

Report of the Director of Place to the meeting of Corporate Overview and Scrutiny Committee to be held on 21 February 2018.

AG

Subject:

Draft Bradford District Strategic approach to Tackling Poverty 2018-2020

Summary statement:

The report presents the draft Bradford District Strategic Approach to Tackling Poverty 2018-2020 along with data measures that will be used to evidence impact of activity at a District and lower levels.

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Portfolio:

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Overview & Scrutiny Area:

Corporate

1. SUMMARY

The report presents the draft Bradford District Strategic Approach to Tackling Poverty 2018-2020 along with data measures that will be used to evidence impact of activity at a District and lower levels.

2. BACKGROUND

2.1 The Strategic Director of Place, Steve Hartley, presented Corporate Overview and Scrutiny Committee of the 2 February 2017 with a progress report on implementation of the recommendations made by Corporate Overview and Scrutiny Committee of the 29 June 2016 and Council Executive of the 19 July 2016 that followed the Bradford Poverty Scrutiny Review.

2.2 Corporate Overview and Scrutiny resolved as follows:

That this Committee requests that the Poverty Strategy be presented to this Committee, which also includes quantifiable data that analyses the impact of activities that are being undertaken as part of the Strategy.

2.3 The draft Bradford District Strategic Approach to Tackling Poverty 2018-2020 has been developed with consideration of the Scrutiny Review recommendations and following workshops and consultation with the multi-agency Bradford District Anti-poverty Co-ordination Group (APCG).

2.4 Drawing on the Joseph Rowntree 5 Point Plan for Solving Poverty, the Approach has five priorities as follows:

1. Boost income and reduce costs
2. Deliver an effective benefits system
3. Improve education standards and raise skills
4. Strengthen families and communities
5. Promote long-term economic growth benefitting everyone

2.5 Whilst much action to address the recommendations within the Scrutiny Poverty Review is taking place across the District, there are additional actions within the strategic approach that aim to bring work together to improve outcomes for people such as the Anti-poverty Co-ordination Group working together and through their own individual organisations to raise awareness around Universal Credit and entitlement to other welfare benefits, promoting membership of Credit Unions.

2.6 A further action within the Approach is to involve people with a lived experience of poverty in developing local response to it. The Large families conference, described in 3.3 below, brought home to those present the importance of hearing about the impact of policy on people's lives. Experience from other areas where the Poverty Truth Commissions have operated shows that people with a lived experience of poverty have valuable insight into what would help and what does not. The Commissions are made up of local decision-makers, leaders and people. The Leeds Poverty Truth Commission reported back on the 2 February 2018 and launched its Humanfesto. – the key points in this manifesto are:

- People experiencing poverty should be in the leadership of programmes to address it
 - People writing about poverty should take care to use language that is respectful to those experiencing it
 - Poverty creates isolation. People should reach to those experiencing poverty. This will help to build stronger and more resilient communities
- 2.7 The Approach acknowledges that work is already undertaken across the District to reduce and mitigate the impacts of poverty and that this work will and should continue, for this reason this Approach aims to:
- Reduce duplication in effort by maintaining a broad overview of strategy, plans and activity across the District
 - Influence and encourage strategic and delivery partnerships, groups and providers to develop and deliver their plans and actions to reflect the five anti-poverty priorities within this approach
 - Concentrate effort where further collaborative partnership working would make an impact
 - Identify gaps or barriers to progress and consider how these can be filled or removed
 - Try out new approaches where gaps or barriers to progress have been identified
 - Collaborate with partners across West Yorkshire, the region, nationally, globally or virtually where this would support delivering on our priorities.
- 2.8 The Approach is underpinned by a delivery framework along with a set of quantifiable data that will evidence impact of activity at District and lower levels and over time.
- 2.9 Once the Approach is endorsed by the Anti-poverty Co-ordination Group, consideration will be given to implementation of each specific activity and if any additional data can be used to evidence impact of implementation.
- 2.10 Further comments on this draft are being sought from the APCG and Corporate Overview and Scrutiny Committee before it will be shared with wider partners and other interested parties.
- 2.11 The Strategic Approach will be a live document, with additional activities being added as need is identified and being removed as issues are addressed.
- 2.12 The APCG will develop and deliver awareness and workshop sessions with partners, groups and others with a role in tackling poverty to support them to reflect the five priorities in this plan in their own plans and activities.
- 2.13 APCG will also collaborate with others to promote and provide partner and public awareness events across the District as need and capacity allows.

2.14 The draft document is at Appendix A to this report.

3. OTHER CONSIDERATIONS

3.1 Whilst developing this strategy the APCG has also been actively engaged in developing, promoting and delivering events aimed at raising awareness of the impacts of poverty and of support available to help people who are experiencing it.

3.2 During Financial Inclusion Week 2017 the Group was involved in all aspects of the locally organised 'Manage your Money Week' activities that ran from 30 October to 3rd November 2017.

Workshop

The week started with a workshop for Voluntary and Community Sector organisations, along with other partners, in City Hall where information about help available to sign-post and support people in poverty was provided along with an update on the experience of our partner, Incommunities, of supporting tenants moving over to Universal Credit and the impact this had had on these families. The event was opened by Council Leader Cllr Susan Hinchcliffe and chaired by our own Anti-Poverty Champion Cllr Cath Bacon. The event also provided an opportunity for individuals from organisations to meet and develop useful networks

Feedback from the event suggests that more of these events would be welcomed.

Roadshows

This also saw two road shows delivered to the public at Keighley and Bradford where people could get a wide range of information ranging from the benefits of joining a credit union through to switching their energy provider to White Rose Energy.

Members of the public who provided feedback about the event they attended, indicated that they had been provided with useful information to help them manage their money.

3.3 The Group was also a key partner, with Liverpool University and the Children's Society, in developing and delivering a national conference that considered the impacts of poverty and welfare reform on large families.

Large families, poverty and welfare reform conference 13 November 17

The conference opened with members of the local community activist group 'Hope Rising Action Group' giving personal accounts of how changes to the welfare system had affected their families. The accounts were moving – and some in the room were moved to tears. The packed conference heard about children being sent home from school as their parents were unable to afford to buy the 'logoed' trousers that made up part of their school uniform or hiding that they'd grown out of their shoes knowing that their parents didn't have the money to replace them. Delegates also heard about women making the choice between heating or eating food.

Hearing from real people, who at that moment were experiencing poverty, set the tone for the conference and also brought it home that peoples' voices must be heard when developing any policy or strategies that impact them.

After hearing the accounts of real people, the Council's own Anti-Poverty Champion, Cllr Cath Bacon, committed at the conference to re-look at the Council's Discretionary Housing Benefit policy.

- 3.4 The review of the Bradford District Partnership (BDP) may require some reporting arrangements to be changed.
- 3.5 The Anti-Poverty Co-ordination Group will endeavour to work with the BDP led Keighley East Locality Prevention and Early Help Project with a view to implementing and testing new collaborative and small scale approaches.

4. FINANCIAL & RESOURCE APPRAISAL

There are none arising from this report

5. RISK MANAGEMENT AND GOVERNANCE ISSUES

There are none arising from this report

6. LEGAL APPRAISAL

There are none arising from this report

7. OTHER IMPLICATIONS

7.1 EQUALITY & DIVERSITY

- 7.1.1 The Poverty Scrutiny Review highlighted a number of equality and diversity related issues. Research has also highlighted similar issues, such as a link to poorer health, lower educational outcomes etc.
- 7.1.2 The Anti-Poverty Co-ordination Group will consider equality and diversity issues in relation to its work.
- 7.1.3 Key Performance Indicators will be used to evidence overall outcomes of anti-poverty work across the District as well as the impact on individuals, groups and communities with protected equality characteristics.

7.2 SUSTAINABILITY IMPLICATIONS

There are none arising from this report

7.3 GREENHOUSE GAS EMISSIONS IMPACTS

There are none arising from this report

7.4 COMMUNITY SAFETY IMPLICATIONS

There are none arising from this report

7.5 HUMAN RIGHTS ACT

There are none arising from this report

7.6 TRADE UNION

There are none arising from this report

7.7 WARD IMPLICATIONS

The Anti-poverty Co-ordination Group intends to work directly with Council officers with a direct remit of developing and monitoring ward action plans.

8. NOT FOR PUBLICATION DOCUMENTS

None

9. RECOMMENDATIONS

That Corporate Overview and Scrutiny Committee:

- 10.1 Accept the progress made to date against the recommendation of the Corporate Overview and Scrutiny Committee of the 2 February 2017
- 10.2 Provide their comments on the draft Strategic Approach presented
- 10.3 Suggest other action the Committee believes the Anti-poverty Co-ordination Group should or could be taking to make a positive impact against poverty in the District.

11. APPENDICES

Appendix A: Draft Bradford District Strategic Approach to Tackling Poverty 2018-2020

12. BACKGROUND DOCUMENTS

[Scrutiny Poverty Review report 2016](#)

[Corporate Overview and Scrutiny Committee 29 June 2016](#)

[Council Executive 19 July 2016](#)

[Corporate Overview and Scrutiny Committee 2 February 2017](#)

[JRF 5 Point Plan for Solving Poverty](#)

Leeds Poverty Truth Commission - [Humanefesto](#)