensive work taking place within the sub groups that sit under the Children and Young People's Leadership Partnership Group: parenting strategy, mental health and emotional wellbeing strategy; partnership training programmes in risk assessment.
- (e) Work is being developed as part of the National Problem Solving Partnership model with Police Scotland and other partners in taking a 'place based approach' to resolving some of the impacts of child poverty, ie anti-social behaviour through intervention and prevention by all partners.
- (f) In 2018 there will an opportunity to co-ordinate the new Plans being developed (Council Plan 2017, Children and Young People's Plan 2018 onwards and the Reducing Inequalities Plan 2018 onwards) ensuring that there is a set of connected actions and priorities that will bring together the work of the Council and its partners, evidencing a strong commitment to the new vision of the Council outlined in Connected Borders, ie 'ensuring that the vulnerable and marginalised are included and considered in every action we take' and that 'together we need to ensure that no-one and no community is left behind but that we grow and develop together'. This broader commitment of partners and Council directorates will support the work being carried out in schools so that together more interventions can be taken to mitigate

the impact of child poverty and greater levels and range of preventative actions can be taken to reduce child poverty levels in the Scottish Borders.

3.1.10 Conclusion

There is considerable work taking place within and across schools to 'close the poverty related attainment gap'. Schools have responded well to the professional learning and development sessions on child poverty and best practice showcase sessions linked to 'closing the gap' school interventions. The work is in its infancy and the challenge is significant. However, the approach being taken and the commitment being demonstrated evidences that very robust processes are in place to address this challenge. The work is being closely monitored by Attainment Officers and Quality Improvement Officers and high quality work is being evidenced by schools. This work will now be complemented by the work of broader partnership groups moving forward which will be subject to reports in other key forums.

4 IMPLICATIONS

4.1 Financial

There are no costs attached to any of the recommendations contained in this report. However, the work taking place is very much dependent upon the two Attainment Officers (who were funded in school session 2017/2018 by the schools DSM underspend in agreement with Headteachers) and the central Quality Improvement Officer Team. It is hoped that to achieve aspirations to close the poverty related attainment that these posts continue. The Director aims to discuss the continued funding of the Attainment Officer posts from DSM carry forward for school session 2018/2019 as part of the budget discussions with Headteachers. There is no plan to reduce the Quality Improvement Officer Team within the 2018/2019 budget process.

4.2 Risk and Mitigations

The report fully describes all the elements of risk that have been identified in relation to this project and no specific additional concerns need to be addressed.

4.3 Equalities

An Equalities Impact Assessment has been carried out on this proposal and it is anticipated that there are no adverse equality implications.

4.4 Acting Sustainably

There are no economic, social or environmental impacts arising as a result of this report.

4.5 Carbon Management

There are no anticipated impacts on carbon emissions as a result of this

report.

4.6 Rural Proofing

There are no anticipated impacts on rural policy or strategy as a result of this report. However, it should be noted that the additional challenges that aspects of rural poverty impact upon children's attainment have been highlighted as a concern within the report, ie the impact upon pupil participation and opportunities to access learning after the school day, fuel poverty and digital poverty. Schools are tuned into these challenges as are the broader partnership groups such as the Children's Leadership Group and the Reducing Inequalities Joint Delivery Team. Action plans will be forthcoming and it is hoped that a broader discussion takes place with the Scottish Government regarding the extent of the challenge of rural poverty upon the life chances of children and young people in the Scottish Borders.

4.7 Changes to Scheme of Administration or Scheme of Delegation

There are no changes required to either the Scheme of Administration or the Scheme of Delegation as a result of this report.

5 CONSULTATION

- 5.1 The Chief Financial Officer, the Monitoring Officer, the Chief Legal Officer, the Chief Officer Audit and Risk, the Service Director HR and the Clerk to the Council have been consulted and any comments received have been incorporated into the final report.

Approved by

Donna Manson

Service Director, Children & Young People

Signature

Author(s)

Name	Designation and Contact Number
Michelle Strong	Chief Officer, Education
Amanda Hamilton	Attainment Officer
Peter Macklin	Attainment Officer

Appendices:

Appendix 1: Scottish Borders Council Child Poverty Index 2017

Appendix 2: PEF Allocations per School for school session 2017/2018

Appendix 3: Scottish Borders Council 'closing the poverty related attainment gap' Guidance for Schools

Appendix 4: % of pupils per school receiving targeted support

Background Papers:

Joseph Rowntree Foundation (2016)

UK poverty: Causes, costs and solutions

<https://www.jrf.org.uk/report/uk-poverty-causes-costs-and-solutions>

Scottish Government (2017) Poverty and Income Inequality in Scotland: 2015/16

Joseph Rowntree Foundation (2017)

Households below a Minimum Income Standard: 2008/09 to 2015/16

<https://www.jrf.org.uk/report/households-below-minimum-income-standard-200809-201516>

Child Poverty Action Group website

<http://www.cpag.org.uk>

Scottish Government (2017)

Children in families with limited resources across Scotland 2014-2016

<http://www.gov.scot/Publications/2017/11/9758>

PEF-National Operational Guidance

<http://www.gov.scot/Resource/0051/00516300.pdf>

Children and Young People Improvement Collaborative

<http://www.gov.scot/Resource/0051/00517520.pdf>

Previous Minute Reference: N/A

Note – You can get this document on tape, in Braille, large print and various computer formats by contacting the address below. Michelle Strong can also give information on other language translations as well as providing additional copies.

Contact us at Council Headquarters, Newtown St Boswells, Melrose TD6 0SA.

This page is intentionally left blank

Scottish Borders Child Poverty Index (SB CPI) 2017 by Primary School for ELC Expansion

The table below ranks the non-denominational primary schools in the Scottish Borders by the 'Average of SB CPI Score' for the primary school based best fit data zones. The components of the SB CPI 2017 are:

- Percent of Children in Low Income Families (CiLIF) 2014 from HMRC¹
- Percent of Pupils in Receipt of Free School Meals (FSM) 2017 from SBC's SEEMIS
- Percent of Pupils in Receipt of Clothing Grant (CG) 2017 from SBC's SEEMIS
- Percent of Pupils Aged 16+ in Receipt of Education Maintenance Allowance (EMA) 2017 from SBC's SEEMIS

Each primary school is allocated into a SB CPI quintile based on the school's score.

		Scottish Borders	14.0%	10.0%	14.6%	11.0%	10.0		29	28	32	29	25	143
		SB CPI Quintile												
SB CPI Primary School Rank	Secondary School	Primary School	Average of Children in Low Income Families 2014 (HMRC)	Average of % FSM - 2017 (SBC)	Average of % Clothing Grant - 2017 (SBC)	Average of % EMA - Yes of those aged 16+ -2017 (SBC)	Average of SB CPI Score (Max 21)	Best Allocation SB CPI Quintil	1	2	3	4	5	Count of Data Zones
1	Hawick High School	Burnfoot Primary	31.9%	28.3%	40.7%	29.9%	19.8	1	4					4
2	Kelso High School	Yetholm Primary	24.6%	17.3%	28.8%	20.0%	16.5	1	1					1
3	Eyemouth High School	Coldingham Primary	18.8%	20.0%	26.0%	25.0%	16.5	1	1					1
4	Selkirk High School	Philiphagh Primary	22.3%	22.5%	29.2%	12.5%	15.3	1	1	1				2
5	Berwickshire High School	Greenlaw Primary	19.1%	20.7%	20.7%	8.3%	15.0	1	1					1
6	Peebles High School	Walkerburn Primary	17.7%	15.2%	22.7%	14.3%	14.5	1	1					1
7	Berwickshire High School	Chirnside Primary	17.4%	14.2%	19.1%	30.6%	14.2	2	1	2				3
8	Hawick High School	Trinity Primary	19.9%	18.8%	24.7%	5.0%	13.8	2	1	1				2
9	Galashiels Academy	Burgh Primary (St Margarets Gala)	24.9%	15.0%	21.1%	6.3%	13.3	2	1	2				3
10	Eyemouth High School	Eyemouth Primary	19.7%	11.0%	20.0%	18.8%	13.3	2	2	2	1			5
11	Kelso High School	Broomlands Primary	15.6%	12.3%	18.5%	20.6%	13.0	2	2	1	1			4
12	Eyemouth High School	Reston Primary	14.0%	10.4%	15.1%	33.3%	13.0	2		1				1
13	Galashiels Academy	Langlee Primary	26.4%	16.4%	28.1%	2.5%	12.9	2	2	1			1	4
14	Jedburgh Grammar	Howdenburn Primary	19.0%	13.4%	18.5%	9.5%	12.5	2	2			1		3
15	Galashiels Academy	Balmoral Primary	17.0%	11.0%	18.0%	22.9%	12.1	2	1	2			1	4
16	Hawick High School	Wilton Primary	14.5%	11.6%	18.0%	20.0%	12.0	2		2				2
17	Galashiels Academy	Tweedbank Primary	13.7%	10.6%	16.1%	21.2%	11.8	2	1		2			3
18	Berwickshire High School	Coldstream Primary	13.2%	11.8%	15.5%	22.0%	11.6	2	1	1	1	1		4
19	Peebles High School	Broughton Primary	12.4%	11.8%	15.5%	14.3%	11.5	2		1				1

¹Most recent data from HMRC at data zone (Note: End Child Poverty data was reported at multi member ward for 2015)

SB CPI Primary School Rank	Secondary School	Primary School	Average of Children in Low Income Families 2014 (HMRC)	Average of % FSM - 2017 (SBC)	Average of % Clothing Grant - 2017 (SBC)	Average of % EMA - Yes of those aged 16+ -2017 (SBC)	Average of SB CPI Score (Max 21)	Best Alloc- ation SB CPI Quintile	SB CPI Quintile					Count of Data Zones
									1	2	3	4	5	
20	Galashiels Academy	St Peters Primary	13.6%	14.6%	22.9%	7.5%	11.3	3	2				1	3
21	Hawick High School	Drumlanrig St Cuthberts Primary	14.9%	11.6%	16.0%	14.2%	11.3	3	2	2	3		2	9
22	Peebles High School	Newlands Primary	11.2%	5.5%	11.0%	30.0%	11.0	3			1			1
23	Berwickshire High School	Duns Primary	11.9%	9.2%	17.8%	13.9%	10.7	3		3	2	1		6
24	Kelso High School	Edenside Primary	16.9%	9.4%	12.4%	11.0%	10.5	3		2	2		1	5
25	Kelso High School	Ednam Primary	13.2%	5.2%	11.3%	18.2%	10.0	3			1			1
26	Jedburgh Grammar	Parkside Primary	17.3%	10.5%	16.5%	2.4%	10.0	3		1	1	1		3
27	Selkirk High School	Knowepark Primary	14.0%	12.0%	14.3%	3.2%	9.9	3		1	3	1		5
28	Kelso High School	Morebattle Primary	16.1%	3.8%	7.6%	16.7%	9.0	3			1			1
29	Hawick High School	Newcastleton Primary	18.1%	8.1%	11.6%	0.0%	9.0	3			1			1
30	Selkirk High School	Lilliesleaf Primary	12.5%	9.2%	9.2%	14.3%	8.5	3			1			1
31	Galashiels Academy	Glendinning Primary	11.4%	5.3%	9.2%	14.3%	8.5	3			1			1
32	Eyemouth High School	Ayton Primary	8.8%	7.5%	10.2%	11.1%	8.3	3			2			2
33	Peebles High School	St Ronans Primary	10.5%	7.5%	9.2%	8.4%	8.2	3	1		1	2	1	5
34	Earlston High School	Lauder Primary	7.9%	7.1%	9.8%	13.2%	7.7	4		1			2	3
35	Peebles High School	Kingsland Primary	9.0%	6.4%	11.2%	6.0%	7.6	4	1			4	1	6
36	Hawick High School	Stirches Primary	11.1%	6.5%	8.2%	4.5%	7.5	4			1	1		2
37	Galashiels Academy	Fountainhall and Heriot Primary	7.1%	6.6%	7.4%	12.0%	7.5	4				1		1
38	Earlston High School	Earlston Primary	8.6%	6.2%	10.1%	6.3%	7.2	4			1	1	1	3
39	Earlston High School	Newtown Primary	11.8%	6.3%	8.4%	8.3%	7.2	4		1		1	1	3
40	Earlston High School	St Boswells Primary	6.9%	5.9%	8.0%	15.3%	7.2	4			1	2		3
41	Kelso High School	Sprouston Primary	12.2%	5.9%	6.9%	0.0%	7.0	4				1		1
42	Jedburgh Grammar	Ancrum Primary	9.6%	3.5%	6.7%	11.9%	7.0	4				2		2
43	Earlston High School	Gordon Primary	5.3%	5.7%	5.7%	8.7%	7.0	4				1		1
44	Berwickshire High School	Swinton Primary	8.4%	4.8%	10.6%	11.3%	6.8	4			1		1	2
45	Hawick High School	Denholm Primary	14.9%	3.5%	5.6%	0.0%	6.5	4				2		2
46	Earlston High School	Melrose Primary	6.6%	4.4%	7.8%	6.8%	6.5	4			1	2	1	4
47	Peebles High School	Priorsford Primary	5.1%	5.0%	6.8%	9.9%	6.1	4			2	1	3	6
48	Selkirk High School	Kirkhope Primary	4.0%	9.7%	12.9%	0.0%	6.0	4				1		1
49	Peebles High School	Eddleston Primary	5.8%	5.6%	7.4%	0.0%	6.0	4				1		1
50	Eyemouth High School	Cockburnspath Primary	9.3%	4.1%	10.2%	0.0%	6.0	4				1		1
51	Selkirk High School	Yarrow Primary	19.4%	0.0%	2.0%	0.0%	5.0	5					1	1
52	Galashiels Academy	Clovenfords Primary	3.3%	1.5%	1.5%	12.5%	4.5	5					1	1
53	Galashiels Academy	Stow Primary	9.7%	1.1%	1.1%	0.0%	4.0	5					1	1
54	Earlston High School	Westruther Primary	7.3%	3.3%	4.6%	0.0%	4.0	5					1	1
55	Peebles High School	West Linton Primary	4.6%	0.6%	1.4%	0.0%	2.0	5					3	3
56	Earlston High School	Channelkirk Primary	4.7%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	1.0	5					1	1

Appendix 2 PEF Allocations For Each School 2017/2018

School	Stage	Allocation
Ancrum Primary School	Primary	£ 3,600
Ayton Primary School	Primary	£ 10,800
Balmoral Primary School	Primary	£ 22,800
Broomlands Primary School	Primary	£ 30,000
Broughton Central P School	Primary	£ 6,000
Burgh Primary School	Primary	£ 33,600
Burnfoot Community School	Primary	£ 130,800
Channelkirk Primary School	Primary	£ 3,600
Chirnside Primary School	Primary	£ 37,200
Clovenfords Primary School	Primary	£ 6,000
Cockburnspath Primary School	Primary	£ 4,800
Coldingham Primary School	Primary	£ 8,400
Coldstream Primary School	Primary	£ 36,000
Denholm Primary School	Primary	£ 8,400
Drumlanrig St Cuthbert's Primary School	Primary	£ 39,600
Duns Primary School	Primary	£ 45,600
Earlston Primary School	Primary	£ 18,000
Eddleston Primary School	Primary	£ 3,600
Edenside Primary School	Primary	£ 72,000
Ednam Primary School	Primary	£ 3,600
Eyemouth Primary School	Primary	£ 90,000
Fountainhall Primary School	Primary	£ -
Glendinning Terrace Primary School	Primary	£ 8,400
Gordon Primary School	Primary	£ 6,000
Greenlaw Primary School	Primary	£ 20,400
Halyrude Primary School	Primary	£ 15,600
Heriot Primary School	Primary	£ -
Howdenburn Primary School	Primary	£ 33,600
Kingsland Primary School	Primary	£ 48,000
Kirkhope Primary School	Primary	£ 3,600
Knowepark Primary School	Primary	£ 34,800
Langlee Primary School	Primary	£ 105,600
Lauder Primary School	Primary	£ 25,200
Lilliesleaf Primary School	Primary	£ 6,000
Melrose Primary School	Primary	£ 21,600
Morebattle Primary School	Primary	£ 6,000
Newcastleton Primary School	Primary	£ 13,200
Newlands Primary School	Primary	£ 2,400
Newtown Primary School	Primary	£ 9,600
Parkside Primary School	Primary	£ 36,000
Philiphaugh Community School	Primary	£ 44,400
Priorsford Primary School	Primary	£ 28,800
Reston Primary School	Primary	£ 13,200
Sprouston Primary School	Primary	£ 2,400
St Boswells Primary School	Primary	£ 15,600
St Joseph's RC Primary School	Primary	£ 3,600
St Margaret's RC Primary School (Galashiels)	Primary	£ 13,200
St Margaret's RC Primary School (Hawick)	Primary	£ 2,400
St Peter's Primary School	Primary	£ 33,600
St Ronan's Primary School	Primary	£ 25,200
Stirches Primary School	Primary	£ 18,000
Stow Primary School	Primary	£ 2,400

Appendix 2 PEF Allocations For Each School 2017/2018

Swinton Primary School	Primary	£	12,000
Trinity Primary School	Primary	£	33,600
Tweedbank Primary School	Primary	£	24,000
Walkerburn Primary School	Primary	£	3,600
West Linton Primary School	Primary	£	9,600
Westruther Primary School	Primary	£	2,400
Wilton Primary School	Primary	£	58,800
Yarrow Primary School	Primary	£	1,200
Yetholm Primary School	Primary	£	14,400
Berwickshire High School	Secondary	£	50,400
Earlston High School	Secondary	£	54,000
Eyemouth High School	Secondary	£	48,000
Galashiels Academy	Secondary	£	69,600
Hawick High School	Secondary	£	86,400
Jedburgh Grammar School	Secondary	£	27,600
Kelso High School	Secondary	£	39,600
Peebles High School	Secondary	£	56,400
Selkirk High School	Secondary	£	36,000
Wilton Centre			
		£	1,840,800

PUPIL EQUITY FUNDING

A SCOTTISH BORDERS COUNCIL GUIDE TO
GETTING STARTED

AUGUST
2017

Page 41

ock
Images™

iStock
by Getty Images™

iStock
by Getty Images™

iS
by G

ock
Images™

CONTENTS

PUPIL EQUITY FUNDING	3
1 IDENTIFYING YOUR GAP	4
2 CONSIDER WHAT BARRIERS TO LEARNING EXIST IN YOUR COMMUNITY	6
3 TAKING STOCK: WHAT'S WORKING ALREADY AND HOW DO YOU KNOW?	8
4 CLOSING THE GAP - RESPONSIBILITY OF ALL?	10
PEF STARTER READING LIST	15

PUPIL EQUITY FUNDING

What is PEF?

Pupil Equity Funding is additional funding allocated directly to schools and targeted at closing the poverty related attainment gap. Pupil Equity Funding has been allocated to schools on the basis of the estimated number of children and young people in P1-S3 registered for free school meals under the national eligibility criteria.

What can it be used for?

Funding must provide targeted support for children and young people affected by poverty to achieve their full potential. Headteachers can use their professional judgement to include additional children who may benefit from the targeted interventions.¹ The funding should be focused on activities and interventions that will lead to improvements in literacy, numeracy and health and wellbeing. Family learning opportunities can also be considered as potential interventions, as can interventions that impact on transitions between school stages.

Accountability and Reporting

An Education Scotland Attainment Advisor and SBC Attainment Officers will support Headteachers to plan, deliver and evaluate appropriate evidence-based interventions¹. They have a key role in building the capacity of leaders and practitioners by supporting effective self-evaluation, underpinned by robust evidence of what is working well and what needs further improvement. They will also co-ordinate appropriate support for schools at a local and national level. The "Pupil Equity Funding – National Operational Guidance" document is available at <http://www.gov.scot/Resource/0051/00516300.pdf> This is intended to help schools plan how they will most effectively invest their Pupil Equity Funding allocation to improve the educational outcomes of children affected by poverty. Guidance on School Improvement Planning, including Standards and Quality reporting, has been provided through the National Improvement **Framework**

–

<https://education.gov.scot/improvement/Documents/NIFschoolimprovementguidance201718.pdf>

This document includes the advice that the school improvement plan should include "clear planning for how the Pupil Equity Funding (if relevant) will be used to provide targeted interventions in literacy, numeracy and health and wellbeing to close the poverty related attainment gap and measures of success which include performance data, quality indicators and stakeholders' views." It also states "the local authority should use the information contained in each school's annual report to collate and share self-evaluation evidence in relation to the NIF with the Scottish Government."

¹ In addition, Head teachers should consider additional steps that might be required to close the educational attainment gap for pupils affected by poverty who may also experience disadvantage for other reasons. For example, disadvantage related to; a protected characteristic (disability, gender reassignment, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex (gender) and sexual orientation); a need for which they require additional support; being looked after; having caring responsibilities. (Pupil Equity Funding – National Operational Guidance – 2017) **"More successful"**,

1 Identifying your Gap

Agree and define what the gap looks like in your school context.

Using data at school/faculty level:

- CfE Levels or NQ data in literacy and numeracy by SIMD
- How CfE Levels compare with standardised assessment data – any surprises?
- Between the most and least disadvantaged – SIMD 1 + 2, SIMD 9 + 10
- Use virtual comparator school, local, national statistics where appropriate
- Attendance, exclusion, participation rates
- Achievement awards within school and community
- Leaver destinations where appropriate
- Working knowledge of CfE benchmarks to consider to what extent children are reaching important milestones.
- Consider qualitative data – key adult time, learner conversations, planning meetings.

At classroom level:

- Establish a learner's starting point – this may involve carrying out a baseline assessment
- Expect progress for all and excellent progress for many
- All SIMD bands proportionately represented in the "excellent" – no pattern of lower attainment for children in lower SIMD
- Engage all class teachers in closing the gap – what can be done within lessons?

(Graeme Logan, Director, Education Scotland, February 2017)



Think about:

- Is every teacher in every class aware of SIMD/FME/LAC data (along with other relevant information) on their learners?

- Are sufficiently ambitious targets set for your identified learners?

- How do you ensure there is early enough identification of these learners? How do you use data to support this judgement?

- Do you have specific and measurable targets for your identified learners? How much progress, by when?

- How will interventions be monitored and evaluated?

- In what ways are the targeted learners who are under-performing being given additional support? How are you measuring the impact of that additional support?

- How are parents consulted on and involved in targeted support?

2 Consider what barriers to learning exist in your Community

- **Quality of learning and teaching**

It is important to ensure that day-to-day teaching meets the needs of each learner rather than relying on interventions to compensate for less than good teaching.

(Ofsted, "Closing the Gap in Hertfordshire", 2013)

There is a strong link between teachers' professional skills and competences and the quality of children's learning experiences. Ensuring the highest professional standards for all teachers in Scotland will help to ensure the highest standards and expectations for all children. We want all new teachers to develop as enquiring professionals who are experts in teaching literacy, numeracy and health and wellbeing, including early childhood development where appropriate. This is critical to ensure the strongest possible progression in learning for all children.

(From "Delivering Excellence and Equity in Scottish Education – Delivery Plan", 2016)

- **Disengaged families**

Research shows that giving parents the skills they need to help their children learn produces the best outcomes. Parents engaging in enjoyable conversations and enjoyable books with their children will support this. Sustained, group-based, persistent home-school relationships is another key factor in encouraging parental engagement. Disadvantaged families do not lack high aspiration for their children. (Ellis, S. and Sosu, E. 2015)

Educational interventions involving the whole family make a significant difference not only to the aspirations and attainment of children, but also to the skills, confidence and ambition of their parents. Family learning has long-term benefits as it affects behaviours and attitudes to learning across the whole family (van Steensel et al, 2011).

- **Teachers lacking aspiration**

Less successful approaches have included teachers assuming that pupils eligible for the Pupil Premium will have learning difficulties and therefore, lowering expectations of performance. A no excuses approach is needed. (Ofsted, "Closing the Gap in Hertfordshire", 2013) "A relentless focus on closing the attainment gap" (From "Delivering Excellence and Equity in Scottish Education – Delivery Plan", 2016)

• Early development

For too many children, especially those living in the most deprived areas, educational failure starts early. Gaps in achievement between the poorest children and their better-off counterparts are clearly established by the age of five. There are strong associations between a child's social background and their readiness for school as measured by their scores on entry into Year 1. Too many children, especially those that are poor, lack a firm grounding in the key skills of communication, language, literacy and mathematics. (Ofsted, "Are you ready? Good practice in school readiness", April 2014)

• Language skills

It is interesting to note the number of words spoken to children by adults by the age of 36 months in professional families (35 million), in other working-class families (20 million) and in families on welfare (10 million). (William, D. 2016)

Evidence also shows that at age five, compared with children whose parents have no qualifications, children with a degree educated parent are around 18 months ahead on vocabulary. Children who display better communication skills at an early age are more likely to see their cognitive skills improve during the pre-school period (between ages three and five). This relationship is stronger for children whose parents have no or low educational qualifications. Children from less educated backgrounds whose relative vocabulary ability improves are typically those who are already demonstrating better communication skills at an earlier age. This reinforces the need to support communication skills and language development before the age of three. (Save the Children, "Read On, Get On" report, 2014)

• Home life

A child's early home environment has a profound effect on his well-being. Beginning in infancy, a problematic home environment can disrupt the brain's stress response system, reduce the quality of caregiving a child receives, and interfere with healthy development. (Urban Child Institute, 2012) Children from less advantaged backgrounds are more likely to feel a lack of control over and less involvement in their learning, and so have a greater tendency to become reluctant recipients of the taught curriculum. This relates both to children's attitudes towards learning and to their relationships with adults. (Joseph Rowntree Foundation report "Experiences of Poverty and Educational Disadvantage", 2007)

• Stress, anxiety, lack of confidence

Emotions can support or impede pupils' learning, their academic engagement, work ethic, commitment, and ultimate school success. A number of specific social and emotional competencies have positive effects on academic achievement: pupils who are confident about their learning and who have a 'growth mindset' (they believe their most basic abilities can be developed through dedication and hard work) persist when faced with challenges; pupils who can set goals, manage stress and organise their school work achieve higher grades; pupils who use problem-solving skills to overcome obstacles do better academically. Social and emotional competencies have been found to be a more significant determinant of academic attainment than IQ. (Public Health England, "The link between pupil health and wellbeing and attainment" 2014)

Other barriers to learning may exist in your specific, unique community. Consider what they might be and how you can disrupt their influence.

3 Taking Stock: What's working already and how do you know?

Audit

- Which groups of learners have made expected or better progress?
- Which specific strategies/interventions have made a measurable difference in terms of closing the attainment gap? Are you able to pinpoint the specific aspects that made the difference?
- Evaluate any interventions and support you have put in place. Have they proved value for money in terms of the progress learners have made compared to the time, resources and staffing you have allocated to them?
- Should you continue with these or are there alternative interventions or more fundamental changes which would offer better value and result in greater impact?

Planning

- What do you want attainment and achievement to look like in your school/centre by 2020? How will you agree and share this vision with the whole school community?
- What are your non-negotiable outcomes for all?
- Have you identified the group of learners who are disadvantaged?
- Is your aim specific and measurable? How much, by when?
- How will your planned interventions disrupt the cycle of deprivation being linked to lower attainment and achievement?
- Do you have clarity about evidence-based targeted interventions you have chosen and the expected impact on your gap?
- Have you agreed and shared clear timescales for each intervention?

Implementation

- Have you identified who is leading on the Pupil Equity Funding initiative(s) in your school? Does each intervention have a lead practitioner with clear responsibilities in terms of managing the intervention?
- Are you confident that your interventions are targeting the correct learners?
- Have you got "buy-in" from all key stakeholders in your learning community?
- Have you considered how to target without stigmatisation?
- No one package or strategy will close your gap in isolation. High quality learning and teaching will benefit all learners in your learning community.
- Have you invested in any CLPL for staff to ensure the best possible learning experiences **are being** delivered in your school/centre?
- Would wider changes in the way we work enhance additional support in meeting the needs of learners and closing the gap?

Monitoring

- Have you considered how best to develop data literacy in all staff? The effective use of data is key to everyone knowing where your targeted young people are in terms of their progression and may be a CLPL need in your school/centre.
- Systematic data collection should happen before, during and at the end of implementation. Do you require support with this? Could your assigned Attainment Officer be a source of such support?
- What mechanisms do you plan to use to collect this data and how reliable will the data be?
- Have you planned how to continue to track the targeted cohort post-implementation to ensure gains are sustained?
- Be prepared to adapt or stop interventions if they are not working within appropriate timescales.

Evaluation

- How will you know you have closed the gap? Education Scotland will report on the link between poverty and attainment in your school when you are inspected. How will you demonstrate the impact?
- The most effective schools will have high levels of attainment and there will be no observable pattern between this attainment and levels of deprivation (eg pupils living in SIMD levels 1 and 2 or in receipt of free school meals, will have attainment levels on a par with those living in SIMD levels 9 and 10).
- Effective schools will analyse performance to assess the impact of other factors that disadvantage learners related to; for example looked after children, a protected characteristic (disability, gender reassignment, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex (gender) and sexual orientation) or other additional support needs.
- Softer indicators may also be permissible at certain time points. For example children from poorer areas show the same aspiration to attend university as pupils in better off areas.
- Focussing on Looked After Children's literacy and numeracy is also likely to close the gap.
- You can measure the progress of various groups of children and collect evidence of improvements. Give yourself the best chance of demonstrating such evidence by taking baseline measures pre-intervention.



4 Closing the Gap – Responsibility of all

Advice from Education Scotland is to identify a few targeted interventions which focus specifically on closing your gap. Creativity and new approaches across the four contexts of learning may work well as long as they are based on evidence. So what can make the difference?

Organisers

- Learning and Teaching
- Leadership
- Families and Communities

Interventions

- Literacy
- Numeracy
- Health and Wellbeing

Aim for a range of activities both within and beyond the classroom.
Work together with partners.

**Think transformational – not transactional.
Structural ‘stuff’/hardware has the least effect.**

Organisers

Leadership

Prioritise closing the gap, have a clear, collaborative whole school focus on approaches/interventions to be used and pursue these consistently and relentlessly. Provide significant, high quality professional development tailored to the needs of the staff, school and chosen interventions. Incorporate systematic monitoring of impact and continued support for teachers.

Providing reliable data and developing data literate staff who have the opportunity to have professional conversations about the interventions, coupled with simple but effective monitoring and tracking systems, will help to ensure any impact or otherwise can be identified and acted on in a timely manner.



Poverty proofing the school can help to mitigate against some of the negative impact we know poverty has on stigma and engagement with school. School leaders can make positive choices around minimising costs and pressures on family budgets, ensuring equal opportunities regardless of income and reducing poverty related stigma. A useful resource is “1 in 5 – Raising Awareness of Child Poverty”, which can be found on the National Improvement Hub. School to school networking – work together, share expertise and have a clear focus on what is working and how nuances may make the difference. Closing the gap is the responsibility of all.

Learning and teaching

Very high quality learning and teaching closes the gap. Average learning and teaching doesn't. (Dylan William, 2016)

Consistently high standards across the school will be required to make the difference. Robust evaluation systems coupled with high quality, targeted professional learning should be used to improve the quality of learning and teaching.

Research tells us the following approaches can work:

- Metacognitive and self-regulation strategies
- Assessment and improvement feedback
- Structured group work/cooperative learning
- Peer and one to one tutoring
- Peer evaluation
- Effective questioning
- After school/outside school activities, linked specifically, for example literacy, numeracy, study skills
- Mentoring where objectives are agreed and clear, they are well trained and carefully matched to individual learners
- Differentiation by task, support and outcome

Consider allocating the best teachers to the most disadvantaged learners and what impact this may have.

Families and communities

Support families to realise their ambitions for their children.

Support parents to develop the skills they need to help their children learn.

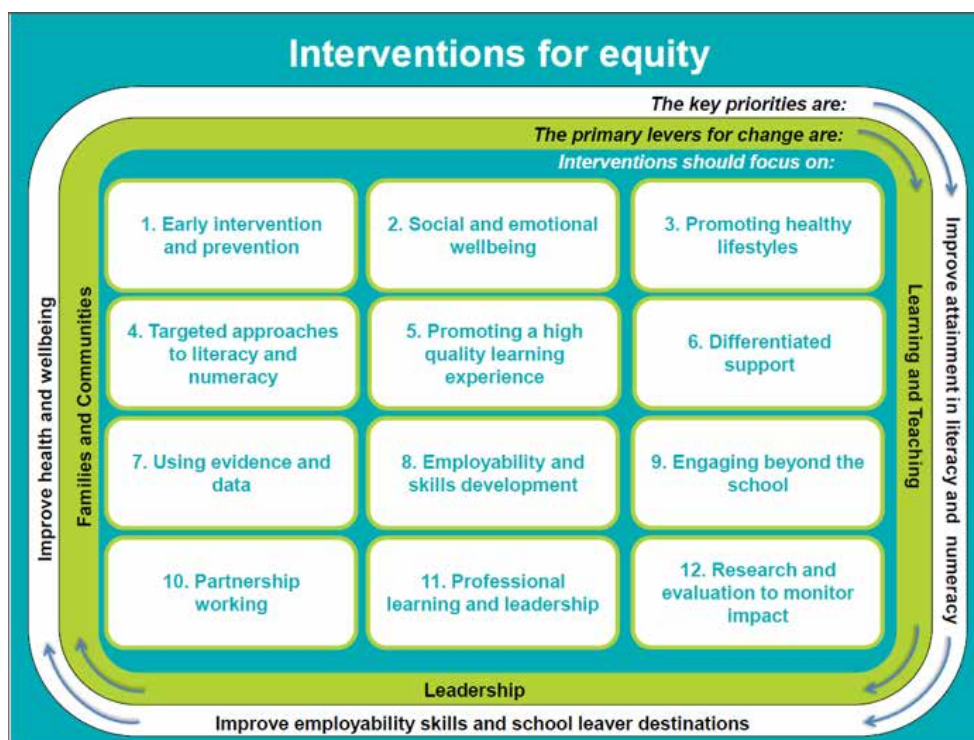
Develop sustained, group based, home school relationships.

Provide professionally led positive parenting support.

Work with partners who can reach parents and who can offer specialist support.

Listen to and empower families and the community – “do with, not to”.

Interventions



Resources such as the National Improvement Hub and the Scottish Learning and Teaching Toolkit can provide information on evidenced based interventions which can help to close the gap.

A few key messages around what works in relation to each of the priority areas are:

Health and wellbeing

Pupil wellbeing is linked to attainment and a range of factors such as social and emotional learning, an assets based approach and supportive and inclusive school communities contribute to this. The adverse impact of poverty on health and wellbeing is well documented. This is evident in both physical and mental wellbeing and the risk of illness, low self esteem, stress, anxiety

<https://www.jrf.org.uk/report/psychological-perspectives-poverty>

Social and emotional competencies are key to enabling young people to achieve their academic potential and are most effective when implemented at whole school level.



Nurture groups can impact positively on social, emotional and behavioural competencies, if implemented well. Literature on resilience and emotional wellbeing identifies connectedness and belonging, feeling safe, valued and liked are key features in relation to positive communities and long term positive outcomes. The role of key adults has been identified as crucial. All adults should be ready to listen to and respond to individual pupils non judgementally and to notice and speak to them when they are concerned. Restorative and solution focussed approaches should be implemented to protect and foster positive relationships across the school and wider community.

Positive relationships impact on attainment. The climate of the classroom and the school community are very influential in supporting learning. Where learners feel there is a climate of trust, they are more likely to have confidence to share what they don't know and so get feedback on what they need to do to improve their learning (Hattie).

The level on engagement a pupil feels with their school is strongly associated with attainment (SCCYP), meaningful learner voice is key to developing this sense of engagement.

Aerobic physical activity can impact positively on academic performance.

Inadequate nutrition has a negative effect on attainment.

Literacy

Early intervention in early years focussing on language development and early reading.

Reading engagement can impact positively on vocabulary and achievement in other curricular areas.

Strengthening a learner's ability to decode using a range of cues supports learning to read.

Promotion of comprehension – of key messages, their implications, links with personal experiences and the wider world – will support a learner's literacy.

Phonics-based approaches to learning to read have been shown to be successful.

Numeracy

There is some evidence that digital revision and support packages can improve attainment in numeracy (eg Sumdog, Numicon).

There is some evidence to suggest that mastery-based approaches can provide particular improvements in mathematics.

It has been suggested by PISA that cognitive activation strategies can enhance problem solving ability in mathematics.

There is evidence (again from PISA) to suggest that teacher-directed instruction is more beneficial than student-directed approaches in mathematics.

Think about:

Don't be tempted by ... Taking on too many things at once.

HGIOS? 4 – 1.5 Management of Resources to Promote Equity

The quality indicator 1.5 within “How good is our school? 4” states that the promotion of equity is a shared responsibility held by all staff, partners and stakeholders. It also promotes the view that the school's management of resources should result in building a more sustainable and equitable future for all. This quality indicator links directly with the use and management of Pupil Equity Funding and therefore can be used to support self-evaluation and planning.

Features of highly-effective practice (HGIOS? 4 page 29) include:

- Staff have a shared understanding of what impacts on child poverty and make effective use of current available data on levels of child poverty and apply this to ensure equity.
- The school can evidence that decisions about expenditure have resulted in increased attainment and achievement.
- The impact of new resources are carefully monitored and evaluated to ensure a positive impact on learning. Evidence is used to support future resourcing.

Challenge questions include:

- How effective are our systems for managing shared budgets to ensure a clear focus on promoting equity (eg cluster or Parent Council budgets)?
- To what extent is financial expenditure focused on improving the quality of learning and teaching?
- How effectively do we use our resources to meet the learning needs of all and ensure equity?

PEF Starter

Reading List

National Guidance

- Pupil Equity Funding – National Operational Guidance
<http://www.gov.scot/Resource/0051/00513664.pdf>
- Scottish Learning and Teaching Toolkit
<https://scot.educationendowmentfoundation.org.uk/>
- National Improvement Hub – Interventions for Equity
<https://education.gov.scot/improvement/Pages/Interventions-for-Equity.aspx>

Leadership

- Scottish College for Educational Leadership
<http://www.scelscotland.org.uk/>
- General Teaching Council for Scotland
<http://www.gtcs.org.uk/>

Learning and Teaching

- University of Strathclyde International Public Policy Institute/ Joseph Rowntree Foundation – Sue Ellis/Edward Sosu – “Closing poverty-related attainment gaps in Scotland’s schools: what works?”
<https://www.jrf.org.uk/sites/default/files/jrf/migrated/files/education-attainment-scotland-full.pdf>
- The Sutton Trust/CEM/ Durham University – Robert Coe/Cesare Aloisi/Steve Higgins/ Lee Elliot Major – “What makes great teaching?”
<http://www.suttontrust.com/wp-content/uploads/2014/10/What-makes-great-teaching-FINAL-4.11.14.pdf>

Families and Communities

- Education Scotland Review of Family Learning
<https://education.gov.scot/improvement/Documents/Family-Learning-Report-full-document.pdf>
- Engaging with Families
<http://engagingwithfamilies.co.uk/>
- The “1 in 5 – Raising Awareness of Child Poverty” Project, City of Edinburgh Council
<https://education.gov.scot/improvement/pages/sacfi10b-child-poverty.aspx>



iStock
by Getty Images™

iS
by C

ges™

iStock
by Getty Images™

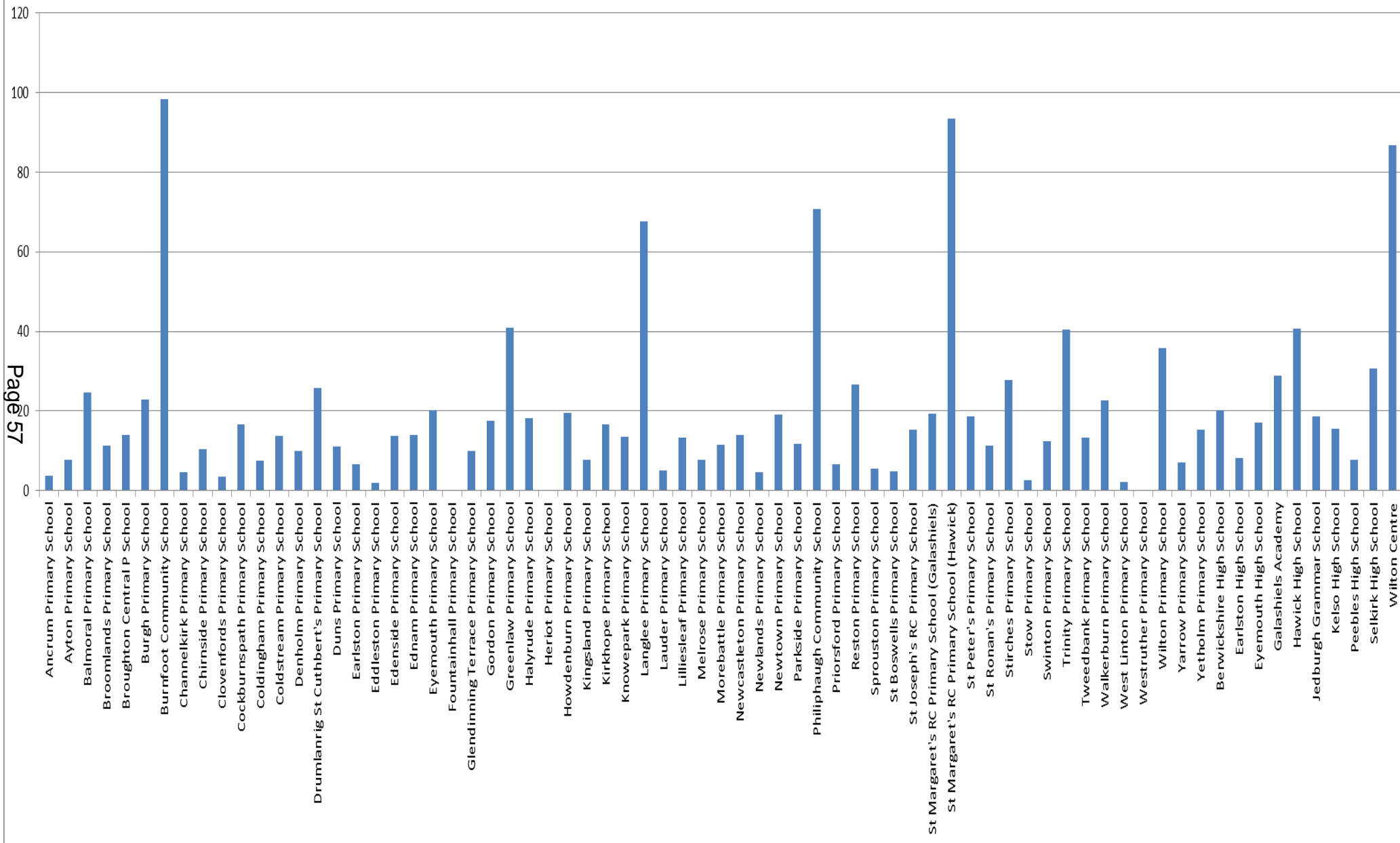
You can get this document on audio CD, in large print, and various other formats by contacting us at the address below. In addition, contact the address below for information on language translations, additional copies, or to arrange for an officer to meet with you to explain any areas of the publication that you would like clarified.

by Getty Images

iS
by C

Printed in the Scottish Borders. Designed by Scottish Borders Council Graphic Design Section. GS 26.09.17

% of pupils in the school who are PEF



This page is intentionally left blank



ADMISSIONS POLICY 2018

Report by Service Director, Children and Young People

EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

30 January 2018

1 PURPOSE AND SUMMARY

- 1.1 **This report proposes that the revised Scottish Borders Admissions Policy 2018 is approved by Members.**
- 1.2 The previous version was approved in 2012. The current version has been revised to take into account best practice across Scotland. The Policy now includes advice on class composition and establishes a date by which schools will not be expected to re-composite/re-timetable classes. It also updates procedures in terms of waiting lists when placing requests are refused.
- 1.3 The updated Policy is responsive in clarifying procedures in areas which have led to dispute with families in recent years. In particular the process to be followed when parents/carers make placing requests during the school year and when children are unable to get a space in their catchment school during the school year. The changes being made will provide clear guidance to Headteachers and ensure greater stability in class composition after census date in September each year. The changes also provide parents/carers with clear information and have been made in response to parental feedback during times of dispute.

2 RECOMMENDATIONS

- 2.1 **I recommend that the Executive Committee approve the revised Scottish Borders Council Admission Policy 2018.**

3 BACKGROUND

3.1 Legislation

The Legislation relevant to this Policy is:

- (a) Education (Scotland) Act 1980;
- (b) Education (Additional Support for Learning) (Scotland) Act 2004 Revised.

3.2 Changes to Policy

The Service has been under pressure from an increasing number of parents enrolling their children after the school term starts in August. This is not an issue when there are available places, but in a number of schools a place only becomes available after the existing classes are re-composited, ie existing classes set up in August have to be re-organised. This causes disruption to the learners in the established classes and much angst amongst parents/carers. The later on in the term, the more disruptive the move becomes and the greater the number of complaints received from parents/carers. The amended Admissions Policy (Appendix 1) (section 7.17) establishes a date, Census day in September, by which schools would only have to re-composite classes at the request of the Director of Children and Young People's Services. There has to be some scope to make changes to class organisation in the first four weeks of the school term as numbers can change quite significantly with children moving into or out of the school catchment area, but beyond census date can have a significant impact on the teacher's planning for the children's learning and upon children's wellbeing. The amended Policy also provides parents/carers with more information regarding composite classes as this is an area that can lead to dispute at school level with parents often challenging the setting up of composite classes. The revised guidance provides greater clarity for all stakeholders. It is important to note that there is no evidence to support that composite classes create any form of detriment to children's learning or wellbeing.

- 3.4 In order to create fairness in placement requests that have been refused due to capacity in a school, the Standing List applies the placement request procedures to those on the waiting list instead of first refusal leading to first offer when a place becomes available, ie a full set of criteria is applied and is detailed within the amended Admissions Policy (Appendix 1) (sections 7.5 and 7.13).
- 3.3 To minimise the effect of re-compositing a class, the Policy states the minimum number of children that can be moved from one class to another. These changes have been made to provide clarification to parents/carers who often seek a change for their child only without consideration of other children in the age grouping.

4 CONCLUSION

- 4.1 The Admissions Policy 2018 has been amended in consultation with Legal Services and in discussion with Headteachers and Quality Improvement Officers in response to activity in this area in recent years. All changes are

in line with best practice nationally. These changes also provide clarity of procedure linked to School Admissions and will provide a more consistent, fair and equitable approach which will benefit all children during Admission procedures.

5 IMPLICATIONS

5.1 Financial

By accepting the recommendations, the cost of transporting catchment pupils will be minimised. The improved clarity of procedures in Admissions will also support Placing Request procedures and reduce the risk of additional teachers having to be placed in a school should a Placing Request Appeal be accepted.

5.2 Risk and Mitigations

The policy amendments go some way to mitigate risks of dispute between schools and families with particular regard to admissions during the school term, however, it is recognised that these amendments may not fully alleviate all areas of contention. The main risks that the amended policy seeks to mitigate are:

- (a) By not accepting the date by which schools are not required to re-composite classes, there is a risk that classes and pupils' learning may be disrupted all through the school year due to possible re-compositing. It could also lead to additional staff costs.
- (b) By not accepting the minimal number and gender mix of a grouping of young people who have to be moved, there is the risk of one child being moved and this could lead to isolation and parental complaint.

5.3 Equalities

An Equalities Impact Assessment has been carried out on this proposal and it is anticipated that there are no adverse equality implications.

5.4 Acting Sustainably

By approving the revised Policy, the distance travelled by pupils will be minimised with resulting minimisation of travel costs and carbon footprint.

5.5 Carbon Management

By approving the revised Policy, we will minimise the carbon footprint due to children attending their nearest school.

5.6 Rural Proofing

By approving the revised Policy, and in particular the Standing List, all young people are treated equally in terms of admission to school and placement requests.

5.7 Changes to Scheme of Administration or Scheme of Delegation

There are no changes.

6 CONSULTATION

- 6.1 The Chief Financial Officer, the Monitoring Officer, the Chief Legal Officer, the Chief Officer Audit and Risk, the Service Director HR and the Clerk to the Council have been consulted and any comments received have been incorporated into the final report.

Approved by

Donna Manson

Service Director, Children & Young People Signature

Author(s)

Name	Designation and Contact Number
James Marshall	Quality Improvement Officer

Appendices: Appendix 1: Admissions Policy 2018

Background Papers: Scottish Borders Council Admissions Policy 2010

Previous Minute Reference: Education Executive, 2 November 2010

Note – You can get this document on tape, in Braille, large print and various computer formats by contacting the address below. James Marshall can also give information on other language translations as well as providing additional copies.

Contact us at Council headquarters, Newtown St Boswells TD6 0SA.

ADMISSIONS POLICY

1 PURPOSE

- 1.1 This document replaces Scottish Borders Council's previous policy on admissions approved in October 2010.
- 1.2 This document details Scottish Borders Council's policy with regard to admissions to all schools (excluding Early Learning and Childcare) under the management of Scottish Borders Council's Children and Young People's Service.
- 1.3 There is a separate policy for Early Learning and Childcare.
- 1.4 An impact assessment, to ensure all aspects of equalities legislation and principles are upheld within this policy, has been undertaken.

2 CORPORATE CONTEXT

- 2.1 This policy supports Priority 3 of the Corporate Plan: **Provide high quality support, care and protection to children and young people.**

3 ACCESSIBILITY

- 3.1 This document can be made available in large print, on tape or in other languages on request.

4 IMPLEMENTATION

- 4.1 The Authority has a legal duty in respect of admissions to:-
 - 4.1.1 Provide suitable education opportunities for children and young people.
 - 4.1.2 Provide parents, children and young people information on their local schools. Details on all schools are included on Scottish Border's website (www.scotborders.gov.uk) and more detailed information is available directly from individual schools.
 - 4.1.3 Provide parents information on admission arrangements for children to the Authorities' Early Learning and Childcare provision, primary and secondary schools.

- 4.1.4 Advise parents of their right to choose a school, for their child, which is not in their catchment area by making a placement request.
- 4.1.5 Accept placement requests except where the Council has the right to refuse the request and chooses to exercise this right.
- 4.1.6 Advise parents of their rights to appeal if a placement request is refused.

5 INDEX/TABLE OF CONTENTS

- 7.1 Catchment Area
- 7.2 Denominational Primary Schools
- 7.3 Enrolment
- 7.4 Process for Admission to Primary One from an Early Years Setting
- 7.5 Prioritising Requests for Enrolment to a Catchment School
- 7.6 Admissions Throughout the School Year
- 7.7 Transfer from P7 to S1
- 7.8 Placement Requests: Primary and Secondary Schools
- 7.9 Prioritising Placement Requests: Primary and Secondary Schools

- 7.11 Admission of pupils from out with Scottish Borders Council
- 7.12 Refusal of a Placing Request
- 7.13 Standing List
- 7.14 Transport for Placement Request
- 7.15 Appealing the Refusal of a placement request
- 7.16 Class Sizes and Composition
- 7.17 Class Composition

6 LEGISLATIVE AND POLICY CONTEXT

- 6.1 This policy responds to and sits within the context of the Education (Scotland) Act 1980, and the Education (Additional Support for Learning) (Scotland) Act 2004, along with the associated amendments and guidance for these Acts. The Curriculum for Excellence establishes health and wellbeing, including developing positive and healthy relationships, as a core part of the learning experience.
- 6.2 Under the Education (Scotland) Act 1980 as amended (which will be referred to as the Act throughout this document), it is the duty of the Children and Young People's Services to provide an adequate and efficient school education for all children living within the Scottish Borders Council area.

7 CONTENT

7.1 Catchment Area

The Council has identified a catchment area for each of its non-denominational primary schools and secondary schools. Each catchment area has a secondary school and a number of associated non-denominational primary schools. A catchment area can be changed to reflect movement in school rolls or to take into account significant new housing developments but before the change can be implemented a statutory consultation must be undertaken and any proposed change would need to be approved by the Authority. In certain circumstances approval of the Scottish Government may also be required.

7.2 Denominational Primary Schools

The Council also has denominational primary schools . The catchment areas for these schools are the same as those of the High Schools in these towns. Where a denominational primary is oversubscribed, priority will be given to children of that denomination..

7.3 Enrolment

7.3.1 School Age

Under Section 30 of the Act, it is the duty of every parent who has a child of school age to provide that child with an education which is suitable to their age, aptitude and ability. Every parent must do this either by ensuring their child attends a public school regularly or by any other means for example by home education.

7.3.2 The Act States that:

“A parent includes a guardian and any person who is liable to maintain or has parental responsibilities in relation to, or has care of, a child or young person”.

7.3.3 After Divorce or Separation

Both parents will retain parental responsibilities, unless the court has specifically removed those responsibilities. In relation to placement requests, both parents will normally have equal rights. However, for purposes of making a placement request, the application form must be completed with the details of the parent with whom the child is ordinarily resident.

7.3.4 The Act describes who a person of school age is

That is a child or young person who has reached the age of five years, but has not yet reached the age of sixteen years.

7.4 Process for Admission to Primary One from an Early Years Setting

7.4.1 There is a legal requirement on parents to ensure that their child attends school from the start of the session in the August following the child's fifth birthday, unless suitable alternative arrangements for education have been made.

7.4.2 Attendance at a private school or a decision to educate a child at home may replace registration at one of the Authorities' primary schools. Parents are requested to notify the Authority in advance of enrolling their child in a private school or of starting to educate their child at home.

7.4.3 To be eligible for entry to Primary 1 at the start of the school year in August, a child must attain their fifth birthday between 1st March of that year and the last day in February of the following year, both dates inclusive. Each year the Authority will advertise details of the enrolment process for parents considering enrolment for their child for the following August. Enrolment week will be the last full week in November.

7.4.4 Parents will be asked to visit their catchment primary school during enrolment week and complete an enrolment form. This ensures that a place is allocated to their child.

7.4.5 Parents who wish to make a placement request will be asked to fill out an enrolment form at their catchment primary school to ensure a place is 'available' for their child. They should then visit their preferred choice of school and complete a placement request form.

7.5 Prioritising requests for enrolment to a catchment school

7.5.1 Where there are insufficient places for children living in a catchment area to

attend their catchment school then the following priority order will be used to allocate places:

- (a) Children identified as being in need of educational provision available at a particular school.
- (b) Children with brothers or sisters already attending the school.
- (c) Children living furthest from their nearest alternative school with an available place. Distances will be determined by the School Transport Team.

If all other factors are equal a ballot will be used to determine places.

7.5.2 Some children, based on the above criteria, will be required to attend the nearest alternative school that has places. In this case they will then be given a higher priority than a pupil making a placing request to the alternative school. The child can transfer back to their catchment school as soon as a place becomes available, if they wish.

7.5.3 Transport costs will be met if the child is distance entitled. If a place subsequently becomes available at the child's catchment school, parents will be responsible for school transport costs if they decide to retain their child at the alternative school. This will commence from the beginning of the subsequent school session.

7.5.4 If parents choose to send siblings to the same alternative school then a placement request will be required and they will be responsible for transport costs.

7.6 Admissions throughout the School Year

7.6.1 Children moving into the catchment area may be admitted at any time of the school year if there are places available. If no places are available the same process described in section 7.5 applies.

7.7 Transfer from P7 to S1

7.7.1 Most children will attend the catchment secondary school for their home address and will transfer there once they have completed their primary school education.

7.7.2 Parents of a child who is to transfer from primary education to secondary education in August will receive from their primary Head Teacher the name of the relevant secondary school. Each school will also arrange a transition programme to assist pupils through the transfer from primary to secondary education.

7.7.3 Where there are insufficient places for children living in a catchment area to attend their catchment school then the process detailed in section 7.5 will be applied.

7.7.4 Where a child attends a primary school as a result of a successful placement request to a non-catchment school, that child will not automatically transfer to the associated secondary school, for that primary school, unless they also live within the catchment area for that secondary school. If they do not live within the catchment area, a further placement request will have to be made.

7.8 Placement Requests: Primary and Secondary Schools

- 7.8.1** The Authority has a duty to accept placement requests from parents to facilitate parental choice where and when this is possible. Where a placement request is received by Children and Young People's Services prior to 15th March in any year relating to a request to start a school in the following August, then the Authority will provide parents with a written decision by 30th April.
- 7.8.2** In any other case, the Authority has a period of two months from the date of receipt of the request to provide parents with a written decision about the placing request.
- 7.8.3** If the Council refuses to grant the request, reasons will be given in the written decision.
- 7.8.4** When a placement request is being made, parents must be informed that they must also register their child with their catchment school. This ensures that should the placement request be refused the child will have an allocated place at their catchment school.
- 7.8.5** If during the course of a school session, a family moves house to another catchment area a placement request must be made if they wish their child to remain at the original school. The parents would be liable for any transport costs.
- 7.8.6** Once a pupil has been offered a placement, it will not be withdrawn unless the Council becomes aware that granting the placement was based on false information.

7.8.7. It should be noted that, **where a child or young person has additional support needs, any placing request made should be made and will be responded to under the Education (Additional Support for Learning (S) Act 2004.**

7.9 Prioritising Placement Requests: Primary and Secondary Schools

7.9.1 Prioritising Placement Requests: Primary and Secondary Schools

The priority order which will be considered is:

- (a) Pupils having been refused a place at their local catchment schools because it is at capacity and the placement request is the nearest alternative school.
- (b) Recommendations from Children and Young People's Services or for certified medical, social or emotional reasons.
- (c) Children with siblings already attending the school.
- (d) Children living furthest from their nearest alternative school.

7.11. Admission of pupils from out with Scottish Borders Council

7.11.1 There are three categories of pupils potentially involved:

- (a) Children living with their parents or carers who are permanently resident out with Scottish Borders Council.
- (b) Children who are looked after and accommodated.
- (c) Children who are resident within Scottish Borders Council as a result of arrangements made by parents or carers but whose parents or carers are permanently resident out with Scottish Borders.

7.11.2 Children in Category (a)

Parents or carers living out with Scottish Borders may ask for a placement request for their child to attend a Scottish Borders school. Such placement requests will be treated in the same way as other placement requests.

There is no payment of out with fees between Authorities for primary and secondary education. Charges will be made only for any additional provision required to meet the child's additional support needs. If additional support is required Head Teachers must notify the SLEO (ASN) in order that the home authority agrees to pay for the additional support. Enrolment must not take place until an agreement has taken place.

Children in Category (b)

Where a child is in the care of a foster parent, the child should be enrolled at the catchment school for the address of the foster parent. The home authority is responsible for the costs of any additional support required. Enrolment at any outwith catchment school should be made through a placement request.

Head Teachers should

- (a) Record the pupil on SEEMIS as Looked After Away From Home.
- (b) Contact the Quality Improvement Officer (QIO) (Inclusion) and give the child's details.
- (c) Contact the Group Manager, Resources, Children & Families Social Work.

Children in Category (c)

Such pupils may only be enrolled on production of clear proof of address within Scottish Borders. The school QIO should be informed of the situation.

7.12 Refusal of a Placing Request

7.12.1 The Authority is entitled to refuse a placement request under the Act only where one or more of the grounds of refusal summarised below applies:

- (a) If placing the child in the specified school would-
 - (i) Make it necessary for the Authority to take an additional teacher into employment.
 - (ii) Give rise to significant expenditure on extending or otherwise altering the accommodation at or facilities provided in connection with the school..
 - (iii) Be seriously detrimental to the continuity of the child's education.
 - (iv) Be likely to be seriously detrimental to order and discipline in the school or
 - (v) Be likely to be seriously detrimental to the educational well-being of pupils attending the school.
 - (vi) Assuming that pupil numbers remain constant, make it necessary, at the commencement of a future stage of the child's primary education, for the Authority to create either an additional class at the school.
 - (vii) If as a consequence of acceptance the capacity of the school would be exceeded in terms of pupil numbers.
- (b) If the education normally provided at the school is not suited to the age, ability or aptitude of the child.
- (c) If the Authority has already required the child to discontinue his attendance at the specified school.
- (d) If the child in question is resident out with the school's catchment area, and the acceptance of that child would entail using one of the places reserved for pupils moving into the catchment area on a permanent basis (secondary schools only)

7.13 Standing List

7.13.1 The Standing List is a list of refused placement requests made during the normal round of placement requests.

7.13.2 A child whose placement request is refused during the normal round of requests from 1 December to 15 March will be entered on a list. This will be held from 30 April or the date of decision, if earlier, to the last day of the academic year applied for. This list will be called the Standing List. Any places which become available between 30 April and the last day of the new academic year will be offered to those children on the Standing List in priority order. See Section 7.5.

7.14 Transport for Placement Requests

7.14.1 Under the Act, an education authority has a discretionary power rather than a duty to provide school transport for pupils attending schools as a result of a successful placement request. Accordingly, Scottish Borders Council does not normally provide school transport in such circumstances.

7.14.2 Placement requests made in circumstances where Children and Young People's Services agree that a change of school is necessary to protect the emotional, physical or educational wellbeing of the child may be considered for transport costs at the discretion of the Service Director.

7.14.3 In considering whether or not to provide transport, Scottish Borders Council will take safety issues into account.

7.15 Appealing the Refusal of a placement request

7.15.1 Under section 28C(1) of the Act parents whose placement request has been refused are entitled to appeal the Children and Young People's Services decision.

7.15.2 This right of appeal only applies to placement requests made to Primary and Secondary schools. It does not, however, apply to Early Learning and Childcare settings.

7.15.3 In the first instance the parent should make an appeal to the Clerk to the Council. The appeal should take the form of a letter stating that a placement request has been refused and that the parent wishes to appeal the decision stating their grounds of appeal.

7.15.4 An appeal must be made within 28 days of receipt of the refusal, or, in the case of a deemed refusal, within 28 days of either 30 April for requests made during the normal round of placing requests, or the expiry of two months following the date of the request, as the case may be.

7.15.5 A parent may request an informal meeting with an officer of Children and Young People's Services at any time, either before or after a placing request is refused. At this meeting the officer will explain the position of Children and Young People's Services to the parent. This is entirely without prejudice to the parent's statutory rights of appeal.

7.15.6 Only one appeal, in respect of any child, will be considered in any twelve month period, although more than one placing request can be made in that period.

7.15.7 Where an appeal has been submitted to the Education Appeals Committee or the Sheriff Court, available places at school will continue to be allocated based on the criteria in sections 7.5.

7.15.8 In cases where a placing request has been made under the Education (Additional Support for Learning) (S) Act 2004, appeals against refusal will, in some cases, be made to Education Appeals Committee and

in other cases be made to the Health and Education Chamber of the First-tier Tribunal for Scotland (formerly the Additional Support Needs Tribunal for Scotland). Advice should be sought on the appropriate body to deal with such appeal. In either case the appeal must be lodged within 28 days of the refusal. In the case of an appeal to the tribunal, an appeal from that body can be made to the Upper Tribunal rather than to the Sheriff Court.

7.16 Class Sizes and Composition

7.16.1 Teachers are allocated to each school according to the total number of children on the school roll and not on the number of children in any one year group.

7.16.2 The National Agreement on maximum class sizes is:

Primary Schools

P1	25 children
P2&P3	30 children
P4-P7	33 children
Composite Class	25 children
Single Stage Primary School	25 children but may be lower at the discretion of the Service Director

Secondary Schools

Practical Classes	20 pupils
S1&S2	33 pupils
S3-S6	30 pupils

In Primary Schools class compositions will be fixed for the academic year on the Monday of the week of the Scottish Executive Census in September.

7.16.3 Exceptions To Class Sizes

The regulations allow for exceptions to the number of pupils in an individual P1, P2 or P3 class to be more than 25/30 up to a maximum of 33 where an 'ordinary teaching session' is conducted by a single qualified teacher. Pupils who are treated as 'excepted pupils', for the purpose of the regulations, do not count towards the limit of 25/30.

7.16.4 Excepted Pupils

A child may only be treated as an 'excepted pupil' if:

- (a) He/she cannot be educated at the school in a class in which the class size limit is not exceeded without measures being taken which would prejudice efficient education or the efficient use of resources, and
- (b) He/she falls into one of the five categories below.

7.16.5 The five categories of 'excepted pupils' fall into two groupings. Those who are placed outside a 'normal placing round' and those who have additional support needs but receive part of their education in a mainstream school.

7.16.6 For the purposes of the regulations a child is placed in a school, whether by request or otherwise, outside the normal placing arrangements if the decision to place him/her is taken after 30 April in the year in which he/she is to start attending school.

7.16.7 Excepted Pupils- Those who are placed outside the 'normal placing round'

- (a) Children whose Co-ordinated Support Plan specifies that they should be educated at the school concerned or children for whom the Authority has recommended this school as an alternative placement.
- (b) Children initially refused a place at the school, but subsequently on appeal offered a place outside a normal placing round or because the Authority recognise that an error

was made in implementing their placing arrangements for the school.

- (c) Children who cannot gain a place at any other suitable school within a reasonable distance of their home when they first move into the area.
- (d) Children initially refused a place at the school, but subsequently on appeal offered a place outside a normal placing round or because the Authority recognise that an error was made in implementing their placing arrangements for the school.
- (e) Children who cannot gain a place at any other suitable school within a reasonable distance of their home when they first move into the area.

7.17 Composite Classes

7.17.1 A composite class is a class which includes children from more than one year group.

7.17.2 When it is necessary to make changes to the way classes are normally arranged (eg if composite classes are required when this would not normally be the case) the Head Teacher will ensure that parents/carers are provided with information and/or opportunities to discuss the likely arrangement of classes before decisions are taken, in order that parents are clear about the reasons for compositing and what the criteria will be, before class allocations are announced.

7.17.3 Where possible, whole year groups will be included in the same class. In small schools it may be possible to include more than 2 whole year groups within one composite class eg P4/P5/P6.

7.17.4 When it is necessary to divide a year group to make one or more composite classes, the first consideration will be to allocating places based on age. For example if a school had 40 children in P4 and 45 children in P5 then one possible way to split the classes would be to put the oldest 11 children from P4 in a composite class with the youngest 13 children from P5. This would give:

a P4 class of 29

a P4/5 class of 24

a P5 class of 32

There are other minor variations on the above class allocations but they all involve a composite P4/5

7.17.5 The reasons for using age are

- It allows the Head Teacher to create classes which most closely resemble those of single year groups
- It is a clear and transparent criteria which is easily understood
- It is objective.

7.17.6 The placement of siblings within the year group will be discussed with parents and their views will be taken into account where possible. In smaller schools in particular, it may be necessary for siblings to be in the same composite class.

7.17.7 Schools will be expected to provide opportunities for children to develop relationships with their year group as well as with their composite class.

Small Numbers in a Composite Class

7.17.8 At times it may be necessary for a small group of children from one year group to be separated from their year group and join a composite class. When this is necessary it is essential that the Head Teacher ensures that each stage being created in the composite class has, where possible, a minimum of 4 pupils.

Information Sharing With Parents

7.17.9 Composite class arrangements work most smoothly in schools where parents/carers understand the reasons why the composite classes are required, the rationale for their formation and the way in which children will be taught within the composite class.

7.17.10 Head Teachers will provide parents with information about composite classes, how they work and how children are taught in a composite setting, prior to the time when class arrangements are being made. It is likely that this will be in the form of parental leaflets and through the school handbook.

7.17.11 Once teacher allocations have been received, class structures should be published as early as possible to allow time for discussion with parents/carers.

7.17.12 Plans for the management of classes such as the location of the classes, the allocation of teachers to classes and planned opportunities for year group activities will be shared with parents/carers as part of the process.

7.17.13 In certain circumstances class restructuring may have to take place during the summer break or shortly after the new school session has started. This could be caused by more children enrolling or leaving the school. If this happens, Head Teachers will:

- Inform parents/carers as quickly as possible that changes have become necessary
- Provide an opportunity for parents/carers to discuss the implications of any such changes.

7.17.14 It will only be in exceptional circumstances that a school will be asked to restructure their classes after the census in September of the new school year. For Example a parent/carer tries to enrol her/his child at the catchment school but the appropriate class is full and there is no capacity in the surrounding primary schools. Or in the event of an extraordinary incident which results in the medium term closure of a school building resulting in children from another school being temporarily located within a neighbouring school.

Dealing with Disagreements

7.17.15 If a parent/carer wishes to discuss the class arrangements made for their child, they should be directed to speak to the Head Teacher in the first instance. The Head Teacher will provide them with the rationale for her/his decision.

7.17.16 If a parent/carer believes that their child has specific needs which have not been taken into account, they should discuss these with the Head Teacher. If the Head Teacher agrees with the parent/carer's views, she/he will discuss how these specific needs can be addressed in the class to which the child has been allocated. The Head Teacher would not necessarily be expected to move the child to another class.

7.17.17 If a parent/carer believes a Head Teacher has not adhered to this policy in allocating his/her child to a particular class, they should raise this concern with the Head Teacher in the first instance, who will provide them with the rationale for her/his decision.

7.17.18 If a parent/carer is still not satisfied following discussion with the Head Teacher, they should raise their concerns with the appropriate QIO. The

QIO will consider whether the Head Teacher's rationale meets the principles of this policy, and whether any actions are required to address the parent/carer's concern. The QIO will not necessarily seek to have the child moved to another class.

7.16.19 If the parent/carer remains unhappy with the class arrangements made for their child and any adjustments made to address their concerns, they may follow the official Scottish Borders Council complaints procedure.

8 EQUALITIES

8.1 The Council is committed to the principles of equality of opportunity that underpin the Equality Act 2010, both in the provision of services and in its role as an employer. In pursuing these commitments the Council acknowledges its statutory duties under the Act, which specifically protects people who may experience discrimination, whether direct or indirect; harassment or victimisation in the workplace.

8.2 The protected characteristics as defined by the Equality Act 2010 are: Age, Disability, Gender Reassignment, Marriage and Civil Partnership, Pregnancy and Maternity, Race, Religion or belief, Gender and Sexual Orientation

9 VERSION CONTROL

Name of Document: Admissions Policy (2017)		Version Number:
Approved by: Donna Manson		
Date first approved: January 4 th 2018		Date of Review: January 2021
Name of officer responsible for the review: Jim Marshall		
Changes to the policy		
<i>Paragraph No:</i>	<i>Change made and reason for change</i>	

This page is intentionally left blank

**SCOTTISH BORDERS COUNCIL
EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE**

MINUTE of Meeting of the EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE held in Council Chamber, Council Headquarters, Newtown St Boswells, TD6 0SA on Tuesday, 5th December, 2017 at 10.00 am

Present:- Councillors M Rowley (Chairman), S Aitchison (from para 2), G Edgar, S Haslam, C Hamilton, E Jardine, W McAteer , T Miers, S Mountford, G Turnbull, T Weatherston; Mr J Clark.

Apologies Mr G Henderson (Federation of Small Businesses).

Also present:- Councillor H Scott

In Attendance:- Chief Executive, Executive Director (R Dickson), Chief Financial Officer, Chief Officer Economic Development, Principal Officer Regeneration, Clerk to the Council, Democratic Services Officer (J Turnbull).

1. **MINUTE**

The Minute of meeting of the Executive Committee of 21 November 2017 had been circulated.

DECISION

APPROVED for signature by the Chairman.

MEMBER

Councillor Aitchison joined the meeting following consideration of the above item.

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT BUSINESS

2. **ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT UPDATE**

2.1 With reference to paragraph 1 of the Minute of 19 September 2017, there had been circulated copies of a briefing note providing an update on recent Economic Development activities. The Chief Officer Economic Development, Mr McGrath, summarised the main points. With regard to business activity during the quarter, the first Scottish Borders Business Conference was held in October 2017 with 140 businesses attending. Following the event, there had been 12 requests from businesses to work with Business Gateway. In terms of Regeneration, a Jedburgh Marketing/Tourism business group had been established to help improve and promote the town centre. The Group was progressing the development of a town website, new visitor leaflets, pop-up displays for empty shops and town entry signage. Two applications had been submitted for a Scottish Government Regeneration Capital Grant Fund 2017 from Regenerating Galashiels – Great Tapestry of Scotland, and Eastgate Theatre Extension & Refurbishment, Peebles. Notification would be given to applicants of funding recommendations by the end of February 2018. The Tweed Valley Tourism Consortium had been successful in securing Scottish Government Seedcorn funding for the development of a Tweed Valley Tourism Business Improvement District.

2.2 Under the Tourism and Events section of the update, Mr McGrath advised that the Cabinet Secretary, Fiona Hyslop, had met with the Scottish Borders Tourism Partnership. Included in discussions were opportunities around the Tapestry and the vision for future

tourism growth. With regard to Funding, Mr McGrath clarified that European funding continued to be available through the Scottish Borders LEADER and European Maritime Fisheries Fund 2014-2020 programmes. The LEADER Local Action Group had approved grant funding of £1.62m in 2017. Up to 10 applications were expected for consideration in January 2018. The Forth Fisheries Local Action Group had recommended six projects to Marine Scotland, committing £264k of funding. In terms of Property and Projects, Mr McGrath advised that work had commenced at the Galalaw Business Park with completion scheduled for summer 2019. To conclude, Mr McGrath advised that under the Low Carbon Economic Strategy, 30 businesses had been referred to Resource Efficient Scotland. The businesses were at various stages in the assessment process from initial request to audit completion and implementation.

- 2.3 Members requested clarification around the detail behind the figures supplied; Mr McGrath responded that with regard to Business Gateway he did not have the exact number of referrals from intermediaries (e.g. bank managers, accountants) but this was considered an effective way of working as they were able to highlight to businesses the advantages and services of Business Gateway. The economic impact of the Scottish Borders Business Fund and Business Loan Fund was calculated using the overall spend of each project and applying a multiplier, grants were always of a smaller amount. The spectator figures for the Tour of Britain Cycling event had been supplied by the organisers, using a methodology standard to all their events. With regard to bank closures, Mr McGrath advised that planning officers recognised the impact on town centres and this would be reflected in the Main Issues Report (MIR) and Local Development Plan. In respect of digital connectivity and the additional funding announced by Scottish Government, the Chairman advised that this would not be directly provided, but was a fund in which local authorities could bid. Officers would be presenting a report in January 2018 to the Executive Committee with further information on the position of the Borders with regard to broadband coverage.

DECISION

NOTED the update.

3. VISIT SCOTLAND ICENTRE UPDATE

- 3.1 There had been circulated copies of a report by the Executive Director providing an update to Members on how VisitScotland was responding to changes in the way visitors accessed information and made holiday decisions and, in turn, how this was impacting on the performance of the manned visitor information service in the Scottish Borders. The report explained that VisitScotland currently operated and managed three VisitScotland iCentres in the Scottish Borders, providing face to face information services, including an accommodation and ticketing service. The VisitScotland iCentres were partially funded via an annual Minute of Agreement (MOA) between Scottish Borders Council and VisitScotland. Visitors were accessing information from a wide range of sources when they were in Scotland. Trends indicated that online usage for visitor information and booking would continue to rise. In line with this trend, Scottish Borders VisitScotland iCentres had experienced a general decline in footfall in recent years while there had been a significant rise in website visits and digital referrals to Scottish Borders businesses. Recognising the change in consumer behaviour and demand, VisitScotland had announced a new strategy for the provision of tourism information and the overall customer experience, looking at the best way to ensure that information was delivered to more people in more places using the channels that visitors used the most. The new strategy would be implemented over a two year period and would include: A new regional hub, a new partnership with Live Borders and an increase in the number of VisitScotland Information Partners (VIP Programme). Mr McGrath clarified that officers would work with VisitScotland to identify options and the location for the new regional hub, a further report would be presented to Executive Committee in 2018 providing recommendations.
- 3.2 In the ensuing discussion, Councillor Edgar advised that SEStran would supply interactive screens and the first year's maintenance for sites across the Borders.

However, there seemed to have been an issue with Live Borders' connectivity; the Chief Executive advised that she would investigate this matter out-with the meeting. In response to a question regarding the geographic area covered by the Tweed Valley Consortium, Mr McGrath clarified that this covered the Tweeddale to Selkirk area, and the Leader confirmed that the Consortium focussed on mountain-biking. The success of the VIP Programme in Kelso was highlighted and that Kelso could be promoted as a good example for other Border towns.

DECISION:

- (a) **NOTED the changes to information provision in the Scottish Borders made by VisitScotland and welcomed the increased involvement of local tourism businesses in the VisitScotland Information Partners (VIP) Programme in the Scottish Borders.**
- (b) **AGREED that a further report with recommendations for the location of the new regional hub for tourism information provision be presented to the Committee in 2018.**

4. **SCOTTISH BORDERS COUNCIL EVENTS PLAN 2014-2020-UPDATE REPORT**

4.1 With reference to paragraph 5 of the Executive Committee of 1 November 2016, there had been circulated copies of a report by the Executive Director presenting an update on the Council's Events Plan 2014-2020. The Council had successfully facilitated and supported the delivery of a wide range of regional, national and international events. This coordinated and targeted approach to promoting events in the Scottish Borders has had a significant impact on the economy, generating an estimated economic impact of almost £6 million in 2017. These events raised the profile and enhanced the reputation of the Scottish Borders and delivered social and community benefits. The regional tourism strategy and action plan highlighted events as a key success factor in attracting more visitors to the area, and encouraging them to do more, spend more and return more often. The updated Events Plan 2014-2020 set out in Appendices 1 and 2 of the report outlined the approach to prioritising event support activity and highlighted key achievements to date.

4.2 The Principal Officer Regeneration, Ms Julie Hogg, highlighted the main points: Melrose Sevens continued to develop and innovative with a new Universities match which would be expanded in 2018; the success of the Tour of Britain and Tour of the Borders continued to build strength for cycling events; the Borders Book Festival continued to deliver a high profile event; and, the Scottish Borders Heritage Festival's overall economic impact was £1,450,000 with almost 30% from outside the Borders. In response to questions, Ms Hogg advised that with regard to Springwood Park events, the Council worked closely with events' organisers and this would continue. The Executive Director, Mr Dickson, added that the Border Union Agricultural Society had met with Scottish Enterprise representatives to explore longer term opportunities. Members noted that the organisers of the Jim Clark Rally were trying to re-establish the event, but there were a number of challenges to be addressed before this could happen. With regard to the funding of private sector, profit making events, Mr McGrath explained that such events came within the Events Strategy, raised the profile of the Scottish Borders and encouraged return visits. Further, the Chief Executive confirmed that defined outcomes were required for any public funding, with events also delivering a range of benefits; for example, the 2017 Borders Book Festival had given educational sessions which supported the school curriculum. The Council worked with VisitScotland to support new events and encouraged existing events to develop and grow. With regard to visitor accommodation, Ms Hogg advised that officers consistently worked with event organisers to address this issue. Mr Dickson added that there had to be a balance between existing and temporary accommodation and that the Council should explore market demand, occupancy rates and visitors expectations in terms of visitor accommodation.

DECISION:

- (a) **NOTED the achievements and progress made in relation to the Scottish Borders Council Events Plan 2014 – 2020.**
- (b) **AGREED to continue to support the events sector to maximise economic impact and legacy through delivery of the Scottish Borders Council Events Plan 2014-2020.**

5. **HAWICK ACTION PLAN - UPDATE**

With reference to paragraph 10 of the Minute of Scottish Borders Council of 30 March 2017, there had been circulated copies of a report by the Executive Director providing a progress report on key activities within the Hawick Action Plan following the last meeting in March 2017. The Hawick Action Plan was structured around three key themes which were identified and agreed by the key stakeholders for the town. The themes were: making Hawick a 'Great Place for Working and Investing'; a 'Great Place for Living and Learning'; and a 'Great Destination to Visit'. There had been significant progress within some of the themes, in particular 'Creating an Environment to Encourage Economic Growth'. The priority actions identified and areas of progress were set out in Appendix 1 to the report. A number of key areas of progress were highlighted within this report. Some of the key areas of progress noted included the Hawick Business Growth project with £3.625million of Scottish Government funding; Relocation of Business Gateway to Tower Mill, Hawick; the completion of Hawick Town Centre Marketing Pilot; the Borders Railway Extension Feasibility Scoping Study report being progressed; progress on the design and consultation of Hawick Flood Protection Scheme; Tourism Marketing activity including completion of a signage audit and commissioning of a marketing company to progress delivery of the marketing action plan; and initial feasibility study research commissioned for a 'Townscape Heritage' programme. In response to a question regarding the occupancy of incubation units, Mr McGrath clarified that Business Gateway had been involved in the type of unit to be created to maximise their relevance to potential businesses.

DECISION:

- (a) **NOTED the progress made in taking forward key actions within the Hawick Action Plan since March 2017, as set out in Appendix 1 of the report.**
- (b) **AGREED that:**
 - (i) **the Executive would support further work with businesses and stakeholders in Hawick in 2018/19 as outlined in Appendix 1 to the report;**
 - (ii) **the feasibility studies previously identified for two former textiles mill sites were now targeted at alternative priority buildings, and authority was delegated to the Executive Director to agree these alternative buildings in consultation with the Executive Member for Business & Economic Development and the local Elected Members; and**
 - (iii) **the Executive Director would present a further progress report on the Action Plan to Committee by the end of March 2018.**

6. **PRIVATE BUSINESS**

AGREED under Section 50A(4) of the Local Government (Scotland) Act 1973 to exclude the public from the meeting during consideration of the business detailed in the Appendix to this minute on the grounds that it involved the likely disclosure of exempt information as defined in the relevant paragraphs of part 1 of schedule 7A to the Act.

SUMMARY OF PRIVATE BUSINESS

7. BORDERLANDS INITIATIVE

The Executive Committee considered a report by the Executive Director setting out progress in taking forward the Borderlands Initiative.

The meeting concluded at 11.30 am

This page is intentionally left blank

ANNUAL TAXI FARES REVIEW 2017/18

Report by Service Director Regulatory Services

EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

30 January 2018

1 PURPOSE AND SUMMARY

- 1.1 **This report advises Members of the recent public consultation undertaken in connection with the statutory review of the current scale of charges for taxi fares.**
- 1.2 The Council as licensing authority is required in terms of Section 17 of the Civic Government (Scotland) Act 1982 ("the Act") to review the scales for fares and other charges in connection with the hire of a taxi at intervals not exceeding 18 months of the last review.
- 1.3 A report on the consultation with the taxi trade was presented to the Councils Executive on 17 October 2017
- 1.4 Following the Executives decision to keep taxi fares at their current rates the Act requires the council to then undertake a public consultation on taxi rates.

2 RECOMMENDATION

- 2.1 **I recommend that the Executive Committee decides:**
 - (a) **That taxi fare rates should remain unaltered in line with the outcome of the Council's established formula;**
 - (b) **Now that all consultations are complete Taxi Operators are written to in accordance with the Act and informed of the Councils decision.**

3 BACKGROUND

- 3.1 Scottish Borders Council, as Licensing Authority is required under Section 17 of the Act to review and then fix scales for fares and other charges at intervals of not exceeding 18 months from the date the last scales came into effect. The current scales came into effect on 10 October 2016.
- 3.2 At the Council's Executive meeting on 17 October 2017 a paper was presented that reported on the consultation with the taxi trade and it was agreed that taxi fares will remain unaltered in 2018 and a further review of taxi fares would be undertaken within 18 months as required by the Act.
- 3.3 Following the Executives decision to keep taxi fares at their current rates the Act requires the council to then undertake a public consultation on taxi rates. Item 4.9 of the Executive report of 17 October 2017 and item 4.1 below explains the background to this.

4 TAXI FARES; OUTCOME OF CONSULTATION WITH THE PUBLIC

- 4.1 As part of the review the Council is obliged to consult with persons or organisations appearing to it to be, or to be representative of, the operators of taxis operating within its area. Following that consultation the Council is required to review the existing scales, and thereafter propose new scales (whether at altered rates or the same rates). The proposed scales, their effect, and the date upon which it is proposed they come into effect must then be published in a newspaper and representations invited from the public in writing by a stated deadline. The Council must then consider any representations received.
- 4.2 In accordance with the usual guidance the public consultation ran for 4 weeks. It commenced on 25 October 2017 and ended on 24 November 2017.
- 4.3 The consultation was advertised in local newspapers and also appeared in some on-line versions of the local press. The council also advertised the consultation on its website and its social media outlets.
- 4.4 A total of 6 people responded to the consultation. Their responses can be viewed in APPENDIX 1.
- 4.5 Of the 6 people who responded 2 were taxi operators whose views have been previously captured and were included in the report of 17 October 2017. Despite having seen these previously, their views are included in the appendix.
- 4.6 Of the 6 responses:
 - 1 was a suggestion around a new fare structure and
 - 2 were in favour of keeping taxi fares at current rates and
 - 3 were in favour in an increase to current rates.

5 IMPLICATIONS

5.1 Financial

There are no costs to the Council, other than officer time in the reviews, attached to any of the recommendations contained in this report.

5.2 Risk and Mitigations

The Council does have a statutory duty to consider reviewing taxi fares within 18 months of the previous review and therefore may risk a legal

challenge and reputational damage if it does not comply with this requirement, thus this report and its recommendations for risk mitigation.

5.3 **Equalities**

An Equality Impact Assessment has been conducted and no negative impacts have become apparent. Indeed maintaining the licence fee will lead to a positive impact for the whole community as access should remain status quo.

5.4 Equalities will need reviewed for impact if any increase recommended.

5.5 **Acting Sustainably**

The Council has a statutory responsibility to review taxi fares within 18 months of the previous review.

5.6 **Carbon Management**

Taxis are a carbon consuming service. However this fact must be balanced against the level of provision particularly in rural areas where mainstream local bus services cannot or do not operate.

5.7 **Rural Proofing**

Not applicable as this is not a new policy.

5.8 **Changes to Scheme of Administration or Scheme of Delegation**

No changes to either the Scheme of Administration or the Scheme of Delegation are required as a result of the recommendations in this report.

6 **CONSULTATION**

6.1 The Chief Financial Officer, the Monitoring Officer, the Chief Legal Officer, the Chief Officer Audit and Risk, the Chief Officer HR and the Clerk to the Council have been consulted in the preparation of this report.

Approved by

Brian Frater

Service Director Regulatory Services

Signature

Author(s)

Name	Designation and Contact Number
Timothy Stephenson	Passenger Transport Manager – 01835 825182

Background Papers: None

Previous Minute Reference: Executive Committee 17th October 2017

Note – You can get this document on tape, in Braille, large print and various computer formats by contacting the address below. Jacqueline Whitelaw can also give information on other language translations as well as providing additional copies.

Contact Jacqueline Whitelaw, Place, Scottish Borders Council, Council Headquarters, Newtown St Boswells, Melrose, TD6 0SA, Tel 01835 825253, Fax 01835 825071, email JWhitelaw@scotborders.gov.uk.

This page is intentionally left blank

Public responses are listed below. They appear in the order they were received and are unedited other than all references to individual names or taxi companies have been removed

Response 1

All the smaller companies require is the starting rate changed from £2.25 to £2.50 and £2.80 to £3.00 [REDACTED] now own virtually all the big companies and the 5% is on the whole fare , meaning the small independents might just go out of business due to the higher fares, some drivers are only working for £3.00 and hour, and having to work 70 hours or more to make ends meet yet the minimum wage has risen 3 times since our last rise

Response 2

12 pound return on the train to edinburgh and 20 from gala to bannerfield, thankfully driver turned the meter off on the low road i think he was getting embarrassed. Does anyone else think that the that taxi prices are high enough already.

Response 3

I think that the taxi fare are way to high. Aithought my wife and I will take the bus into Peebles for a night out instead of the car, we do get a taxi home as the buses are less frequent in the evenings and I believe that the taxi fares should be reduced to encourage people to use them in the evenings, particularly when having a drink, instead of driving home in there own vehicles

Response 4

Taxis are so important to rural dwellers that I believe they should be encouraged; and that the requested fare increase of 5% should be granted. It's not equitable that they should be expected to continue in business with no compensation for cost increases.

Response 5

Why in any other job you would get a pay rise but in taxi trade we get nothing fuel prices rise taxi test a joke taxi badge price a joke and get nothing for it and now a medical that u have to cover cost of your self

Response 6

I do not accept the Executive Committees decision on various grounds. I don't believe this format allows me a time factor to comment in full so I will be brief. 1: The formula is outdated and does not reflect the true costs of Operating a Licensed Taxi within the Local Authority area. Additionally, there is no access to the formula as it is based within a sealed portal operated by a University. 2: The majority of responders to the Fare Review requested an increase but this was ignored. 3: There was no formal opportunity for the trade to engage in the decision making on the day of the Executive Committees decision. 4: The decision makers have not proved that they have a competent knowledge of the Taxi trade and it is my belief that this lack of knowledge was always going to place the trade in a detrimental position. This is my position in brief

This page is intentionally left blank

Document is Restricted

This page is intentionally left blank