

Report of the Strategic Director of Place to the meeting of Council Executive to be held on 8 January 2018

Subject:

AG

Anti-poverty Strategy: Bradford District Anti-Poverty Co-ordination Group's Approach for Tackling Poverty.

Summary statement:

Following a Corporate Overview and Scrutiny Review in 2016, Councillors and officers have been working with partners to (a) harmonise all strategies and initiatives tasked with alleviating poverty in the district and (b) developing a partnership approach by creating the Anti-Poverty Co-ordination Group including partners from the social housing, health, voluntary and community and faith sectors.

This has developed a 'living document' which provides an overview of what partners and the council are currently doing and planning to do to alleviate poverty in the District.

Following discussion and a recommendation at the Corporate Overview and Scrutiny Committee of the 15 November 2018, the draft Anti-poverty Strategy: Bradford District Anti-Poverty Co-ordination Group's Approach for Tackling Poverty is presented to Executive for their consideration and approval.

Views from Executive are also requested on how we engage with the community of interest on poverty.

Steve Hartley
Strategic Director of Place

Portfolio:

Neighbourhood and Community Safety

Report Contact: Helen Johnston, Policy Officer
Phone: (01274) 434401
E-mail: helen.johnston@bradford.gov.uk

Overview & Scrutiny Area:

Corporate

1. SUMMARY

Following endorsement of the recommendations of the Corporate Overview and Scrutiny Review in 2016, Councillors and officers have been working with partners to (a) harmonise strategies and initiatives tasked with alleviating poverty in the district and (b) developing a partnership approach by creating the Anti-Poverty Co-ordination Group including partners from the social housing, health, voluntary and community and faith sectors.

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Following discussion and a recommendation at the Corporate Overview and Scrutiny Committee of the 15 November 2018, the draft Anti-poverty Strategy: Bradford District Anti-Poverty Co-ordination Group's Approach for Tackling Poverty is presented to Executive for their consideration and approval.

Views from Executive are also requested on how we engage with the community of interest on poverty.

2. BACKGROUND

- 2.1 Given the nature of Council activity, much of what we do is focused on tackling poverty, whether this is through creating good jobs and inclusive growth through the economic strategy, improving the healthy quality of life through the health and wellbeing strategy or removing barriers to community cohesion through our stronger communities' strategy. Given the commitment of the Council, and our partners, to tackle poverty and its causes, it is important we present this activity together coherently.

Scrutiny Review

- 2.2 A report on the Scrutiny Poverty Review was discussed at Corporate Overview and Scrutiny on 29 June 2016 and at Council Executive on the 19 July 2016.
- 2.3 This report made 22 recommendations and Scrutiny received reports on progress on 2 February 2017 and 21 February 2018 respectively. At these meetings, the Scrutiny Committee agreed that most recommendations have already been delivered.
- 2.4 Following scrutiny's initial review, there has been activity to oversee all existing work in the authority through one overarching approach whilst developing a multi-agency approach to tackle poverty in the district. This has included creating a Bradford District Anti-Poverty Co-ordination Group (APCG).
- 2.5 Corporate Overview and Scrutiny Committee received a further report on the 15 November 2018 that detailed the work of the APCG and presented the draft Anti-poverty Strategy: Bradford District Anti-Poverty Co-ordination Group's Approach for Tackling Poverty for the Committee's comment and endorsement.

2.6 Corporate Overview and Scrutiny Committee resolved as follows:

- (1) That the final draft Bradford District Anti Poverty Co-ordination Group's Approach for Tackling Poverty 2018-2020 be accepted and endorsed.
- (2) That the draft Anti Poverty Strategy be presented to the Executive for approval taking into consideration the comments raised by this Committee.
- (3) That a progress report in relation to the work of the Bradford District Anti Poverty Co-ordination Group and progress against the delivery plan be presented to this Committee in 12 months time.

Working in Partnership – The Anti-Poverty Co-ordination Group (APCG)

- 2.7 It is well understood that to have an impact on poverty in a place, it is critical that Councils take a multi-agency approach and work with partners across the district¹. Therefore, following the initial scrutiny review, significant effort was made to convene a partnership approach to addressing poverty in Bradford District.
- 2.8 The Anti-Poverty Co-ordination Group (APCG) is attended by Council members and officers including the Neighbourhood & Community Safety Portfolio Holder, the Strategic Director for Place and the Member Anti-poverty Champion. The group also includes membership from statutory partners, the voluntary and community sector, including City of Sanctuary, and faith organisations. A full list of membership is available within the draft Anti-Poverty Strategy at Appendix 1.

Draft Anti-Poverty strategy

- 2.9 The draft Anti-poverty Strategy: Bradford District Anti-Poverty Co-ordination Group's Approach for Tackling Poverty has been developed with consideration to the Scrutiny Review recommendations and the concerns, interests and feedback of partners. The following activities have supported this process:
- Workshops and consultation with the multi-agency Bradford District Anti-Poverty Co-ordination Group (APCG)
 - A workshop with the Bradford District Voluntary and Community Services Assembly (through their Poverty and Universal Credit Summit in May 2018)
 - Wider consultation with elected representatives and representative groups across the district that included an invite to comment and three consultation three drop in sessions at Carlisle Business Centre, Keighley Civic Centre and Bradford City Hall. Appendix 3 provides a list of those consulted.
- 2.10 A number of positive comments were made from the wider consultation, with support expressly given for the plans in the strategy to:
- Work to more closely understand the experiences of those living in poverty in the district.

¹ The following JRF report highlights how partnership working is best practice for authorities <https://www.jrf.org.uk/report/addressing-poverty-through-local-governance>

- Consideration to be given to the use of social inclusion currency as a means of getting people involved in volunteering and other activities aimed at improving their wellbeing and opportunities, getting people socially connected within their communities and as a means of helping people, especially those with lower incomes, to take part in a range of normal social activities.

Other feedback included:

- Promote volunteering more as it supports wellbeing and can lead to employment opportunities
- Area Committees should receive regular reports about their own areas as elected members have much local knowledge and experience that would be useful in tackling poverty in their wards.
- Need to report data for specific communities of interest and those with other protected characteristics – as poverty impacts more in some communities than others
- A need to acknowledge and address the issue that being in poverty can pose a barrier to moving into work for practical reasons of presentation such as not having access to decent clothes/shoes, hairdressers./barbers etc.
- Acknowledgement of the huge anti-poverty agenda and the complexities involved in trying to address the agenda.
- A need to change the mind sets of those in poverty and decision-makers
- Concentrate efforts on areas that are most deprived
- Reflect Roma and Traveller needs in the strategy.
- That people living in poverty should be treated with dignity and respect
- Concern that some measures taken by Government that have had a positive impact on levels of poverty have not been acknowledged in the Approach
- That people should be encouraged, where ever possible, to help themselves
- Having a job is more important than having a 'well paid job'. Expectation cannot be that it is usual to join the job market at a 'higher level'.
- The Approach should not concentrate on lowering costs in Bradford – as costs here are quite low compared to other places.
- The absence of Welfare Advice providers from the Anti-Poverty Co-ordination Group
- Need for increased funding and support for Welfare Advice services
- Lack of information on the Bradford District Partnership pages about the Anti-Poverty Co-ordination Group

2.11 A total of 80 people and organisations gave their feedback through the Bradford VCS Assembly workshop with an additional eight providing detailed comments through the wider consultation exercise.

2.12 As far as possible comments and suggested amendments have been incorporated into the final draft document. However, it is recognised that following recent budget consolidations, there is a lower level of Council resources available to undertake some of this activity, including the consultation elements.

2.13 Comments received about specific services and groups through this consultation will be passed to the appropriate partnerships for consideration and response, such as to USDL group (Universal Services Delivered Locally).

- 2.14 The work also brings together a number of existing strategies and work carried out by the Council and its partners to address poverty in the district including, but not limited to, the economic strategy, the Education Opportunity Area, activity in relation to Financial Capability following the recent welfare reform changes, the Health and Wellbeing Strategy. The Council is continuing to work on embedding poverty in its partnership strategies and approaches, including the recently published Joint Health and Wellbeing Strategy; this strategy recognises the wider factors, including poverty, that influence our health and wellbeing, and has reducing inequalities at its core.
- 2.15 The Approach reflects a commitment by organisations across the district to work together to undertake additional collaborative work that will add to the wealth of anti-poverty work taking place across the district
- 2.16 Actions within the Approach will be delivered within existing resources or via funding identified and applied to from external bodies.

Consulting with those with a Lived Experience of Poverty

- 2.17 The APCG is keen for those with a lived experience of poverty to inform the local agenda and be involved in co-producing interventions to address poverty. The Group is investigating options to support this, such as through a Poverty Truth Commission.
- 2.18 There is need to ensure children have a voice in this strategy. The Group is currently considering the use of existing mechanisms, such as Youth Ambassadors, to meet this need.
- 2.19 The final Approach draws, as previously, 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
- 2.20 Appendix 2 provides an overview of the draft Anti-poverty Strategy priorities and planned actions.

On going Challenge and Review of the Anti-poverty Strategy

- 2.21 The strategy, **a live document**, will be reviewed regularly to ensure it continues to align with other Bradford District strategies and to allow for outcomes from engagement, and the involvement, of people with a lived experience of poverty and children to inform and support implementation of current actions and future plans.
- 2.22 The Anti-Poverty Co-ordination Group is also aware that from time to time Full Council receives motions that are aimed at alleviating poverty, such as the motion at its meeting of the 16 October concerning period poverty and, in particular, how this might negatively impact on the education of girls whose families are living in poverty.

- 2.23 Whilst it was resolved to instruct Council officers to undertake further work on this issue and report back, the APCG will also be keen to consider its role in ensuring that Council anti-poverty resolutions, such as this one, are implemented.
- 2.24 Whilst much action to address the recommendations within the Scrutiny Poverty Review has taken place across the district, there are additional actions within the strategy 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 and representative bodies to raise awareness around Universal Credit and entitlement to other welfare benefits, promoting membership of Credit Unions, trade unions etc.
- 2.25 A further action within the Approach is to involve people with a lived experience of poverty in developing local responses to it. One mechanism to support this engagement could be through a Poverty Truth Commission. Preparatory work around setting up such a Commission in Bradford has taken place throughout the summer months. In order to do this, there could be some future resource implications on the authority and partners that will need to be considered by the Executive.

Experience from other areas where 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 Humanifesto. –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.
- 2.26 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. Get Bradford Working, Better Start Bradford, improved education outcomes for pupils eligible for free school meals are some examples of work currently being undertaken that is having a positive impact. A round-up of other current work that is aimed at mitigating the impacts of poverty across the district is contained in the draft Anti-poverty Strategy in each of the five priority areas under the headings ‘What’s already happening here’.
- 2.27 This Approach, therefore, 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.
- 2.28 The Approach contains a set of actions along with a set of data that will evidence impact of activity at district and lower levels and over time. Appendix 4 provides an initial data report.
- 2.29 Once the principles and actions within the Anti-Poverty Strategy have been endorsed, the Anti-Poverty Co-ordination Group will firm up and publish its accompanying delivery plan.
- 2.30 The Approach has been endorsed by the Anti-Poverty Co-ordination Group which is now considering the implementation of each specific activity and additional data that can be used to evidence the impacts of implementation.
- 2.31 As this is a **live document**, additional activities will be added as need is identified and those actions implemented removed as issues are addressed.
- 2.32 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.
- 2.33 APCG will also collaborate with others to promote and provide partner and public awareness events across the district as need and capacity allows.
- 2.34 Whilst Corporate Overview and Scrutiny Committee of the 15 November 2018 endorsed the final draft Anti-poverty Strategy, the Committee expressed that they would expect the evidential data-set to be further developed and some more defined actions in the delivery plan when the Committee receives a further progress report in 12 months time.
- 2.35 The Member Anti-poverty Champion and an external partner representative to the APCG both iterated to the Committee that the Group provided an excellent base to conduct cross partner working and further collaboration along with opportunities for partners to network.
- 2.36 The final draft anti-poverty Strategy as endorsed by Corporate Overview and Scrutiny Committee is at Appendix 1 to this report.

3. OTHER CONSIDERATIONS

- 3.1 Work to reduce and alleviate poverty across the district takes place through many organisations, private, public, community and voluntary services and faith

organisations. As resources available for local public services diminish further, organisations are focussing attention on our most vulnerable people and on areas where people face the most deprivation. This strategy augments what is already taking place across the district and is not intended to replace current activity.

- 3.2 The Anti-Poverty Co-ordination Group terms of reference are contained in the final draft Approach document and outline the remit and role of the Group. This is available at Appendix 1.
- 3.3 Implementation of the actions contained within the final draft strategy is within current resources across all the organisations that make up the partnership. The partnership will apply for external funding where additional resources are required to implement actions. Contained in Appendix 1 within the terms of reference is the list of organisations that are represented at the partnership.
- 3.4 Data reporting requirements will be met from within existing resource. Work continues to identify other existing data sets that could be used to evidence progress.

4. FINANCIAL & RESOURCE APPRAISAL

Implementation of the actions within this strategy will either be from current district resources, which may involve re-aligning these resources, or through additional external funding.

5. RISK MANAGEMENT AND GOVERNANCE ISSUES

There are none arising from this report

6. LEGAL APPRAISAL

- 6.1 Section 149 of the Equality Act 2010 (the public sector equality duty) provides that:

(1) A public authority must, in the exercise of its functions, have due regard to the need to —

- (a) eliminate discrimination, harassment, victimisation and any other conduct that is prohibited by or under this Act;
- (b) advance equality of opportunity between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it;
- (c) foster good relations between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it.

(2) A person who is not a public authority but who exercises public functions must, in the exercise of those functions, have due regard to the matters mentioned in subsection (1).

(3) Having due regard to the need to advance equality of opportunity between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it involves having due regard, in particular, to the need to—

- (a) remove or minimise disadvantages suffered by persons who share a relevant protected characteristic that are connected to that characteristic;
- (b) take steps to meet the needs of persons who share a relevant protected characteristic that are different from the needs of persons who do not share it;
- (c) encourage persons who share a relevant protected characteristic to participate in public life or in any other activity in which participation by such persons is disproportionately low.

(4) The steps involved in meeting the needs of disabled persons that are different from the needs of persons who are not disabled include, in particular, steps to take account of disabled persons' disabilities.

(5) Having due regard to the need to foster good relations between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it involves having due regard, in particular, to the need to—

- (a) tackle prejudice, and
- (b) promote understanding.

(6) Compliance with the duties in this section may involve treating some persons more favourably than others; but that is not to be taken as permitting conduct that would otherwise be prohibited by or under this Act.

(7) The relevant protected characteristics are—

- age;
- disability;
- gender reassignment;
- pregnancy and maternity;
- race;
- religion or belief;
- sex;
- sexual orientation.

6.2 Officers have prepared an equality impact assessment on the proposals to assist elected members in having regard to this duty a copy of which is attached as Appendix 5

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.

7.1.4 The Approach contributes to the following Equality Objectives:

- **Employment and skills** – promote inclusive growth through ensuring those most disadvantaged in the labour market are able to get the skills they need and access good jobs.

The final draft Approach contains actions around: promoting apprenticeships to those living in the most deprived neighbourhoods across the district and relooking at entry level jobs so that people can develop their numeracy and literacy whilst working instead of it being a pre-requisite to employment.

- **Equality monitoring** - our data better provides us with the right insight, evidence and intelligence to make well informed decisions that impact on our communities.

The Anti-Poverty Co-ordination Group will be considering data from several perspectives with the aim of evidencing that interventions taken across the district are supporting people who are experiencing poverty and those gaps between the most and least affluent citizens are not widening.

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 no trade union implications apart from a potential increase in membership of trades unions active in Bradford District linked to an action in the strategy.

7.7 WARD IMPLICATIONS

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

7.8 IMPLICATIONS FOR CORPORATE PARENTING

The report does not have any implications for Corporate Parenting

7.10 ISSUES ARISING FROM PRIVACY IMPACT ASSESMENT

There are no issues arising from the privacy impact assessment

8. NOT FOR PUBLICATION DOCUMENTS

None

9. OPTIONS

In considering this report Executive may wish to:

- 9.1 Accept the final draft Anti-poverty Strategy: Bradford District Anti-Poverty Co-ordination Group's Approach for Tackling Poverty and approve it.
- 9.2 Recommend changes to the final draft Anti-Poverty Strategy.
- 9.3 Both of the above options.

10. RECOMMENDATIONS

That Executive:

- 10.1 Approve the draft Anti-Poverty Strategy: Bradford District Anti-Poverty Co-ordination Group's Approach to Tackling Poverty.

11. APPENDICES

Appendix 1: Final draft Anti-Poverty Strategy: Bradford District Anti-Poverty Co-ordination Group's Approach for Tackling Poverty.

Appendix 2: Anti-Poverty Strategy plan on a page.

Appendix 3: Those consulted.

Appendix 4: Initial data report.

Appendix 5: Equality Impact Assessment

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](#)

[Corporate Overview and Scrutiny Committee 21 February 2018](#)

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

[Leeds Poverty truth Commission Humanifesto](#)

[Corporate Overview and Scrutiny Committee 15 November 2018](#)