

Report of the Strategic Director, Health and Wellbeing, to the meeting of Corporate Overview and Scrutiny Committee to be held on 15th September 2022

I

Subject: Anti-Poverty Strategy

Summary statement:

This report presents the new draft District Anti-Poverty Strategy and accompanying action plan. The strategy has been developed by the District Anti-Poverty Coordination Group (DACG), a multi-partner group consisting of representatives from the Council, Department of Work and Pensions (DWP), health, Incommunities and the voluntary and community sector.

The cost of living crisis is impacting families, communities and organisations and creating a new poverty landscape. The new strategy aims to address this. It set out an ambitious vision, based on achieving four core goals: protection, prevention, pathways and participation. The accompanying action plan is based around seven work themes, each with accompanying programmes, actions and outcomes. To support the strategy, governance processes have been refreshed and the DACG has been newly constituted, ensuring partnership working bodies oversee and deliver anti-poverty work. A joined up, whole systems approach is being developed across the district.

Our strategy aims to protect our most vulnerable and poorest communities through the cost of living crisis and, in the longer term, provide people with pathways out of poverty and help prevent people falling into poverty.

Equality impact

Anti-poverty work is a key component of realising the Council's equality objectives, combating disadvantage and increasing the life chances of protected groups. Low income is a locally agreed protected characteristic.

1.0 SUMMARY

This report presents the renewed draft Anti-Poverty Strategy. It:

- Reviews the latest national and local picture;
- Outlines the vision, goals and work themes of the strategy
- Provides an overview of the work being undertaken across the district to support our poorest and most vulnerable communities through and beyond the cost of living crisis;
- Highlights some key issues for Corporate Overview & Scrutiny (CO&S) to have sight of and place in the context of the priorities of the District Anti-Poverty Coordination Group's (DACG) next steps.

2.0 CONTEXT

2.1 NATIONAL PICTURE

The UK is currently in the midst of a cost of living crisis. The crisis is driven both by higher prices, especially energy, fuel and food, and a real terms fall in incomes. A full outline of the cost of living crisis is attached in Appendix 2. In summary:

- Inflation hit a new record 40-year high of 10.1% this August and the Bank of England expects it to rise to 13% or more by the end of the year.
- Employment rates are historically high but this is accompanied by low productivity, a rise in labour market inactivity rates, real terms wage decline and the second largest fall in living standards on record. It was only the additional support provided by the Chancellor in the May statement that stopped the fall being the largest on record. In short, households are getting poorer
- The latest energy price cap, announced on the 26 August, means that from October a typical household energy bill will be £3,549. This is an 80% rise on the April figure. This bill is expected to rise even higher. By January 2023, a typical bill could be £4,500 to £5000 with further rises expected by April. The result is that the cost of energy for the typical household this financial year (2022-23) will be £3,478, up from £1,472 last year. For those on pre-payment metres, the Resolution Foundation estimate that by January, a typical user will need to find £613 that month alone to pay the bill. Roughly a third of the poorest fifth of the population are on pre-payment meters. If no additional support is provided and costs rise in line with predictions, 50-80% of households could technically be fuel poor by early next year. That is to say, they would be spending more than 10% of disposable income after housing costs on energy.
- While the rise in energy prices dominates headlines, the cost of food, clothing and fuel is rising along with rents and mortgage interest rates. This is particularly hard hitting on the poorest families
- A recent JRF survey of low-income households (bottom 40%) shows the rising cost of essentials means a huge increase in families going without. It found 5.2 million households (45%) either cutting down on or skipping meals, or going hungry in the previous month, and 3.2 million (27%) unable to adequately heat their home since

the start of 2022. Rather than having to choose between heating or eating, 2.3 million households (21%) had gone without both.

- At the same time as prices are rising, incomes and living standards are falling, adding to and accelerating a longer term trend of stagnating living standards. Data from ONS, Resolution Foundation and Joseph Rowntree Foundation shows:
 - Currently, wage increases are half that of the inflation rate meaning real terms cuts and a further fall in living standards, continuing a long term trend. This is especially marked for the poorest in our society.
 - The typical incomes of the poorest fifth of the population were no higher on the eve of the pandemic than they were back in 2004-05.
 - Between 2002/03 and 2019/20 the number of people in very deep poverty (below 40% of median income after housing costs) increased by 1.8 million, from 4.7 million to 6.5 million people.
 - Unemployment benefit in 2022-23 will be at its lowest level in real-terms since 1990-91 and is only slightly above an estimated destitution income level of £70 per week. As a proportion of average earnings, it now stands below 14 per cent, half the level it was in the 1970s.
- Recent analysis by the Local Government Association shows that inflation, energy costs and projected increases to the National Living Wage (NLW) will add £2.4 billion in extra cost pressures onto council budgets this year, rising to £3.6 billion in 2024/25. Inflationary costs far outstrip government funding and council tax increases. This poses a serious challenge to the capacity of local authorities and public services.
- Given current political events, the future direction of national policy remains uncertain at best. It is not clear what will happen with programmes such as “Levelling Up” and funding for public services. This in the context of an economy which is heading toward recession.

2.2 NATIONAL POLICY RESPONSE

The Government has introduced three support packages this year. The most recent and significant was in May, when a further £15 billion support package was introduced by the Government, taking the total support provided this year to £37 billion. Key measures introduced in May:

- **All/majority of households:** Energy Bills Support Scheme of £400 off bills; national insurance threshold rise to £12,570 on 6 July 2022; £150 rebate for houses in council tax band A-D.
- **Vulnerable people/households:** £650 one-off Cost of Living Payment for those on means tested benefits; one-off £300 Pensioner Cost of Living Payment; £150 Disability Cost of Living Payment;
- **Pensioner households:** The Triple Lock will continue to apply to state pension
- **Benefit claimant households:** benefits will be uprated in April based on September's inflation rate
- **Household Support Fund** extended until March 2023 with a further £500m provided nationally.

Whilst the May package benefitted the poorest groups most, addressing some weaknesses in the February and March support measures, it is worth noting

- Other tax and benefit changes, such as the freezing of the personal income tax rate, reduce the impact of this package.
- The continuing rise in inflation, particularly in the costs of energy, food and fuel, reduce the real terms value of the support. For example, the support with fuel costs has now been eaten away by the latest price cap rise.
- The support programmes are not directly tied to need. The poorest groups and places face higher inflation costs and spend larger parts of their income on essentials such as energy. This means they have greater need and require more support. This is of particular relevance to Bradford
- The New Economics Foundation estimates that for the poorest quarter of households, by April 2023, the cost of living will have increased over 90% faster than incomes, meaning they'd need 1.5 times more support than all the one-off government cost-of-living measures combined.

2.3 DISTRICT PICTURE

Bradford is particularly vulnerable to the cost of living crisis. Even before the pandemic hit, Bradford was one of the most deprived districts in the country. The impact of the pandemic and the cost of living crisis has deepened poverty and inequality. Further, the end of support measures introduced in the pandemic, particularly the end of the £20 per week universal credit uplift, meant that many of our poorest families experienced an income reduction of £1,040 per year in 2022 compared to 2021. Around 64,000 people were eligible for the uplift when it was introduced. A full poverty profile was presented in the September 2021 report to CO&S and an updated profile is presented in the attached strategy. A full cost of living briefing is also attached in Appendix 2.

The most recently available evidence confirms that poverty is becoming more entrenched and our citizens are being particularly hard hit by the crisis.

- Recently research by Loughborough University and the End Child Poverty Coalition shows that nationally child poverty fell by four percent in the first year of the pandemic –largely due to the £20 uplift in Universal credit, which has now ended. However, it rose in Bradford by two percent. Two in five of our children now grow up in families in relative poverty.
- Recent Centre for Cities research showed that Bradford faced an inflation rate of 11.4% in June 2022 - 2.3% higher than the then national rate of 9.1% -
- The poorest fifth of people spend on average 26% of their income after housing costs on gas and electricity. For some this rises toward 70%. In Bradford, 70% of homes are energy inefficient, the 3rd highest rate of UK cities. Households in these kind of homes were likely to spend between £85-£115 more than the government energy support measures provide and this before the most recent energy price rise.
- Analysis by Friends of the Earth (August 2022) shows that over half (52%) of Bradford's neighbourhoods are energy crisis hotspots – *areas at greatest risk of serious financial hardship as a result of rising energy costs*. The total number of hotspots (162) is the second highest local authority number in the country. Around 60,000 households in these areas lack basic insulation measures: 29,150 households need cavity wall insulation and 31,770 need loft insulation. Energy bills for these households will be £1,000 higher in October 2022 than in October 2021.

- According to a June 2022 Resolution Foundation report, over the past twenty years, older industrial cities like Bradford have fallen further behind the national average for income per person. In Bradford in 1997, the average income per person was 13 per cent below the national average. Fast forward to 2019 and average incomes stood at 26 per cent below the national average. This helps explain why places like Bradford are far more vulnerable to the cost of living crisis.
- On the ground, our VCS partners have reported the following
 - Rising debt problems
 - Demand at foodbanks rising
 - Demand for fuel top ups increasing
 - Reports of increases in food poisoning as people stop using fridges and turn off ovens
 - New service users presenting as more of the “in work poor” turn to food banks
 - Rents are rising and increasing numbers struggling to afford this

Our families are experiencing real hardship. Appendix 3 provides some illustrative quotes from families with whom we have conducted small focus groups.

3.0 BRADFORD DISTRICT’S ANTI-POVERTY STRATEGY

Over the past six months, the anti-poverty strategy has been rewritten and a new action plan developed to reflect the changing landscape brought about by the pandemic and the cost of living crisis.

The September 2021 report to this committee identified that our old strategy, which predated the pandemic, had been overtaken by its impact. Across the district, agencies had shifted focus to dealing with the impact of the pandemic. The impact of the pandemic and now the cost of living crisis, and the accompanying policy responses, necessitated a renewed and refocussed anti-poverty strategy.

3.1 THE NEW STRATEGY

The strategy sets the following vision:

By working together, we want to make sure that Bradford District is a place where everyone, regardless of background, can realise their potential and lead fulfilling and prosperous lives free from the scarring effects of poverty and inequality

To realise this vision, the strategy joins up all district wide work under four goals:

- **Prevention:** through early intervention and support which helps to build the resources, skills and capacity our people and communities need to avoid falling into poverty
- **Protection:** from the harms of poverty through maximising income, minimising expenditure and providing access to goods, services and opportunities that ensure our poorest citizens can live a decent and secure life
- **Pathways:** to help people out of poverty through providing clear pathways that develop the skills, capacities, jobs and opportunities through which people can prosper. For example, ensuring digital inclusion, developing the skills necessary to progress in the workplace and providing decent, well paid jobs

- **Participation:** to ensure our poorest citizens can take part in the full social, political, economic and cultural lives of their communities. This means expanding the public realm – providing goods, services and facilities that ensure all our citizens can participate in their communities. For example, a public park with good play facilities and holiday activity programmes may open the community to all, regardless of income.

To work toward these goals, there are seven work themes. The themes are designed to allow read across with the District Plan and key district wide strategies. The themes are:

- Financial inclusion
- A great start and a great education
- Better skills, good jobs and a growing economy
- Better health, better lives
- Better housing and inclusive and sustainable communities
- Supporting vulnerable groups
- Participation and voice

The work themes bring together a range of strategies, policies and programmes. The aim is to ensure that poverty is addressed through ALL of the council's strategies and plans, reflecting our adoption of the socio-economic duty in our equalities strategy.

Attached to the work themes is a detailed action plan. Below, we pick out some of the programmes that are currently running or in development. First, we pick out those which focus on the goal of protection and our immediate work on the cost of living crisis. Second, we pick out some of the programmes which have longer term goals of prevention, providing pathways out of poverty and ensuring all our citizens can participate in the full social, political, economic and cultural life of their communities.

3.2 WHAT WE ARE DOING

3.2.1 Protection.

Priorities: Food and Fuel Poverty, Maximising Income, Minimising Costs, Protecting Vulnerable Groups:

Delivering the Household Support Fund (HSF).

This is a nationally funded programme that is locally designed and delivered. Introduced in October 2021, initially for six months, it has since been extended twice and will now run until March 2023. In total, almost £17m worth of support will have been delivered from October 2021 to March 2023.

We are currently delivering the April to September phase of the Fund and preparing for the October 2022 to March 2023 phase. Some of the funding spend was mandated and focussed on pensioners and low-income families. For discretionary spend, members decided that 'poverty was poverty' and prioritised cash payments to the lowest income households.

HSF current projects:

- **Voluntary and Community Sector Funding (£972k).** Focused on food provision, around a 100 voluntary and community organisations have been mobilised across the district. They have been tasked with working with vulnerable/disadvantaged families in need of food and are providing healthy food hampers both for collection and by direct delivery.
- **Helping Free School Meal families over summer break (£1,560k).** £1.5m provided to schools to support their free school meal families during the summer break from mid-July to the end of August 2022. All schools received an amount proportionate to the number of pupils on roll, FSM, pupil premium and deprivation levels within their communities. Schools could decide how they delivered support, for example, through the supply of supermarket food vouchers; food hampers etc.
- **Additional support for our foodbanks (£200k).** Funding provided to Storehouse to ensure foodbanks are able to support our most vulnerable residents. There is a specific focus on supporting the faith sectors and underrepresented groups such as BAME, LGBT, refugee and asylum seekers, CEE and Roma communities.
- **Essential cooking equipment (£12.5k).** Bradford Council already has an essential household goods scheme - the Assisted Purchase Scheme. This scheme helps low income households buy (usually) second hand white goods. Funding from the scheme is used to purchase the goods with recipients paying back the costs over a period of time, interest free.
- **Support for Family Carers (£50k).** Carers are often overlooked when it comes to their need for support, but often face a greater challenge than many. Their caring responsibilities can prevent them working or, in some cases, accessing benefits. In addition, depending on the nature of their caring, they may spend more time in the home than average, and thus incur higher fuel bills.
- **Help with Fuel Costs (£2,900k).** Supports our low income households with the cost of energy. To ensure we support as many people as we can, this scheme will make a payment of £50 to all our low income working age households to support them with the increase in energy costs. Our low income pensioner households will receive a payment of £100 (DWP guidance is to allocate 33% of the funding towards pensioners). It is also fair to say that older people may have increased fuel costs due to them spending more time at home.

Examples of Support Achieved Over the Past Year

- Support to 43,500 low income families with energy costs
- Provision of summer holiday support for up to 27,000 free school meals pupils and families. From Sept 2021 to July 2022, meals were also provided in half term holidays.
- Foodbanks supported to provide emergency food hampers over Christmas and half term holidays to the most vulnerable families.

Welfare Assistance and Advice

A £2m funding package has been provided to recommission welfare advice services across the district and reconfigure how such advice and guidance is provided. Public Health commissioners are funding a comprehensive information, welfare advice and guidance service. This includes a number of pilots across the district which utilise digital technology to allow faster access. An option to agree a three-month extension to the current contract has been agreed in order to build new innovations into future provision. The committee receives dedicated reports on the commissioning process.

Examples of Support Achieved Over the Past Year

- Over 11,000 people with 33,000 enquires
- Services are currently being recommissioned to provide continuing support and meet demand over the next couple of years (reported to CO&S on 30th June 2022)

Holiday Activities and Food (HAF) Programme.

A nationally funded programme, running until the end of 2023, that is locally organised and delivered. The programme offers a wide range of activities and a free meal over school holidays. It includes running holiday clubs and sports and leisure park sessions. Thousands of our poorest children and families participate in this scheme.

Examples of Support Achieved Over the Past Year

- In 2021, 109 lead providers provided summer holiday clubs with over 35,000 children attending.
- HAF sports and leisure sessions across the district were attended by 14 052 children, of which 8000 eligible for FSM

Cost of Living Public Information Campaign

The Council has updated and enhanced information, guidance and advice available via its website to support our residents through the cost of living crisis. With partners, we have developed a cost of living survival guide, building on best practice developed during the pandemic. We are also working closely with partners to develop a shared district wide approach to the information, advice and guidance we give out to ensure access to support is made as easy and straightforward as possible and that all information is in real time.

We have included a Council Tax button from the front page of the website and wrote to all households eligible for fuel support in early July.

<https://www.bradford.gov.uk/benefits/general-benefits-information/help-with-cost-of-living/>

Examples of Support Achieved Over the Past Year

- Cost of Living Guide available to everyone in the district
- Over 10,000 booklets distributed, providing signposting and welfare guidance advice

Financial Inclusion

In addition to the measures contained in the Household Support Fund, we are also supporting a range of projects aimed at maximising people's incomes and reducing the costs they face. In the longer term, we aim to bring all projects together into one, coherent and complimentary district wide financial inclusion strategy. Key projects:

- ***Bradford Credit Union:*** continues to develop its membership – now at 9,000. Of these, 2,500 members would face total financial inclusion without the support of the credit union. The credit union, supported by the Council and working with a range of partners, has developed and continues to develop a range of innovative schemes.
 - For the academic year 2021-2022 a Uniform Savers project supporting 285 families has been running. This has been nationally acclaimed. Options for extending this project are currently being considered with public health.
 - A support programme for council staff is running over the summer months which includes a summer loan sale, £25 credit for the first 50 new council members to join and a pensions and money webinar.
 - Assisted Purchases Scheme £50,000 provided per year to support people with purchase of essential white goods and furnishing. Additional £100, 000 added over this year from HSF funding.
- ***Poverty Proofing the School Day:*** this project is currently running with 18 schools and is developing ways of reducing the costs of schooling for our poorest communities.
- ***Warm Homes/Health People:*** this programme combines national and local funding and has been extended for 2022-2025.
- ***Support for social supermarkets and foodbanks:*** we work closely with our VCS partners to support the provision of foodbanks across the district and develop innovative schemes such as Foodsavers. Foodbank use is rising and over the first half of this year support for families increased from approximately 400 food parcels given out per day to 800. The food parcels vary in size, providing food to individuals and families which can last from a day through to a week.

Examples of Support Achieved Over the Past Year

- 9000 member of the credit union, 2,500 of whom would be totally financially excluded with this support
- 800 people a year supported on Warm Homes, Healthy People programme
- Over the past year Foodbanks have been supporting up to 1,500 people per day. Demand will rise over the coming months
- 18 schools currently working on poverty proofing the school day
- 285 families supported through Uniform Savers
- 12,000 households supported with Council Tax Relief (April 2021 to April 2022)
- 1000 people provided with free essential white goods – cookers, fridges through Assisted Purchases Scheme

Period Poverty.

- Addressing period poverty is one of the actions in the strategy action plan. Funding is provided direct to schools for sanitary products to be provided in school settings. However, there is no requirement on schools to collect data. National research is undertaken on an ad hoc basis, but a detailed local picture would require a specifically designed study.

3.2.2 Prevention, Pathways and Participation

In addition to the immediate support we are providing, the strategy sets out longer term goals of preventing people falling into poverty, providing pathways out of poverty and ensuring that all our citizens, regardless of circumstances, can participate in the full social, political, economic and cultural life of their communities.

The strategy contains a wide range of programmes and plans. Key examples include:

- Developing a 0-5 Early Years Programme and an Early Childhood Services Outcomes Offer
- Implementing the Raising Attainment Strategy for Bradford schools. The 5 Year Strategy will look to raise attainment by investing in seven areas of focus for the duration of the strategy. Over the 5 years it is planned to invest a total of £26 million in a range of projects
- Investing £3.57 million in funding SkillsHouse.
- Working closely with our partner organisations such as the NHS, schools and the voluntary sector to develop mental health services for young people
- Implementing the Digital Inclusion Programme, supporting communities with access to devices, internet and digital skills to engage in the digital world. Working closely with the VCS; NHS, local and national organisations to reduce the digital divide across the district
- Levelling Up Strategy: over £60 million of levelling up funding successfully bid for to date supporting redevelopment of Shipley and Keighley and integrated health and leisure provision on Squire Lane and “mini hub” mental health and support services in Manningham and Tong
- Collaborative working through the Act Early Consortium.

Examples of Support Achieved Over the Past Year

The above projects are long term and in development. Outcomes data will be gathered over the course of the strategy. Taken together, the programmes aim to support tens of thousands of people. So far, we have early data on the impact of SkillsHouse, KickStart and Act Early

- SkillsHouse has to date provided support for 24,200 people with the aim of supporting 11,700 people into work by March 2024. Over the next year, 15 Care Leavers will be provided with 12 month paid work placements
- 843 young people provided with KickStart 6 month placements
- Over 50 projects set up through the Act Early Consortium such as glasses in classes and will be evaluated over the next couple of years

- Early intervention, as part of this work, we will deliver a prevention and early help offer for families (to support children and young people from conception to 5 years. All schools will have an Early Health Coordinator. Families in need of support will have a single lead professional, based around schools, who will co-ordinate inter agency support. There are 4 locality Family Hubs developing integrated local offers based on inter agency working.

3.2 CONSULTATION

The strategy is the outcome of extensive review and consultation with a range of partners. The DACG includes Councillor representation. This report is the opportunity for overview and scrutiny to be consulted on the contents of the strategy before it is finalised.

4.0 THE WORK OF THE DISTRICT ANTI-POVERTY CO-ORDINATION GROUP (DACG)

The DACG has been newly constituted and membership refreshed over the past year. Because of the impact of the pandemic, the Council and partners on the APCG worked across the public, business and community sectors to address the immediate impact of the pandemic and plan for the District's recovery to build back better. As we continue to recover from the pandemic and the Cost of Living crisis bites, the newly constituted DAPCG will take the lead in overseeing the anti-poverty strategy.

The newly constituted group, chaired by the Strategic Director of Wellbeing, who is also the Council's Anti-Poverty Champion, has developed the new strategy. It is joining up work across the District and with regional and national bodies. For example, the group will be working closely with the Regional Health Inequalities Alliance. Partners such as Born in Bradford (BiB) and programmes sitting under BiB, such as Act Early, are providing a rich evidence base and supporting policy development locally, regionally and nationally around levelling up, tackling deprivation and inequality.

5.0 CHALLENGES & OPPORTUNITIES

5.1 KEY ISSUES

Local Authority/Statutory Funding

The impact of inflationary pressures on Council, other public sector services and the voluntary and community sector pose threats to our ability to sustain key services and infrastructure. The Anti-Poverty Strategy has been designed to be a live strategy with flexibility to respond both to changing patterns of need and available resources. As noted earlier, recent analysis by the Local Government Association shows that inflation, energy costs and projected increases to the National Living Wage (NLW) will add £2.4 billion in extra cost pressures onto council budgets this year, rising to £3.6 billion in 2024/25. Inflationary costs far outstrip government funding and council tax increases.

Short Term Funding, multiple funding streams and fragmented, ad hoc projects

Many of our support programmes are government funded programmes. This poses two challenges. First, delivering these programmes depends on drawing on the resource and skills of our own staff. While we do this really well, for example our HAF Programme has been nominated for an LGC award and our credit union programmes have been nationally recognised, delivering these programmes is time and resource intensive, requires a range of governance and delivery systems to be established and draws on a variety of funding streams. This places further strain on limited resources. Second, the programmes are short term and ad hoc. There is no clear long term funding security. If and when funding streams end, our ability to provide emergency support will fall but demand will not.

Lack of Impactful National Strategy/Policy

Most of the key policy decisions that determine levels of poverty are set nationally. This is why the Anti-Poverty Strategy has to join up both horizontally and vertically. We need to develop a common approach across the district but also work at regional and national level articulating the Bradford voice and advocating for the district. The Chief Analyst at the Joseph Rowntree Foundation said in August 2022. *'Everyday action is delayed is increasing the anxiety for low income families who do not know how they will get by this winter. The payments promised the government earlier in the year offer some help but their scale has been overtaken by events.'*

Uncertainty

Both the economic and political contexts are uncertain at the moment. Given that we will have a new Prime Minister in September, the policy context could change substantially. It is not clear what the direction of travel will be and what will happen to programmes such as Levelling Up. It is likely that inflation will rise even higher and energy prices also. The impact on our citizens, communities, public services, businesses and VCS will continue to unfold.

Child Poverty

In 2020, one in five working age families were classed as being in poverty and 38% of our children lived in families in relative poverty. As noted earlier, recent research by Loughborough University and the End Child Poverty Coalition shows that nationally child poverty fell by 4% in the first year of the pandemic –largely due to the £20 uplift in Universal credit, which has now ended. However, it rose in Bradford by 2%. Two in five of our children now grow up in families in relative poverty. The new strategic approach to tackling poverty takes a whole family approach to poverty and, as such, the work of the DACG has widened to cover poverty in this way. This approach is essential given the intersectionality around protected characteristics and drivers for poverty.

5.2 MOVING FORWARD: A NEW POVERTY LANDSCAPE

The above issues make it even more important that we build on our strengths and what we know works well. We can do much locally by working with our partners across the public, private and voluntary and community sectors and, most importantly, by working with our communities. We can ensure that the services we provide, the strategies and policies we

develop, the charging and purchasing decisions we make and the ways in which we work together across public, private and voluntary sectors help protect our poorest and most vulnerable citizens in our community, prevent them from falling into poverty and provide progression routes out of poverty.

5.21 STRATEGY IMPLEMENTATION

Our strategy sets the framework for the current crisis. The detailed action plan identifies programmes, policies and strategies which are running or in development. The APS moves toward a whole systems approach, where strategies, policies and programmes align, and toward co-production with our communities. The Council has adopted the socio-economic duty. We can use this commitment and robust equality impact assessment to help drive this move.

5:22 SYSTEM WORKING

Changes to the organisation of resources and activity in the District have been taking place, with more being done at community level. These changes are set to accelerate and become ever more embedded in system culture and the DACG are committed to working within this system to tackle poverty. At the same time, changes to the health and social care infrastructure are rapidly underway, with the move to the ICS and ICP placing greater emphasis on population-wide outcomes and equality of access to healthcare and health outcomes. The national and regional picture has also changed dramatically, for example, devolution and the creation of a West Yorkshire mayoral authority. A priority for the Mayor is creating a regional “Good Work” Charter to address issues such as low pay. These changes allow us to align service provision, commissioning and policy and process across organisations to tackle poverty, its causes and impacts.

5.23 LOBBYING

It is essential that the voice of the Bradford District and its residents are shared with government to argue for a strengthened national policy approach and to argue for robust funding settlements and opportunities to meet need.

5.24 EQUALITY & DIVERSITY

Bradford council in its equality plan has committed to treating low income as a protected characteristic. The refreshed equality plan should ensure that equality impact assessments are thorough and accurate when it comes to decisions being made around service provision, budget changes and/or development of strategies and policies.

5.25 DATA AND GOVERNANCE

Performance metrics have been proposed in the draft strategy attached. These metrics will allow for the strategy to be monitored and evaluated. The DACG has undertaken a governance review and established their role to be:

- Monitoring and reporting on anti-poverty work
- Co-ordinating strategies and policies and working in partnership to deliver key aims
- Setting priorities and directly delivering specific projects

- Monitoring and reporting on trends in poverty
- Providing voice for groups in poverty, linking in with key projects aimed at developing the voice of poor and marginalised groups and feeding this voice into the policy making process
- Driving the poverty proofing of strategies, policies and provision across the district.

5.26 VOICE AND LIVED EXPERIENCE:

One of the key strands of work for the APCG was giving voice to those living in poverty. The need for this voice has become all the more important given the impact of the pandemic and cost of living crisis. Under the lead of the Bradford District and Craven Health and Care Partnership, we are due to launch the Citizen's Forum (working title). This forum will engage with residents of the district collectively. It will work in multiple ways to reach the most people, recognising the impact of digital poverty.

Linking with the Place Based Partnership we will;

- Design a roadshow. This will run in a range of venues and be for a range of groups, including new communities that need support.
- Design an online space.
- Map and connect existing networks and identifying the gaps and areas of the population not already connected.

6.0 OTHER CONSIDERATIONS

6.1 FINANCIAL & RESOURCE APPRAISAL

There are none arising from this report. Although there is a need to resource this area, this report is purely to update and highlight the intended focus for future anti-poverty work.

6.2 RISK MANAGEMENT AND GOVERNANCE ISSUES

There are none arising from this report as this issue already identified on the Council's risk register.

6.3 LEGAL APPRAISAL

There are none arising from this report.

7.0 OTHER IMPLICATIONS

7.1 SUSTAINABILITY IMPLICATIONS

There are none arising from this report.

7.2 GREENHOUSE GAS EMISSIONS IMPACTS

There are none arising from this report.

7.3 COMMUNITY SAFETY IMPLICATIONS

There is a correlation between deprivation and areas of our district that experience the highest level of crime. This has increased the need for focus on prevention of poverty within the district's new strategic approach.

7.4 HUMAN RIGHTS ACT

There are none arising from this report.

7.5 TRADE UNION

There are no trade union implications.

7.6 WARD IMPLICATIONS

The APCG intends to work directly with Council officers with a direct remit for developing and monitoring ward action plans.

7.7 IMPLICATIONS FOR CORPORATE PARENTING

Children in Care are one of a number of groups most affected by poverty and reduced life chances. The report identifies specific measure to support children in care and care leavers. For example, children in care have been supplied with laptops and a digital learning programme and care leavers from 18-21 can be exempt from Council Tax and from age 21-25 can receive a 50% discount.

7.8 ISSUES ARISING FROM PRIVACY IMPACT ASSESMENT

There are no issues arising from the privacy impact assessment.

8.0 NOT FOR PUBLICATION DOCUMENTS

Appendix 1 – Draft Bradford District Anti-Poverty Strategy.

This appendix is "Not for Publication" on the grounds that it contains exempt information within paragraph 3 (Information relating to Financial or Business Affairs) Schedule 12 A of the Local Government Act 1972 (as amended) and the public interest in applying this exemption outweighs the public interest in disclosing the information

9.0 OPTIONS

Not applicable, the document is for consultation and discussion.

10.0 RECOMMENDATIONS

That the Committee consider the report and agree to have an update on progress in twelve months' time.

11.0 APPENDICES

Appendix 1: Draft Bradford District Anti-Poverty Strategy. This appendix is “Not for Publication” on the grounds that it contains exempt information within paragraph 3 (Information relating to Financial or Business Affairs) Schedule 12 A of the Local Government Act 1972 (as amended) and the public interest in applying this exemption outweighs the public interest in disclosing the information.

Appendix 2: Cost of Living Briefing.

Appendix 3: What Our Families Are Experiencing

12. BACKGROUND DOCUMENTS

12.1 None.

Appendix 3: Consultation - What Our Families Are Experiencing

Some of the lived reality is captured in the quotes below, taken from recent focus group research conducted with mothers.

The Lived Reality

"I'm scared all the time, scared that I can't pay for things the kids need, scared if the fridge or washer breaks, scared if the kids are still hungry after dinner. What can I do?"

"We all go to bed early now, it saves electric if we don't use the lights and TV but I think this will be worse in winter when it's dark early"

"I cry a lot, every time you think it's as bad as it can be it just gets worse. I keep crying thinking about the next lot of price rises"

"What are we supposed to do when the washing machine breaks? We have no choice; we have to get loans out even if we know it's a rip off"

"I missed my smear test twice, once because work couldn't let me have time off and once because I couldn't afford the bus fare to get there"

"Birthdays and Christmas are supposed to be happy times but they're not, not anymore. Even the six week holidays are a nightmare"

"It's hard when the kids talk about what their friends do and I have to keep telling them no, I'm sure they'll grow up hating me"

"You keep hearing about cutting out one take out coffee a day would make a difference like we can even afford one in the first place"

"We had to give our dog away, we couldn't afford his food anymore"