Lewisham Labour Group
Task and Finish Group Proforma

Proposed title *This should be written as a question. What is the main question that you are looking to answer? Ideally use "how" I.e. "How can we improve……XXX?"*	How can we identify the lack of access to the Wi-Fi network, to improve connectivity, along with educational outcomes, for those pupils most in need?
Overview *Provide 2-3 sentences explaining the proposed investigation in more detail including the key areas that you are proposing to look at.*	The investigation will identify failings in internet access and wifi connectivity relied upon by pupils, particularly those already identified as under achieving prior to lockdown due to the pandemic, who will need to catch-up via on line learning outside of the school environment – mainly at home.
Reason for proposal *Why do you think that a task and finish group is the most appropriate way to address this issue / answer this question? Where has the suggestion come from? (I.e. through resident engagement, casework, external inspection, performance information.)*	The Mayor of London has launched a new taskforce to tackle the digital divide, and amongst other issues support children in need. He has allocated £1.5m over the next two years for this, part of the work will be to map out reliable connectivity across London. At a recent Webinar chaired by the Mayor of London, it was also mentioned that if there are issues with Wi-Fi hotspots in individual boroughs to let the taskforce team know. Ofcom estimates over 880,000 UK children have only a mobile internet connection at home. The task and finish group can work alongside schools/officers to help identify those households most in need. This will also provide detailed information for targeted pupil support and to pass on to the taskforce team, along with specific, up-to-date information for inclusion in future applications for external funding.
Policy Context *How does the proposal support delivery of the Lewisham Corporate Strategy; national/regional policies, initiatives; legislation etc.*	I believe this proposal will help us identify and better support the educational achievements, and outcomes, for those Lewisham pupils who will be reliant on a good network connection, both now and in the future. In addition to this it will support the Level-up agenda aimed at ensuring children get guaranteed access to learning.
Criteria for the investigation *(Essential)* • *Is the proposed investigation timely? Why?* • *Is it a strategic and significant issue? How?* • *Is it of concern to one or more sections of the population? Who?* *(Desirable)*	This proposal is very timely and coincides with the launch of the London Mayor's task force to tackle the digital divide. Moreover, most children have just begun returning to school after almost a year being home schooled. We will need to do all we can to support their learning outside of the school environment and access to a reliable network service will be crucial. This can only be good for Lewisham schools, parents and pupils.

• *Is the issue of concern to partners or stakeholders? How?* • *Will the investigation add value in terms of improving the council's or partner's performance or service delivery? How?* • *Will the investigation be duplicating any other work? What?* • *What control or influence does the Council have in this area?*	
Sources of evidence *Do you have any thoughts/ideas on where you might gather evidence from? e.g. research or site visits. (Officers will be able to recommend suggestions and help with this.)*	We can gather evidence from parents and schools. Officers have also begun a review of buildings across the borough to expand services and provide better support for families. We can also get technical information from local network providers. I am also open to other suggestions that would help with this work.
Co-optees / Technical advisors? *Would the task and finish group benefit from having expert input such as an academic or local expert?*	BT and Vodaphone's expert technical advice and support would be very helpful.
Suggested timeframe *Do you estimate / suggest that the investigation take 3, 6, 9 or 12 months? Outline your suggested timetable for evidence gathering.*	At this stage it is difficult to say, I would estimate 6 – 9 months.
Equalities Impact *Identify any equalities issues that might be applicable.*	
Councillor(s) submitting the proposal *Please list the names of the submitting councillor(s)*	Cllr Colin Elliott