



## Children, Education and Safeguarding Committee

29 November 2018

<b>Title</b>	<b>Petition for debate</b>
<b>Report of</b>	Head of Governance
<b>Wards</b>	All
<b>Status</b>	Public
<b>Urgent</b>	No
<b>Key</b>	No
<b>Enclosures</b>	None
<b>Officer Contact Details</b>	Salar Rida – Governance Team Leader (acting) <a href="mailto:Salar.Rida@Barnet.gov.uk">Salar.Rida@Barnet.gov.uk</a>

### Summary

This report informs the Committee of a petition which meets the requisite number of signatures for reporting to a Theme Committee. The petition falls within the terms of reference of the Children, Education and Safeguarding Committee. The Committee is therefore asked to note the petition and provide its instructions as set out under the Recommendation.

### Officers Recommendation

That the Committee note the petition as detailed in Section 1 and decides on one of the following, to:

- a) Take no action;
- b) Refer the matter to a chief officer to provide a written response to Lead Petitioner within 20 working days; or
- c) Instruct an officer to prepare a report for a future meeting of the Committee on the issue(s) raised with a recommended course of action

## 1. WHY THIS REPORT IS NEEDED

- 1.1 In accordance with the Councils Constitution, Article 3, petitions with 2000-6,999 signatures will be reported to the relevant Theme Committee. The details of the petition are set out in the below table.

**Petition Title:** Oppose London Borough of Barnet's proposal to charge every child in every borough school

**Lead Petitioner:** Simon Moore

**Number of signatures:** 2223\*

*(Only signatures from Barnet residents have been counted towards the overall signature total as per the Council's Constitution, Article 3 – Residents and Public Participation)*

**Details:** Barnet council is launching its consultation with schools on several significant proposals in relation to the Schools Budget in 2019-20.

Namely that they start charging all the schools in the borough per pupil for previously funded support work from the Education Services Grant. In effect this will mean that each school in the Borough suddenly faces paying the council anywhere between £30-50 per pupil. With a school that has 400+ pupils that is a significant amount of money to suddenly find.

Secondly that each school pays a % of its annual budget direct to the council as a one off fee. In essence this means that schools will suddenly face paying a fee of in excess of £40,000 to the council.

This is motivated by a shortfall in the Boroughs budget. Not the schools themselves. So in essence the Borough is looking to address its financial situation by asking for schools to bale them out.

Given that the majority of the Borough's school's are already facing financial difficulty these proposed new payments by the council will force schools into further budget cuts to try to cover these demands (teacher redundancies, support worker lay off, cuts to learning resource budgets and material, cuts to SEN provision, risks to food provision, sports activities etc).

We do not feel it is the responsibility of Head teachers and schools to bail the council out of any financial difficulty or shortfall in its budget provision. This may well be caused by a shortfall in money given by central Government - but why should Schools have to sort this mess out?

We wish to state our opposition as parents and voters to this proposal.

We wish to protect our schools, maintain a proper level of education for our children and support teachers.

## **2. REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATIONS**

- 2.1 The Head of Governance received notification on 15 November 2018 of an e-petition with 3,936 signatures at the of time of submission. Following a review of the 3,936 signatures, against Barnet electoral addresses, the overall signature count from residents within Barnet was 2,223 which meets the 2,000 signatures threshold for reporting to a Theme Committee.

## **3. ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS CONSIDERED AND NOT RECOMMENDED**

- 3.1 Not applicable.

## **4. POST DECISION IMPLEMENTATION**

- 4.1 As per the Recommendations.

## **5. IMPLICATIONS OF DECISION**

### **5.1 Corporate Priorities and Performance**

- 5.1.1 N/A.

### **5.2 Resources (Finance & Value for Money, Procurement, Staffing, IT, Property, Sustainability)**

- 5.2.1 Not applicable.

### **5.3 Social Value**

- 5.3.1 Not applicable.

### **5.4 Legal and Constitutional References**

- 5.4.1 The Council's Constitution, Article 3 states that E-petitions submitted on external websites can be accepted by the council. Petition signatures must be from Barnet residents otherwise they will not count towards the overall signature total.

- 5.4.2 Article 3 of the Constitution also states that petitions with 2000-6,999 signatures which relate to matters outside the remit of an Area Committee, will be reported to the relevant Theme Committee. The Committee, when considering the petition may decide to:

- *Take no action;*
- *Refer the matter to a chief officer to provide a written response to Lead Petitioner within 20 working days; or*
- *Instruct an officer to prepare a report for a future meeting of the Committee on the issue(s) raised with a recommended course of action*

- 5.4.3 Under Article 7 of the Council's Constitution, the responsibilities of the Children, Education and Safeguarding Committee includes all matters relating to children, education and schools.

### **5.5 Risk Management**

5.5.1 N/A.

**5.6 Equalities and Diversity**

5.6.1 N/A in the context of this report.

**5.7 Corporate Parenting**

5.7.1 No direct or indirect impact in the context of this report.

**5.8 Consultation and Engagement**

5.8.1 N/A

**5.8 Insight**

5.8.1 N/A

**6. BACKGROUND PAPERS**

6.1 E-Petition published: <https://www.change.org/p/london-borough-of-barnet-oppose-london-borough-of-barnet-s-proposal-to-charge-every-child-in-every-borough-school>