

Report for: Cabinet, 14 July 2020

Title: University scheme for Haringey young people

Report

authorised by:



Ann Graham, Director of Children and Young People's Service

Lead Officer:

Eveleen Riordan, Assistant Director, Schools and Learning
020 8489 3607 eveleen.riordan@haringey.gov.uk

Ward(s) affected: All

Report for Key/

Non Key Decision: Key

1. Describe the issue under consideration

- 1.1 This report seeks agreement to fund a Local Authority university bursary scheme for young people from low income families (under £30k PA total income) from the academic year 2021. The scheme is intended to support an increase in the percentage of those students from low income families who can go on to university at the end of year 13 and graduate.
- 1.2 The scheme would, among other things, support a monthly (Sept to June) bursary of £300 for the duration of the degree course, mentoring from year 13 (or before) through to graduation, the cost of the UCAS application and visits to two university open days during year 12/13.
- 1.3 It is proposed that the scheme will run year on year, supporting up to 10 students through university at an eventual annual cost to the Council of £120k. The scheme would also make available a period of work experience within the Local Authority or one of its partners, aimed at the summer recess in the second year and based on two days a week for a period of eight weeks at London Living Wage.
- 1.4 Funding would come via Children and Young People's Service for the first year, and from a growth in the MTFS thereafter. The estimated cost (officer time) of administering the scheme has been factored into the annual cost. It is expected that recipients of the bursary would go on to mentor future participants, once they have graduated.
- 1.5 A panel of members (including the Cabinet Member for Children's and Families), officers, head teachers/educational professionals and partners will consider and make recommendations as to the beneficiaries each year based on an agreed set of criteria. The final decision to award support to young people under the scheme will be made by the Assistant Director, Schools and Learning. The scheme would be open to all young people who have lived in the borough for a minimum of three years at the time of application. In exceptional circumstances, young people with less than three years residence in the borough will be considered.

2. Cabinet Member Introduction

- 2.1 Education is unequal. Much too often, opportunities at school or university are skewed by where you come from. Outcomes clearly are too. Children from the most deprived families tend to do less well at school and are less likely to go on to university, or any other form of higher education. Among those that do go to university, the most deprived students are more likely to drop-out and less likely to secure a top class degree.
- 2.2 We know too that inequality persists beyond graduation day. The most advantaged graduates are more likely to be in a high-skilled job after graduating, and BAME Russell Group university graduates are more likely to be unemployed than their white peers.
- 2.3 No single injustice is responsible for the gap. Income and financial security are a major factor, but there are wider and subtler causes behind the gap too – ethnicity, class, health and household dynamics are just some of them.
- 2.4 A lot of the inequalities that distort educational opportunity are deep-set and will take wide-ranging interventions to overcome. We cannot reverse the government's 2016 decision to abolish maintenance grants for low-income students for example. But there is a clear role – indeed a leading role – that a local council can play to improve opportunities and outcomes for the most deprived residents in its borough. This scheme is central to that ambition. It sets out a slate of interventions to support children from some of the most deprived families in Haringey.
- 2.5 It creates a bursary grant fund that Haringey's young people can apply to. This will provide some extra financial security through their studies and substitute, to some extent, for the 'bank of Mum and Dad' that wealthier students can draw on. We are also creating a wider fund to cover the cost of open day visits and UCAS application fees.
- 2.6 The scheme also introduces a major programme of mentoring. This sets out to support schoolchildren as early as possible – before attainment begins to diverge along social lines in secondary school. We will bring together peer mentors from across the borough to support young people right through their education. From the transitional years at the start of secondary school, through GCSE choices, through university applications, through arrival at university itself, and all the way to graduation day. We are putting in place dedicated assistance with university applications as well for young people who are least likely to apply to university – or who may not apply for 'high status' Russell Group universities.
- 2.7 On top of this, we are creating placements within the council and our partners (to be paid at London Living Wage) to offer students relevant experience in a field that they wish to pursue and give them a foothold in the jobs market.
- 2.8 This is a scheme that aims to confront inequality at every stage of education – and with that to expand the life chances of our most deprived residents. It also aims to act as a catalyst, pulling in extra funding and assistance from partners, foundations and private donors to steadily expand the number of young people we can support every year.
- 2.9 We know we cannot end inequality alone, or for that matter overnight, but we can make a real contribution to the life chances of our most deprived residents – and begin to create a much fairer and more equal borough.

3. Recommendations

3.1 Cabinet is asked to:

- 1) Approve the creation of a Haringey University Scholarship Scheme with an eventual annual funding of £120,000 to assist young people from lower income families to access university with financial support.
- 2) Agree that the Assistant Director for Schools and Learning consult with schools and pupils over the summer on the proposals, mentoring and placement for the scholarship scheme and a second report is brought to Cabinet in autumn 2020 setting out responses to the consultation and detailed proposals for mentoring, placements, partnership work and administrative details.

4. Reasons for decision

- 4.1 Haringey is committed to creating greater equality, including in education and opportunities for access to higher education. Our borough has a stark socioeconomic gap between communities and, as the Borough Plan makes clear, the Council has a pivotal role to play in narrowing it. That ambition requires interventions on several fronts – of which higher education is just one.
- 4.2 The interventions in the university bursary scheme are designed in the context of wider inequalities. They aim not just to support young people who are weighing up the affordability of university or another form of higher education, but also to support them as they complete their university studies and with their entry to the job market afterwards through the provision of mentoring and work experience within the Local Authority or partner organisation during the summer recess in the second year.
- 4.3 Using a fund of £120k per year and based on an assumed bursary of £3k grant per annum for each student, based on ten students, the following is proposed:

Year 1: 10 students = £30k
Year 2: 20 students = £60k
Year 3: 30 students = £90k
- 4.4 This would provide a monthly sum (Sept to June inclusive) of £300 per month for each of the ten students. Other costs relating to mentoring and application support, together with administrative costs bring the total for the scheme up an eventual £120k per annum (see Appendix 4).
- 4.5 This report sets out details of the current education attainment gap for low income families and how the annual fund of £120k can support our young people from lower income families to access and achieve at higher education on a level that is closer to their higher income peers.

5. Alternative options considered

5.1 A number of alternative options were considered, including:

- A Southwark Scholarship Scheme approach
- A university grant: restricted to academic courses
- A Haringey Student Loan

5.2 Southwark Council's Scholarship Scheme covers the full cost of tuition fees for students (£9,000 per year). However, the bursary scheme as proposed by this report is favoured because it supports the young person's month to month living expenses by providing direct grant funding to give lower income students financial security that replicates some of the additional support middle income students often receive from their parents. Grants of this nature, which are smaller, can be distributed to more students – broadening the reach of the scheme.

5.3 A university grant that is restricted to academic courses was rejected on the basis that it would only support residents applying to university courses. Further, offering a cash grant for a certain type of course could create a perverse incentive, pushing individuals to choose an academic degree over another preferred form of higher education and to which they are more suited. The perceived hard line between academic and vocational courses is somewhat misleading. Some university courses are very clearly tied to a specific job or career. Some university courses include placements or internships, while some vocational courses include on-campus tuition. Creating a fund based on an unclear distinction could needlessly exclude some residents from support.

5.4 A Haringey Student Loan has been rejected because it would not reduce debt for students – and this is already a perceived barrier. The impact of reduced debt interest on a young person's decision to pursue university is likely to be minimal.

5.5 Further, a loan scheme would create a large upfront cost for the Council and a great deal of financial uncertainty. It is very hard to project how many students will go on to earn salaries above £21,000 (the threshold at which repayments to the Student Loan Company start to be made) and how consistently they will be earning.

5.6 A loan scheme would also require enforcement and collection. Staff resources would need to be allocated to this, potentially at a significant level of cost.

5.7 The Springboard Scholarship scheme as proposed, provides a broader 'opportunity fund' to give any eligible young person a route into post-18 education – and the opportunities that come with it.

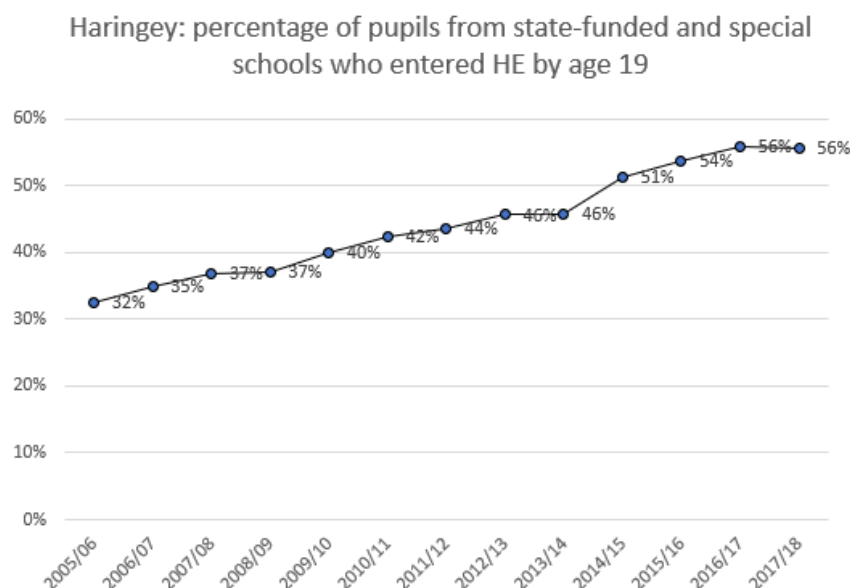
6. Background information

6.1 Haringey is the fourth most deprived borough in London. 34% of residents – and 40% of children – live below the poverty line. The map at Appendix 1 shows deprivation in Haringey by ward. The map at Appendix 2 shows more specific pockets of deprivation, using IDACI (Income Deprivation Affecting Children Index) data.

6.2 Higher education can be defined as any form of education that results in a level 4+ qualification. This includes a high national diploma (HND), foundation degree,

university degree or degree apprenticeship¹. More than half of London's young people now go into higher education (54%) by the age of 19. In Haringey, the number is a little higher (56%). That figure has risen steadily over the last fifteen years. In 2005 just under a third of Haringey's young people (32%) went on to higher education.

- 6.3** Graph 1 below, shows the percentage of young people in Haringey² from state funded and special schools who enter higher education by age 19.



Graph 1: % of Haringey young people entering higher education by age 19.

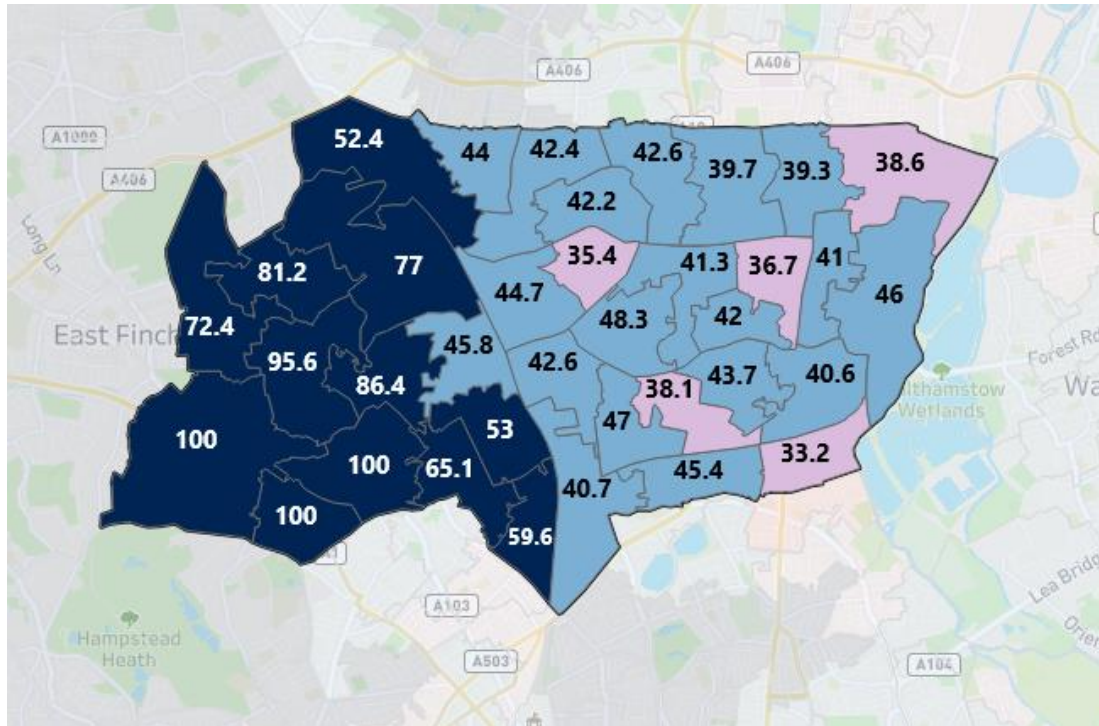
- 6.4** Entrance into higher education is unequal. There is a clear gap between the number of Haringey residents from lower income households who go on to university or another form of higher education, as compared to those from higher income families.
- 6.5** The map³ below shows the disparity between participation rates in higher education for different areas of Haringey (percentage sampled entering higher education). The data for this map uses Middle Layer Super Output Areas⁴ (MSOAs).

¹ <https://www.goodschoolsguide.co.uk/careers/higher-education/what-is-higher-education>

² <https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/statistics-on-higher-education-initial-participation-rates>

³ <https://www.officeforstudents.org.uk/data-and-analysis/young-participation-by-area/map-of-young-participation/>

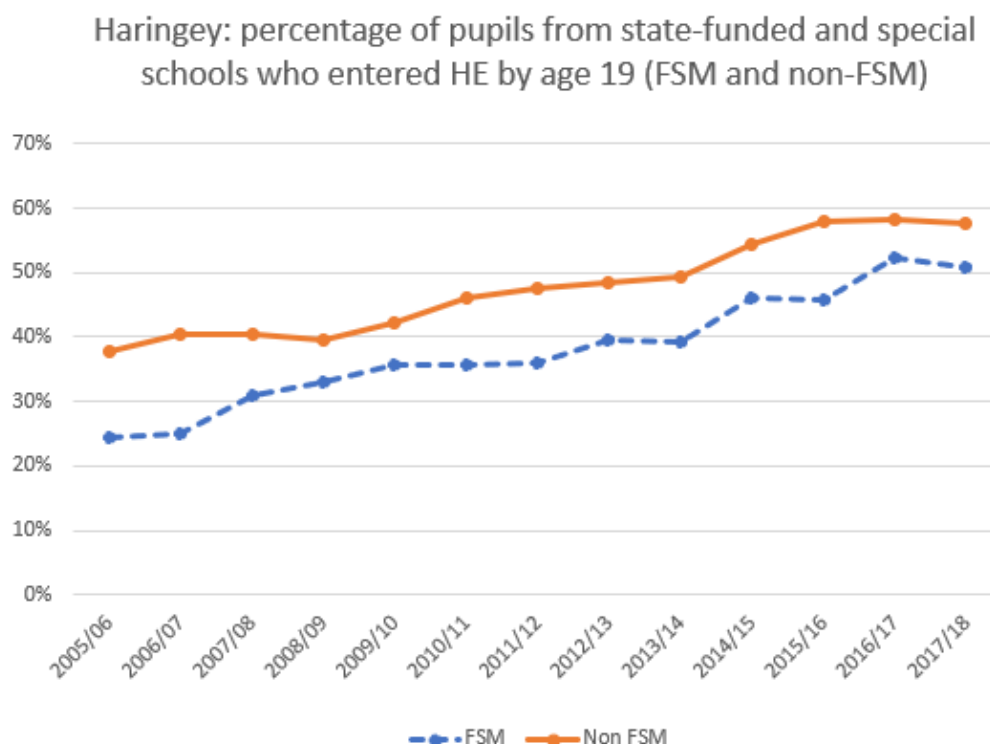
⁴ A Middle Layer Super Output Area is a geospatial statistical unit used in England and Wales to facilitate the reporting of small area statistics. They consist of contiguous Lower Layer Super Output Areas. They are part of the ONS coding system created by the Office for National Statistics.



Map showing disparity in take up of higher education across the borough.
The darkest colour (navy) shows the higher take up, medium (mid blue) shows the medium take up and the lighter colour (pink) shows the lowest take up wards.

- 6.6 Among young people in Haringey who receive Free School Meals (FSM), the proportion going on to higher education is a little lower (51%). By contrast 58% of those who do not receive FSM enter higher education. There are some limitations to FSM data as a measure of deprivation. Some households do not claim FSM despite eligibility, for several reasons. Some households have lost eligibility for FSM in recent years following changes to the welfare system but remain on a low-income.
- 6.7 Graph⁵ 2 below summarises the percentage of Haringey children who enter higher education by aged 19 by FSM and non-FSM.

⁵ <https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/statistics-on-higher-education-initial-participation-rates>



Graph 2: % of pupils from state-funded and special schools who entered higher education by age 19 (FSM and non-FSM)

- 6.8** National figures on university acceptances show that 18.9% of state-school pupils receiving FSM were accepted onto an undergraduate degree in 2019. By contrast, 35.6% of non-recipients of Free School Meals were accepted.⁶
- 6.9** Inequality and poverty create multiple barriers and blockages to higher education, known as the participation gap. These include but are not limited to:
- **Financial security gap:** residents from lower income households do not have the 'bank of mum and dad' to fall back on if they get into financial trouble during a higher education course. Maintenance grants for lower income students were removed in 2016.⁷ This reduces the number of lower income young people who are prepared to expose themselves to financial risk by going on to higher education.
 - **Application gap:** residents from lower income households are less likely to apply.
 - **Age gap:** older residents from lower income households are less likely to apply.
 - **Expectation gap:** residents from households where entrance into higher education is uncommon, or unprecedented, are less likely to apply.
 - **Aspiration gap:** residents from lower income households are less likely to apply to 'high status' institutions (such as the Russell Group of universities).
 - **Attainment gap:** pupil attainment begins to diverge before GCSE level.

⁶ <https://www.ucas.com/data-and-analysis/undergraduate-statistics-and-reports/ucas-undergraduate-end-cycle-reports/2019-end-cycle-report>

⁷ <https://www.theguardian.com/education/2016/aug/01/abolition-student-maintenance-grant-poorest-university-loans-tuition-fees>

- **Decision gap:** pupils who make GCSE subject choices with higher education in mind put themselves in a much better position to secure a course offer in Year 13.
- **Situational gap:** residents from lower income households are more likely to live in overcrowded homes with a compromised studying environment.

- 6.10** The barriers and blockages listed above are not exhaustive. Much deeper engagement is needed to unravel issues that prevent access to higher education in Haringey. A wider round of consultation is proposed over the summer of 2020 with our schools and with our young people to further unpick the barriers to accessing higher education for our young people, before final recommendations are put to Cabinet on the finer detail of the scheme, including the mentoring component. The final name of the scheme has not yet been agreed but will be set out as part of the autumn Cabinet report.
- 6.11** A wraparound package of support is proposed for residents who receive a Haringey Springboard Scholarship. To directly address affordability, bursary grants are proposed for residents facing the highest levels of financial insecurity, as well as payments for course application fees and campus visits. To address some of the broader environmental barriers, mentoring is also proposed utilising officers in the LA and partner organisations and, over time, also utilising graduate beneficiaries of the Springboard Scholarship. This will enable those who have benefitted from the scheme to be able to give back to other young people through their experiences and learning. Mentoring is proposed to a wider group of young people than just those who are awarded the bursary.
- 6.12** More detail on the higher education participation gap and the known barriers to entry nationally and in Haringey is set in Appendix 3 to this report.
- 6.13** It is proposed that the funding for the scheme will come from the following sources:
- 1) in year 1 only, the scheme will be funded via existing Schools and Learning Budget in Children's Services.
 - 2) in years 2 and 3 and in subsequent years (this is an ongoing scheme), full funding will come via growth in the MTFS.
- 6.14** Appendix 4 of this report sets out more detail on the breakdown of how the funding will be used year on year. This breakdown, in addition to the monthly bursary that ten students will receive, also sets out funding to support:
- Up to two higher education campus visits for up to 25 young people in year 12 (drawn from a shortlist of those being considered for the scheme).
 - UCAS⁸ application fees for up to 100 young people in year 13 and drawn from the shortlist of those being considered for the scheme.
 - Pre-application mentoring for up to 25 young people from years 11 and 12.
 - Application support (via With Insight⁹ or another similar organisation).

⁸ Universities and Colleges Admission Service: <https://www.ucas.com/about-us>

⁹ With Insight already supports young people in our borough. They provide an e-mentoring programme aimed at high potential black-heritage A-level students. They work with pupils from the Spring term of Year 12 to help them overcome barriers. Over 10 monthly sessions they are provided with a structured programme of support from relatable mentors.

- Placements within the local authority or partner organisation based on an eight week period of two days a week paid at the London Living Wage and aimed at the summer holiday of year 2 to provide work experience.
- Funding for a Council-based coordinator (10% of a full-time PO1 role @ £31,548).

6.15 This report seeks to agree the funding for the springboard scheme only. A further Cabinet report on the detail of how the scheme will work will be brought to Cabinet in autumn 2020. We will work closely with our schools to ensure that the scheme complement and does not replicate any schemes already in place in schools. The autumn Cabinet report will set out detail including but not limited to:

- i. Eligibility criteria for the scheme, to include:
 - a) Residents with a total household income of below £30,000.
 - b) Applying for any higher education course (Level 5/6), including vocational courses, but excluding post-graduate courses (Level 7/8)
 - c) No minimum grade requirements.
 - d) Have been resident in the borough for at least three years.
 - e) An identified learning need.
- ii. Panel makeup – to include members, officers, head teachers/education professionals and partners.
- iii. Selection criteria, to include:
 - a) barriers an applicant has faced (such as caring responsibilities, mental health/trauma issues, disabilities and others);
 - b) parental situation/characteristics (drug and alcohol issues/ others) and whether parents went to university (a key factor identified in research);
 - c) material deprivation: access to essential goods and services
 - d) additional indicators of financial insecurity, including:
 - Free School Meal eligibility.
 - Universal Credit.
 - Council Tax Reduction eligibility.
- iv. Mentoring – as part of the scheme, a mentoring component (mentors drawn from the local authority, partners and graduates of the scheme) would also be delivered to each young person, including:
 - Starting peer mentoring for pupils before GCSE choices, at Key Stage 3
 - Assign mentors to a fixed number of eligible applicants (25 young people)
 - Mentors assigned to grant recipients will continue to mentor through transition to higher education and during the course
 - Potential for a period of second year holiday work experience within the local authority or in one of the partner organisations.
- v. School governors will be consulted with on the proposal and contribute towards the detail of the scheme and how it will be delivered.

6.16 In conclusion, a bursary scheme would help support young people from low income families and for whom university progression has not previously been an option, to secure a degree or equivalent and therefore widen their life opportunities. Of Haringey pupils who went to Russell Group universities in 2017, 9% were from disadvantaged backgrounds and 20% from non-disadvantaged backgrounds. Providing this bursary would contribute towards reducing the deterrent effect of debt,

reducing the financial risk of taking on full-time education and provide the value of a financial safety net for those young people.

- 6.17** This report asks Cabinet to agree the year on year funding for the scheme, with a further Cabinet report to come in autumn 2020 to set out the detail of the scheme, including eligibility, selection and administration.

7. Contribution to strategic outcomes

- 7.1** Borough Plan objectives and outcomes supported include:

- 7.1.1** The proposal links to Priority 2 – People – of the Haringey Borough Plan and particularly supports that “Every young person, whatever their background, has a pathway to success for the future”.
- 7.1.2** Consultation on a Haringey Economic Development Strategy (EDS) has been delayed from March 2020 because of Covid 19. The focus of the EDS is on jobs, growth, and prosperity. The emerging EDS will identify the opportunities and challenges of the local economy. This bursary scheme will support the opportunities and life chances of those from families where total household income is currently very low.
- 7.1.3** Community Wealth-Building framework aims to create an economy that is rooted in the community, with the council leading by example. It means the council will support residents economically and socially, with a focus on employment, particularly in areas with high levels of deprivation.
- 7.1.4** The Fairness Commission recommendations include a fair start in life for children and young people.

8. Statutory Officers comments (Chief Finance Officer (including procurement), Assistant Director of Corporate Governance, Equalities)

Finance

- 8.1.1** This report is proposing to set up a new scheme to support 10 students a year to access higher education through a combination of individual bursaries and meeting expenses associated with applications and work placements.
- 8.1.2** The following table shows the associated costs with implementing this scheme:

Table showing the total cost of the scheme by year from 2020/21 to 2023/24

Academic year	2020/21	2021/22	2022/23	2023/24
Number of student bursaries	0	10	20	30
Bursary payments to students		£ 30,000	£ 60,000	£ 90,000
Application and placement support	£ 13,000	£ 13,000	£ 24,000	£ 30,000
Total cost of scheme	£ 13,000	£ 43,000	£ 84,000	£ 120,000

- 8.1.3** The cost of the application support costs in 2020/21 can be met from existing agreed resources. The costs for 2021/22 onwards will be subject to additional budgets being agreed within the MTFS.

Legal (Gina Clarke: Principal Lawyer, Corporate, Employment and Education

- 8.1.4 Section 1 of the Localism Act 2011 confers on local authorities a general power of competence to do anything that individuals generally may do. This is a broad, flexible power of first resort, which can be used even if legislation already exists that allow a local authority to do something. However local authorities may not use the general power of competence to do anything that the authority is unable to do under a pre-commencement limitation or under a post-commencement limitation that is expressed to apply.
- 8.1.5 The general power of competence enables the Council to provide financial support to assist young people from lower income families to access university.
- 8.1.6 As to setting eligibility criteria for young people to meet to apply for the scheme, the Council would need to ensure that the criteria set does not amount to indirect discrimination. Indirect discrimination may occur where, what may seem to be a neutral criterion or practice, puts persons sharing the protected characteristics at a particular disadvantage. A criterion which indirectly discriminates against a group sharing a protected characteristic is unlawful unless it can be objectively justified, that using the criteria is a proportionate means of achieving a legitimate aim.
- 8.1.7 Examples of what constitutes a legitimate aim are - ensuring that benefits are targeted at those who most need them; preventing fraud or other forms of abuse or inappropriate use of services provided by the service provider; protecting the public purse.
- 8.1.8 The use of criteria to access services is reasonable as a means of restricting the use or provision of the service to a selected group, where it is necessary to do this, to ensure that the benefit of the scheme is restricted to pupils living in the borough for a certain period presents minimal risk of a legal challenge, as it is proposed in exceptional circumstances pupils not meeting the proposed residential criteria will be considered. Further the justification for restricting provision would be to protect the public and to ensure that benefits are targeted to those who most need them. The Council's public sector equality duty (PSED) is referred to in the Equalities section of this report. This duty requires the Members to have due regard the requirements of the PSED in their decision-making processes.
- 8.1.9 To demonstrate that the Council have had 'due regard' to its equalities duties, there is no prescriptive way in which due regard is evidenced. However, it is generally advisable that an equalities impact assessment (EIA) is carried out, as this provides a method of assessing equalities aims.
- 8.1.10 The comments contained in the Equality Section refer to appendix 3 of the report regarding the analysis that has been carried on pupils from different backgrounds and what is known about disabilities.

- 8.1.11 The PSED is a continuing duty, and as the details of Scheme are to be developed; to ensure that equalities evidence is taken account of through the decision-making process, and due weight is given to equalities aims, it is advisable that an EIA is carried out, and included in the further report to Cabinet on the Scheme in the autumn.

Equality

- 8.1.12 The Council has a Public Sector Equality Duty under the Equality Act (2010) to have due regard to the need to:

- Eliminate discrimination, harassment and victimisation and any other conduct prohibited under the Act
- Advance equality of opportunity between people who share those protected characteristics and people who do not
- Foster good relations between people who share those characteristics and people who do not.

- 8.1.13 The three parts of the duty applies to the following protected characteristics: age, disability, gender reassignment, pregnancy/maternity, race, religion/faith, sex and sexual orientation. Marriage and civil partnership status apply to the first part of the duty.

- 8.1.14 The proposed decision is to approve the creation of a Haringey University Scholarship Scheme to assist young people from lower income families to access university with financial support. The people that the decision will affect include young people from lower income households (under £30k p.a.). In addition to socio-economic disadvantage, young people from lower income households are more likely to share certain protected characteristics. For example, those young people are more likely than the Haringey average or the London average to be from BAME communities, Christian or Muslim families, and to have disabilities or serious health conditions.

- 8.1.15 Appendix 3 of this report sets out how BAME pupils in Haringey, aside from those with Bangladeshi backgrounds, are less likely than White British pupils to go to Russell group universities. Appendix 3 also notes how pupils from more disadvantaged backgrounds are less likely to access higher education and more likely to drop out of university. We also know that pupils who have disabilities, serious health conditions, and/or caring responsibilities are less likely than average to access higher education. The objectives of the decision are to address these existing inequalities in access to higher education. To the extent that the Haringey University Scholarship Scheme achieves this objective, it will advance equality of opportunity for those young people who are under-represented within higher education. The scheme can be expected to improve the life chances of disadvantaged people and thereby increase equality in Haringey.

- 8.1.16 Haringey Council will have due regard for the aims of the public sector equality duty in the operation of the University Scholarship Scheme. Appropriate measures will be taken to ensure that the scheme is accessible,

to prevent any indirect discrimination, and to address any inequalities that may arise during the scheme's operation.

9. Use of Appendices

9.1 The following appendices are attached to this report:

Appendix 1	Deprivation in Haringey by ward
Appendix 2	Specific pockets of deprivation, using IDACI (Income Deprivation Affecting Children Index) data.
Appendix 3	Further information and evidence on the participation gap
Appendix 4	Summary of cost of bursary year on year

10. Local Government (Access to Information) Act 1985

10.1 All background documents used to support this report have been referenced in the footnotes and links to the reports provided.