

## **Report of the Strategic Director, Adult Social Care, to the meeting of Corporate Overview and Scrutiny Committee to be held on 5 October 2023**

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### **Subject: BRADFORD DISTRICT ANTI-POVERTY STRATEGY 2022-2027**

#### **Summary statement**

This report provides a progress update on the development and implementation of the Bradford District Anti-Poverty Strategy 2022-2027 (BDAPS). 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), NHS, Incommunities, the voluntary and community sector (VCS) and higher education.

The strategy sets an ambitious vision based on achieving four core goals: protection, prevention, pathways, and participation (the 4Ps). Alongside the strategy, an action plan, delivered through seven work themes, sets out accompanying priorities, programmes, actions and intended outcomes.

The impact of the strategy must be understood in the context of the ongoing cost of living crisis, which continues to hit our families, communities and public services. Over the past year the focus has been on protecting our most vulnerable citizens by providing a safety net. This has been done by drawing on the extension of the Household Support Fund and a range of other funding sources, and also by working in partnership to sustain existing programmes and develop new ones. The adoption of the strategy across the district is now providing a joined-up framework for developing our longer-term goals of providing people with pathways out of poverty, preventing people falling into poverty and ensuring participation in the full social, political, economic and cultural lives of the community.

#### **Equality impact**

Anti-poverty work is a key component of realising the Council's equality objectives. We have adopted the socio-economic duty and low income is a locally agreed protected characteristic.

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Report Contact: Iain Macbeath  
E-mail: [Iain.Macbeath@bradford.gov.uk](mailto:Iain.Macbeath@bradford.gov.uk)  
Report Contact: Kevin Brain  
E-mail: [Kevin.Brain@bradford.gov.uk](mailto:Kevin.Brain@bradford.gov.uk)

Portfolio: Cllr Duffy

Overview & Scrutiny Area: Corporate

## **1.0 SUMMARY**

1.1 This report provides a progress update on the development and implementation of the Bradford District Anti-Poverty Strategy 2022-2027 (BDAPS). The report:

- Briefly reviews the current national and local picture
- 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 challenges for the Corporate Overview & Scrutiny Committee (CO&SC) to have sight of, and outlines how the BDAPS will move forward over the coming year

1.2 The need to support our most vulnerable citizens through the cost of living crisis has dominated the first year of the strategy. The Council and partners have focussed work on trying to protect the most vulnerable citizens and, where possible, maintain a safety net.

1.3 The report maps out this work. But it also maps out ongoing work aimed at putting in place the conditions for longer term change. For example, the regeneration projects taking place across the district or the work on developing skills.

1.4 Given the focus on protection in response to the impact of the cost of living crisis, the fact that the strategy is only in its first year, combined with issues around data availability, it is too early to present before and after data on its impact on levels of poverty across the district. For example, official poverty statistics are only available for 2021-22. In any case, as section two shows, the impact of the cost of living crisis means that the strategy is swimming against a much stronger tide. In this context, more people could fall into poverty despite the strategy.

1.5 Poverty is an entrenched problem that requires long term action. This is why the BDAPS runs over five years. To fully understand the impact of the strategy on poverty across the district requires a long term evaluation programme.

## **2.0 BACKGROUND**

2.1 The Bradford District Anti-Poverty Strategy 2022-2027 was formally approved by both Council Executive and Wellbeing Board in November 2022.

2.2 It was developed to meet the challenges of the new poverty landscape emerging from the impact of Covid and the cost of living crisis.

2.3 Since its approval, there has been a commitment from a wide range of partners, including the NHS, voluntary, community and faith sector leaders, Incommunities and the wider public sector, to adopt the strategy as a shared approach and to work in partnership to support the households most at risk in the district.

2.4 The Wellbeing Board has overall strategic governance responsibility for the strategy. The Council lead is the strategic director for adult social care. Operational oversight and monitoring of the strategy is the responsibility of the District Anti-

Poverty Coordination Group (DACG). This is a multi-agency partnership involving Council departments, voluntary and community sector (VCS) and wider public sector partners. It also has representatives from Act Early and academic partners. It meets monthly and is chaired by the Council lead.

2.5 The strategy sets out 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.*

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

- **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.
- **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.
- **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.

2.7 Seven themes support us to work toward these goals. The themes are designed to read across to the District Plan and other key district wide strategies, and to reflect different dimensions of poverty and deprivation. 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

2.8 An accompanying action plan sets out priorities, programmes and intended outcomes for each of the seven themes. The action plan accompanying the strategy contained 50 programmes, but it was always intended that the plan would change over time.

## **National context**

- 2.9 The UK remains in a cost of living crisis. The crisis has been driven both by higher prices, especially energy, fuel and food, and a real terms fall in incomes.
- 2.10 Inflation rates are now falling. At the time of writing, the CPI inflation rate was 6.7 percent, having peaked at 11.1 percent in October 2022. The Bank of England forecasts the rate to fall to 5 percent by December 2023 and down to 2 percent by the end of 2024. But falling Inflation does not mean prices are falling, only that prices are increasing at a slower rate. It does not mean that people's income is rising or living standards are improving.
- 2.11 Growth in real incomes has lagged inflation over the past couple of years. From April 2021 to April 2023, prices rose on average by 18 percent but earnings only rose by 13 percent and benefits by 14 percent. Living standards have fallen. On average, people have become poorer.
- 2.12 There are now signs average wage increases are rising in real terms but this is driven by rises in wages for those on higher incomes, not by real terms wage rises for those on lower incomes.
- 2.13 Despite falling inflation rates, the economic outlook remains uncertain. Economic inactivity rates remain high and are still higher than they were pre pandemic. The National Institute of Economic and Social Research (NIESR) [quarterly forecast](#) (August 2023) suggests increasing financial vulnerability for households in the bottom half of the income distribution and increases in destitution due to ongoing low growth and stagnant productivity.
- 2.14 Interest rates have risen over the past twenty months from 0.1 percent to 5.25 percent at the time of writing. Rising interest rates are intended to reduce demand in the economy, providing a further break on economic growth. This may well result in a rise in unemployment. Unemployment rates remain low at 4.2 percent as of June 2023. But the rate has risen over the past year from 3.6 percent and may rise further. The rise in interest rates raises the costs of housing for homeowners and renters and increases the cost of borrowing.

## **Poverty and Impact of the Cost of Living Crisis**

- 2.15 Department of Work and Pensions (DWP) statistics from 2021-22 show that nationally 22 percent of people were in relative poverty after housing costs compared to 21 percent in 2020-21 (relative poverty is defined as having an income after housing costs which is below 60 percent of the median income). Due to sampling difficulties, the DWP caution against using these figures in year on year comparisons.
- 2.16 The poverty statistics do not reflect the impact of rising prices over the past year on what people can afford to buy. Poverty is not just about income but also expenditure and the gap between the two. The poorest face effective inflation rates which are higher than the average rate because the poorest spend a greater proportion of their income on essentials such as food, energy and housing. The

Joseph Rowntree Foundation (JRF) estimates that the poorest 10 percent face an inflation rate 3 percent higher than the richest 10 percent.

2.17 Evidence from a wide range of sources such as the Office for National Statistics (ONS), JRF, Institute for Fiscal Studies (IFS), Resolution Foundation, and from services on the ground such as Citizens Advice Bureau (CAB), foodbanks, local authorities and health services show that the cost of living crisis has bitten deep over the past year and continues to bite. This is reflected in a wide range of ways: skipping meals, not heating homes, use of foodbanks, demand for debt advice, increasing debt and reliance on loans and inability to pay household bills. For example, based on its [cost of living survey tracker](#) data from a sample of 4,000 people in May 2023, the JRF argues that nationally:

- 48 percent of low income households – 5.5m people - had to cut down or skip meals, 4m reported going hungry.
- 27 percent - 3.2m people - reported not being able to adequately heat their home over winter.
- 39 percent - 4.5m people - reported being in arrears. 22 percent of low income households had a loan with a loan shark, payday or doorstep lender or pawnshop.
- Nine in 10 households on Universal Credit (UC) are going without essentials such as food, heating, clothes, showers and essential journeys. This is despite the April 2023 benefits uprating and the availability of cost of living payments.

2.18 On current forecasts, it will take a long time for average household incomes to recover from the cost of living crisis. Average real disposable income may not return to its 2022/23 level until 2027/28. Living standards are likely to be below, or only just level with, pre pandemic levels by 2027/28. The Resolution Foundation's September 2023 [Living Standards Outlook](#) estimates a 2 percent fall in income for the lower half of the working age population for 2024-25 and for an additional 300,000 people to fall into absolute poverty next year.

### **Government Support**

2.19 The government introduced a series of support schemes to help people with the cost of living crisis. For example, the Energy Price Guarantee, cost of living payments, and the Household Support Fund (HSF).

- The Energy Price Guarantee scheme ended on 30 June 2023. Energy prices are now set by the Ofgem energy price cap. Because energy costs have come down, the typical bill had fallen to £2074 by summer 2023 from £2500 over the winter of 2022-23. However, this typical bill remained almost twice as high as it was before the impact of the cost of living crisis.
- Cost of living payments will continue throughout the financial year 2023-24, as will the HSF. Through the cost of living payments, those on benefits can receive an extra £900. A further £150 is available for those with a disability and £150-£300 for those entitled to a Winter Fuel Payment.
- While cost of living payments have been maintained for those on benefits, the universal £400 payment has ended. This means that many poor people not

entitled to benefits will now receive no additional help. The cost of living payments criteria creates a cliff edge whereby anyone even just £1 over benefit levels will get no additional help. There are gaps in support and many poor households are not covered by the payments.

- Benefit payments were increased by an inflation based 10.1 percent in April 2023. This rise follows a year in which safety net benefits saw their greatest fall in value since annual uprating began in 1972.
- A range of organisations such as JRF, the Trussell Trust and CAB argue that the social security system fails to provide sufficient income to meet the full cost of basic daily living essentials. The JRF's research suggests that 90 percent of households on UC are going without some basic essentials because the level of benefit is not sufficient. A situation made worse as almost half of households on UC see benefit payments reduced by deductions and caps.

### ***The District Picture***

- 2.20 Bradford District has some of the highest poverty and deprivation rates in the country, as shown by the profile which accompanies the BDAPS. As a district we have poorer health, higher unemployment and economic inactivity rates, high benefit claimant rates (68,723 people were on UC in June 2023), lower educational attainment and lower quality housing stock (around 60,000 houses are estimated to lack basic insulation) than most other local authorities. Child poverty rates are particularly high. Based on data for 2021-22 from the Centre for Research in Social Policy at Loughborough University, two in five under 16s across the district live in families in relative poverty after housing costs. ([see here](#)).
- 2.21 The cost of living crisis can only deepen poverty and deprivation. The Centre for Cities cost of living vulnerability index shows Bradford to be one of the most vulnerable local authorities in the country. Our poorest communities face a 3 percent higher inflation rate than average because a much greater proportion of their income is spent on essentials of food and energy. For them it is a struggle to afford the basic essentials of everyday living. According to Centre for Cities, from January 2022-January 2023 the real value of the [median full time wage](#) in Bradford fell by £111.
- 2.22 On the ground, as with last year, our VCS and public service partners continue to report the following:
- Demand at foodbanks is rising and straining the capacity of foodbanks – around 100,000 people have been supported in the past year.
  - Demand for support with fuel top ups and energy bills is increasing.
  - More people in work (the “in work poor”) are using foodbanks.
  - More families are struggling to get by and provide basic essentials.
  - Rents are rising and increasing numbers are struggling to afford housing costs. Latest data suggests there is over a £100 gap between Local Housing Allowance and average rent for one to three bedroom properties and over a £300 gap for four bedroom properties. Housing Options are experiencing their highest ever demand.
  - Debt problems are rising.

- Demand for services is outstripping capacity to meet need.
- 2.23 Our families are continuing to experience real hardship and will for some time to come. At the same time, the capacity of public services, also hit by the cost of living crisis, is being stretched ever thinner. If the JRF statistics on families on UC going without essentials is applied to Bradford, around 45,000 households would be going without a basic essential.

### **3.0 PROTECTION, PREVENTION, PATHWAYS, PARTICIPATION: BRADFORD DISTRICT'S ANTI-POVERTY STRATEGY AND ACTION PLAN.**

#### ***Overview***

- 3.1 The BDAPS and action plan are living documents. They are designed to change as the poverty landscape changes, new funding opportunities and programmes arise, and existing programmes end or are further developed. Some of the programmes in the action plan have now ended or have been redeveloped. The tables presented at the end of each theme summary reflect this.
- 3.2 Before looking at the strategy work themes individually, a summary of the breadth of work undertaken over the past year developing and delivering the strategy and action plan is presented.
- 3.3 Over the past year, the work of the DACG has:
- Concentrated on protecting our most vulnerable communities through the cost of living crisis. Our aim has been to provide a safety net. Programmes are aimed at mitigating the impact of food and fuel poverty, ensuring access to welfare advice and guidance services, promoting financial inclusion and supporting vulnerable groups. Around a fifth of households have access to one or more of the support programmes on offer. Foodbank and food support programmes have supported over 100,000 people in the past year.
  - Drawn on national funding sources and leveraged in additional monies to sustain our existing work and develop new programmes. Funding from the HSF, NHS, Mayoral Authority, Department for Education and UK Shared Prosperity Fund (UKSPF) has been drawn on in addition to Council resources. The DACG has also continued to develop and build on our partnership working with the VCS and other public sector organisations to maximize our resources, ensure a common approach and draw on a wide range of expertise to help develop our programmes.
  - Managed the ongoing implementation and further development of the action plan which currently has approximately 67 programmes. We have developed our HSF funded crisis support for our most vulnerable citizens. From October 2021 to March 2024, around £27m of HSF money will have been spent to provide emergency cost of living support. We have also built on and further developed the programmes which we know are working well at local level. Some of these have been recognised regionally, nationally and even internationally for their success. Examples here include:

- Foodbank provision and the FoodSavers social pantry project
  - Holiday Activities and Food (HAF) programme
  - Bradford District Credit Union (BDCU) and its financial inclusion work
  - Locality based welfare advice services and the development of our cost of living survival guide
  - The range of projects run by Act Early
- Worked on joining-up anti-poverty work across the district. The seven BDAPS work themes build in wider district strategies and policies. For example: levelling up, skills, health, education, housing, food, transport and culture. The success of the strategy depends on the impact of these wider strategies and policies. If we include monies brought in through City Centre regeneration, Towns Fund, transport redevelopment, City of Culture, UKSPF and hospital building, over £1bn will flow into the district over the next few years. The investment is intended to provide jobs, businesses, infrastructure, economic development, leisure opportunities and cultural growth. If successful, this will create pathways out of poverty, prevent people falling into poverty and help people to participate in the full lives of their communities.
- Closely collaborated with partners such as Act Early and Better Start Bradford. The DACG has external representatives which link our work to wider anti-poverty work and projects, running both at regional and national level, such as Child of the North and Act Early. This work has led to:
  - A collaborative project exploring the feasibility of auto-enrolment for free school meals
  - Collaboration with health partners and CAB to identify areas with low benefit take up to improve take up rates and family income
  - Collaboration with the Royal Society of Arts (RSA) to develop a research project looking at the issues of transition for young people moving from education to work
  - Participation in a three-year research project examining the impact of the benefit cap and two child limit on families, now completed
  - Work with Act Early partners and NHS colleagues to assess the feasibility of developing a pilot universal basic income proposal for young people with mental health problems. The pilot proposal has been requested by Wellbeing Board
  - An evidence base to inform the ongoing child poverty inquiry led by Children’s Overview and Scrutiny Committee
- Integrated the “Bradford Approach” with a developing regional approach to anti-poverty work through providing regional briefings and contributing to policy development at the West Yorkshire Mayoral level. Work with regional officer groups has allowed the DACG to benchmark, share best practice and develop new policy ideas. The Council has worked with the regional Health Inequalities Alliance (HIA) and the BDAPS has been shared through this network. Council officers have worked closely with the Mayoral Authority and supported the Fair Work Charter. Additional funding for welfare advice services and wider cost of living work has been secured through the Mayoral Cost of Living Emergency Fund. Ongoing work with the Mayoral Authority is focusing on securing deeper devolution powers to support key areas such as skills development and



improving transport and housing. Additionally, the DACG has worked closely with a range of academic partners through organisations such as Act Early and our newly established Health Determinants Research Collaborative (HDRC). This work has been aimed at developing an evidence based approach to policy and practice and collaboration on research, policy development, implementation and evaluation.

- 3.4 As a result of the range of activity, there is now an extensive network of interlinked policies and programmes across the district aimed at reducing poverty and inequalities and improving life chances.
- 3.5 But, as the BDAPS makes clear, poverty is an entrenched problem and many of the key drivers are outside of local control. We cannot determine national economic or welfare policy. After a decade of austerity and now the impact of the cost of living crisis, public services face the twin challenges of inflation eating away at available budgets as demands on services rise. Inevitably, this leads to further pressure on services and a short fall in capacity to meet demands.
- 3.6 An easily overlooked but fundamentally important strand of anti-poverty work is raising awareness of the impact of poverty and the cost of living crisis, joining up work across the district in a shared Bradford Approach and advocating for regional and national policy to meet the needs of our district.

## **WHAT WE ARE DOING ACROSS THE DISTRICT: THE SEVEN WORK THEMES**

### **Theme 1: Financial Inclusion.**

*We cannot hope to reduce the impact of poverty unless we can maximise the income of our poorest citizens and reduce the costs they face. We want to ensure that we reduce food and fuel poverty, maximise take up of benefits and, where possible, minimise the costs of accessing goods and services essential to living a decent life.*

- 3.7 There is a wide range of programmes aimed at reducing food and fuel poverty, ensuring access to welfare advice and guidance services, and supporting vulnerable groups. These programmes are focused on protecting our poorest and most vulnerable citizens.
- 3.8 The overall aim for the past year has been to try and ensure there is a safety net for our most vulnerable citizens by maintaining provision.
- 3.9 A wide range of funding sources have been drawn on and partnership working has helped to maximize resources, ensure a common Bradford approach and draw on a wide range of expertise.
- 3.10 Table 1 provides a summary of the Theme 1 priorities, programmes, progress and outcomes to date. Progress and achievements are highlighted below.

### ***Household Support Fund (HSF)***

- 3.11 The Council is continuing to use the HSF to maintain existing programmes and to develop new ones in response to need. As noted above, from October 2022 to April 2024, approximately £27m of support will have been provided to our most vulnerable citizens. A fifth of households are being provided with support, either through direct support with energy bills or support with access to foodbanks/emergency food support. Approximately, 43,500 households received a direct grant to help with fuel bills over winter 2022-23. The payment was £65 per household with an additional £20 for each child. A similar number of households will receive a payment over the winter of 2023-24. HSF funded food provision ensured that up to 40,000 meals were provided over the winter months of 2022-23 and contributed to securing overall foodbank provision. This support will be continued over the winter of 2023-24. The warm spaces /welcoming spaces programme has been developed in the past year as a year round programme. It is open to all who can attend and make use of the spaces and has approximately 185 organisations participating. A range of highly vulnerable groups, such as care leavers, have also been provided with additional emergency support to help protect them during the cost of living crisis. New projects have been developed such as the Child Safe Sleeping project which provides financial support for vulnerable families with newborn and young children. A summary of all the HSF projects is provided in appendix 2.

### ***Welfare Advice, Information and Guidance***

- 3.12 The Council has provided a £2m funding package to recommission, reconfigure and secure provision of welfare advice services across the district. Services have now been secured for the next six years. New locality based delivery models are being developed. These are based on local community needs analysis and delivered in partnership with the VCS. The welfare services work in partnership with other Council funded services. Under the new contract terms, outcomes data, such as the amount of benefits successfully claimed, evictions prevented and outcomes of immigration cases dealt with, will be provided. It is also expected that welfare advice providers liaise with their local GPs to get early warning of the needs of people accessing disability benefits and their review dates to avoid people falling out of the benefits system. In the first three months of 2023, 5,600 enquires have been dealt with, 69 percent of these were about benefits.
- 3.13 Additionally, Bradford secured £220k from the West Yorkshire Mayor Cost of Living Emergency Fund announced in October 2022. This has been added to funding for our welfare services, augmenting our provision and helping to meet the huge increase in demand for welfare benefits advice we have been experiencing. This should provide additional capacity to support a minimum of 732 people.

### ***Cost of Living Survival Guide, Public Information Campaign and One Stop Website***

- 3.14 Community Action Bradford and District (CABAD), in partnership with health partners and the Council, developed a cost of living support guide and public information campaign for 2022-2023. The guide brought together, in an accessible

booklet and an online portal, sources of funding and support available to help people through the cost of living crisis. This included: advice on how to secure access to cost of living payments; information, advice and guidance on access to services and which services to access for particular needs; practical tips on budgeting, buying and saving; and signposting to sources of support available to help households manage financial crisis and debt.

- 3.15 In the first six months of the guide's release (winter 2022-23) there were over 100k hits on the website and 34k downloads. To date, 95k hard copies of the Bradford cost of living guide booklet have been printed and distributed widely across the district. The booklet and its associated mobile website were adopted by partners across the district and the booklet was short-listed for a Local Government Chronicle national award.

### ***Bradford District Credit Union and Financial Inclusion***

- 3.16 Bradford District Credit Union (BDCU) has continued over the past year to maintain and develop membership and a range of support programmes. Currently, it provides financial services for over 9,000 people across the district. Of these, 2,500 members would face total financial exclusion without its support. The credit union, supported by the Council, works with a range of partners to provide several anti-poverty schemes. It runs the Uniform Savers project – a nationally acclaimed project which supports 385 families with saving for school uniforms. An additional £40k from the Mayoral Cost of Living Emergency Fund has been secured to further widen and develop this project. A wider Back to School Loan scheme has also been created which allows loans for school uniform and equipment to a wider range of people. To date 250 families, who otherwise would not be able to get a loan, have been supported through this scheme. The credit union also runs a range of ongoing community campaigns to help people reduce reliance on loan sharks and doorstep lenders, provide people with access to low interest loans, and offer debt and saving support and advice. It also works closely with the FoodSavers programme.
- 3.17 The work of BDCU has been drawn on as a model of good practice both nationally and internationally. It has been nominated for the National Consumer Credit Award.

### ***Benefits Take Up***

- 3.18 Detailed data analysis has been conducted to identify areas and groups where benefit take up might be low across the district. It is difficult to be precise about how much benefit is unclaimed, but estimates can be made. If rates of benefit take up are the same in Bradford as estimated nationally, up to £157m may be going unclaimed across the district. The largest gap is in the poorest areas. Working with health partners and the VCS, the Council is drawing on this analysis to adopt a data led approach to ongoing work to increase take up. This work focuses on raising awareness of take up issues across the public sector, the VCs and in communities; promoting understanding of the benefits available to individuals and families; and providing access to information, guidance and local support in communities to help individuals and families navigate the complex system of benefits so they can maximise their income.

### ***Foodbanks and FoodSavers***

- 3.19 The foodbank network across the district provides a safety net of emergency food support, both through the foodbanks and through outreach work with highly vulnerable people. In total, over 100,000 people have been supported in the past year. It is estimated that there is capacity to provide 1 million meals. Around 100 VCS organisations are involved in providing forms of emergency food support. As noted above, HSF monies have also been used to support emergency food provision.
- 3.20 The FoodSavers project has expanded and further developed its work over the past year. FoodSavers is a social pantry scheme which aims to reduce dependency on foodbanks and free food provision by combining sustainable low-cost food markets with easy access to BDCU. Over the past year, the project has increased membership from 1,000 to 3,000 members and from 11 to 18 pantries. Members can save up to £1k on their yearly shopping bills. The programme is being rolled out across West Yorkshire and its success has secured funding from Comic Relief. Five additional staff will be employed to support local, regional and national roll out.

### ***Poverty Proofing the School Day***

- 3.21 This project aims to reduce the costs of schooling for our poorest communities and is part of the Living Well Schools programme. Fifteen schools are involved. Over the past year, poverty audits have been conducted across schools. York University is conducting analysis of the findings. These will be used to develop a free toolkit and resources to help schools develop best practice. To date work has focussed on addressing issues around school uniforms, school meals, dealing with debt and developing pupil voice.

### ***Warm Homes Healthy People***

- 3.22 Over the past year, the expanded Warm Homes Healthy People (WHHP) service has dealt with 2008 referrals. An increase of 1,263 people supported since 2021-22. The number of clients offered fuel and water debt support increased from 24 to 228 over the same period. The WHHP service is commissioned by the Council and the local NHS to address fuel poverty. It is based on evidence-based guidance on reducing cold-related ill-health and excess deaths in winter and addressing excess heat in the summer. Referrals are triaged to prioritise households without heat and households where someone is at high risk from excess cold or heat. The service provides free independent energy advice for households in the Bradford District area, supporting households to access available grants and benefits, to conserve energy and switch tariff when this can reduce bills, and reduce the likelihood of damp and mould. The service can provide emergency heating. For 2022-23, the service has been able to provide heating repairs, servicing and a small number of heating replacements. Investment of additional funding from the national NHS Fuel Poverty Scheme, the DWP and Household Support Fund in 2022-23 has enabled the service to meet the much higher level of demand during the current cost of living crisis. The service also provides online training to raise awareness of fuel poverty, energy conservation and the support available, amongst health and care

professionals and community organisations, and attends community events to raise public awareness of the service.

**Table 1, Theme 1: Financial Inclusion**

| Priorities                                      | Programmes   | Progress and Outcomes 2022-2023   |
|---|--|---|
| <b>Food and fuel Poverty</b>                    | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Foodbank provision</li> <li>• VCS vulnerable groups</li> <li>• Food Savers Network</li> <li>• Warm Spaces/Welcoming Spaces</li> <li>• Warm Homes Healthy People</li> <li>• Household Energy Efficiency</li> <li>• Direct Payments</li> <li>• Fuel Payment Scheme Fuel Support Team<br/>(Note: HSF funding has been drawn on to support these programmes)</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Foodbank provision sustained across the district. Storehouse funded to help ensure over 100,000 people supported. Approximately 1m meals can be provided through the Foodbank network</li> <li>• 100 VCS organisations working directly with the most vulnerable households to provide direct emergency support. For example, foodbanks supported to provide emergency food hampers over Christmas and half term holidays to the most vulnerable families</li> <li>• Approximately 43,500 households provided with £65 plus additional £20 for each child for winter 2022-23. Payments will also be provided over winter 2023/24</li> <li>• Warm Spaces (winter), Welcoming Spaces (summer) programme established with over 185 providers including libraries, community centres, church halls, sports clubs and other places. Totally free, open to all who can attend</li> <li>• WHHP service has expanded with additional funding provided from NHS and HSF. Over the past year, an additional 1,263 referrals have been taken and an additional 224 people provided with fuel and water debt support</li> <li>• Fuel Support Team services secured for next six years</li> <li>• Fuel Payments Scheme maintained, offering help to the most financially vulnerable families. People on prepayment meters can receive £80 twice per year</li> <li>• FoodSavers expanded from 1,000 to 3,000 members and from 11 to 18 pantries. Members can save up to £1,000 on yearly shopping. The programme is being rolled out across West Yorkshire and nationally. Funding secured from Comic Relief and five additional staff employed</li> </ul> |
| <b>Provision of welfare advice and guidance</b> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Locality based welfare advice services</li> <li>• Cost of Living Survival Guide and online portal</li> </ul>  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Invested in provision of four district hubs and one service aimed at those with complex and/or long-term health conditions. Services guaranteed for the next six years</li> <li>• Ongoing development of a locality model of working and joining up of welfare advice services/ providers through closer collaborative working and local needs planning. This includes developing new digital options and joint working between the Council's Customer Services and Libraries Services to expand access</li> <li>• Capacity to support over 12,000 of our most vulnerable citizens. In the first three months of 2023, 5,600 enquires dealt with.</li> <li>• Secured £219k from West Yorkshire Combined Authority (WYCA) Emergency Fund for VCS welfare advice</li> </ul>  |

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|  |   | <p>support. Aims to support a minimum of 732 people over the coming year</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Cost of living survival guide and one stop website developed (nationally recognised). Over 100k hits, 34k downloads and 95k hard copy booklets over the past year. <a href="https://www.bradford.gov.uk/benefits/general-benefits-information/help-with-cost-of-living/">https://www.bradford.gov.uk/benefits/general-benefits-information/help-with-cost-of-living/</a></li> </ul>  |
| <p><b>Maximising household income and minimising costs</b></p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Bradford Credit Union (BDCU)</li> <li>• Council Tax Relief</li> <li>• Assisted Purchases Scheme</li> <li>• West Yorkshire Mayoral Cost of Living Emergency Fund</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The Council has maintained funding of the Financial Inclusion Officer post to lead and manage the BDCU programme and coordinates financial inclusion programmes across the district</li> <li>• BDCU actively supports 9,000 members and a range of programmes including Uniform Savers, Back to School Loans Scheme, FoodSavers and financial inclusion campaigns. 350 families have been supported through the Uniform Savers scheme and 250 (to date) through the Back to School Loan Scheme</li> <li>• Circa 44,000 households receive means tested Council Tax Relief (CTR). A working group has been established to review CTR support</li> <li>• Secured £430k from The West Yorkshire Mayoral Cost of Living Emergency Fund. This is being distributed to VCS organisations through Area Committees to meet local need. It is also being used to fund the Credit Union Family Loans Project and to extend the Uniform Savers Scheme</li> </ul> |
| <p><b>District wide financial inclusion strategy</b></p>       | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Bradford District Anti-Poverty Strategy</li> <li>• Benefit take up review</li> </ul>   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The district wide approach is now driven by the BDAPS 4Ps. The financial inclusion officer post leads and manages the BDCU programme; coordinates financial inclusion programmes across the district and works with partners to develop a range of financial inclusion programmes and campaigns</li> <li>• Review in progress and district profiling completed. This is informing a data led approach to ongoing work to ensure those entitled secure their benefits</li> </ul>   |

## **Theme 2: A Great Start, A Great Education**

*We want to ensure all our children and young people grow up in families free from the scarring effects of poverty on life chances and to ensure they can make successful transitions into adult life. This means ensuring all children get a good start in life through high quality early years care and providing pathways into good, well paid jobs and further and higher education.*

- 3.23 The strategy recognises the challenges to giving all our children the best start in life. In Bradford, two in five of our children grow up in relative poverty and this fundamentally affects their life chances, from how well they will do in school to how long they will live. As the BDAPS demonstrates, there is a close link between poverty, early childhood development and subsequent educational attainment.
- 3.24 Almost a third of our school pupils are eligible for free school meals (approximately 30,000). National research shows that, on average, children on free school meals are around 18 months behind their better off peers by the age of 16. The challenges we face are great.
- 3.25 But there are world leading policy and research programmes such as Born in Bradford, Act Early and Better Start Bradford running across the district. Our public services and VCS deliver nationally recognised programmes such as Living Well and our HAF programme. These programmes are making a real difference to the lives of children and their families in our communities.
- 3.26 Table 2 provides a summary of the Theme 2 priorities, programmes, progress and outcomes to date. Note that the action plan accompanying the strategy originally contained a five year Raising Attainment Strategy. This strategy has not gone forward, instead there is now a renewed focus on improving attendance and ensuring digital access. The 0-5 universal early years outcome offer in the original action plan is now a broader Prevention and Early Years Strategy.
- 3.27 Progress and achievements are highlighted below.

### ***Prevention and Early Help Strategy***

- 3.28 This prevention and early help strategy is now based around a newly reconfigured family hubs locality based service. This aims to provide families with the support, advice and guidance to help ensure children thrive and develop from birth through the critical early years of child development and on into adolescence.
- 3.29 The hubs bring services together to work with families from 0 to 19 years, and up to age 24 years for some young people with needs arising from Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND), to deliver an integrated local offer. More detail on this can be found in the section on Theme 4.

### ***Act Early and Living Well Schools***

- 3.30 Part of the wider Act Early programme, Living Well Schools aims to transform the health and wellbeing of pupils to achieve better educational outcomes and live

happier, healthier more fulfilling lives. It focuses on three core strands: improving physical health, improving social and emotional health, and reducing classroom inequalities. A wide range of projects have been developed to improve the health and opportunities for children living in areas with high levels of child poverty. These include initiatives such as Glasses for Classes, the Digital Makers Programme and the Poverty Proofing the School Day pilot programme. Ongoing implementation and evaluation of these programmes is developing the evidence base for finding out what works and further developing policy and practice.

### ***Reducing the Educational Attainment Gap and Ensuring No Child is Left Behind***

- 3.31 Over the past year, resources have been directed to two priorities. First, reducing persistent absence, including providing specialist support for children and young people with SEND. Second, providing access to devices and the internet through capital funding in Digital Inclusion for Disadvantaged Children & Young People. The pandemic demonstrated the importance of digital access to children's learning and the ways in which a lack of access disadvantaged our poorest children.
- 3.32 Work on reducing persistent school absence has been reconfigured. A persistent Absence Reduction Team works across the localities and works in partnership with the family hubs and other support teams. Initially this way of working was piloted with 30 schools. Out of 169 children, the average child's annual attendance rate has increased by five percent, 114 out of 169 children recording improved attendance as an outcome of the pilot. The aim is to ensure every school in Bradford has a similar level of support from September 2023.
- 3.33 From September 2023, Children's Overview and Scrutiny Committee will be reconvening their inquiry into child poverty to better understand the impact of child poverty on life chances and review how services at local level can work better together to reduce this impact.

### ***Children and Young People's Strategy and Child Friendly Bradford District***

- 3.34 A new Children and Young People's Strategy is being finalised which will set the framework for all our work with children and young people going forward. One of the priorities for the strategy is education. The strategy also sets the context for our work around Child Friendly Bradford District, our approach to taking a more children's right based approach to decision making where children and young people are given more voice and influence. Through this approach, children and young people, and their right to be heard, will be at the heart of our decision making and all that we do. A key part of this will be overcoming the barriers child poverty creates and which prevent children realising their potential and participating in the full life of their communities.

### ***Holiday Activities and Food Programme (HAF)***

- 3.35 Our HAF programme continues its successful implementation. Now in its third of four years, the programme (worth approximately £2.9m per year) provides a wide range of holiday activities and sports programmes, free meals and access to



information, advice and guidance for children and their parents. In total, over 25,000 of our poorest children and their families benefit from this programme. The programme for 2023 has seen:

- Approximately 5,500 children engaged in the Easter 2023 programme - a similar number will be engaged in the Christmas 2023 programme
- A comprehensive summer programme with 130 clubs delivering provision with over 4,000 activities on offer ranging from sports, arts, music, nature, educational and much more
- Over 14,000 children engaged in the Summer 2023 programme

**Table 2, Theme 2: A Great Start, Great Education**

| <b>Priorities</b>  | <b>Programmes</b>   | <b>Progress and Outcomes</b>   |
|--|---|--|
| High quality early years service for all                                 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 0-5 Early Years Programme</li> </ul>   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The 0-5 programme has been restructured and merged with the district wide Prevention and Early Help Strategy 2022-25</li> </ul>   |
| Prevention and Early Help  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• District wide strategy for 2022-25 based on the relaunch of locality based Family Hubs</li> </ul>  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Relaunch of four locality based Family Hubs Completed with linked sites and some co-located services</li> <li>• Completed sign up for the Start for Life programme (see Table 4, Theme 4)</li> <li>• A Family Hub Practice Lead and a Healthy Relationships/Reducing Parental Conflict Practice Lead have been recruited</li> <li>• Adoption of Nothing About Us Without Us co-production strategy</li> </ul>   |
| Reduce the educational attainment gap and ensure no child is left behind | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Educational Attainment Strategy</li> <li>• Living Well Schools focus on reducing classroom inequalities</li> <li>• Holiday Activities and Food Programme (HAF)</li> <li>• Child poverty inquiry</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Original plan for 5-year educational attainment ended. The focus is now on reducing persistent absence, including providing specialist support for children and young people with SEND and, through capital funding in Digital Inclusion for Disadvantaged Children &amp; Young People, providing access to devices and the internet</li> <li>• Act Early and Living Well Schools programme is running over 50 projects aimed at improving children's health and reducing educational inequalities</li> <li>• Highly successful HAF programme continues (funded by Department for Education until 2025). Approximately 5,500 children engaged in Easter 2023 programme (and a similar amount to be engaged over Christmas 2023) and 14,000 children engaged in Summer 2023 programme. 130 clubs delivered HAF provision during Summer 2023 with 4,000 activities being delivered ranging from sports, arts, music, nature, educational and much more</li> <li>• Established a district wide inquiry investigating impact of child poverty and ways in which services, VCS and communities can work together to reduce impact of child poverty on life chances. One of the areas of exploration is educational inequality and achievement</li> </ul> |
| Poverty Proofing the School Day  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Living Well Poverty Proofing the School Day Programme</li> <li>• Free School Meals auto-enrolment</li> </ul>   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Fifteen schools involved. Poverty audits are being conducted and a toolkit developed to reduce costs to families of schooling and barriers to learning. Work with Action for Sports also incorporated into the poverty proofing programme</li> <li>• Uniform Savers scheme expanded with additional £40,000 funding and a Back to School loan scheme introduced by BDCU</li> <li>• Free School Meals auto-enrolment feasibility study being conducted with academic and local authority partners.</li> </ul>  |

|                                |  |  |
|--------------------------------|--|--|
|                                | feasibility study  |  |
| Becoming a Child Friendly City | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Children and Young People's Strategy</li> <li>• Development of Child Friendly District</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A new Children and Young People's Strategy has been developed with education being one of the priorities</li> <li>• The Child Friendly District lead is working on developing the district as a child friendly district which promotes and protects children's rights. A key part of this will be overcoming the barriers child poverty creates which prevent children realising their potential and participating in the full life of their communities</li> </ul> |

### **Theme 3: Better Skills, Good Jobs and a Growing Economy**

*Work should provide a progression route out of poverty but too many of our citizens are trapped in low paid and low skilled jobs. For all our adults in work, we want to ensure access to well paid jobs, with clear progression routes, and the training opportunities to allow progression in the work place.*

- 3.36 To prevent people falling into poverty and provide pathways out of poverty, work is key. However, research shows that it is not just having a job that matters but having a good job: a job which pays well, offers sufficient hours of work, a degree of security, decent progression routes and decent working conditions. Too many people in low paid, part-time, insecure, low skilled jobs get trapped in poverty.
- 3.37 The district's economic strategy, levelling up programme and training and skills provision sets the framework for anti-poverty work in Theme 3. Over the next few years, around £1bn will be invested in the district through regeneration, culture and transport schemes. This has the potential to be transformative for Bradford.
- 3.38 Table 3 provides a summary of the Theme 3 priorities, programmes, progress and outcomes to date. Progress and achievements are highlighted below.

#### ***Kickstart***

- 3.39 The Council ran one of the most successful Kickstart programmes in the country with over 800 people on placements which ended in October 2022. Of this 800, 60 percent (480) young people went on to get jobs.

#### ***Integrated Employment Support, Careers and Technical Education Offer***

- 3.40 In partnership with education and employment partners, the Council continues to develop the successful integrated careers and technical education offer. This is delivered through SkillsHouse. To date more than 45,000 adults have been supported into education and training since August 2020 and, in the academic year 2022/23, over 9,000 residents of all ages accessed information, advice and guidance support. The careers and technical education approach for young people is also delivered through SkillsHouse. In 2022-23, just over 7,068 young people (age 16-18) were supported to participate in education and training, and 16,000 accessed sector specific career pathway education. Additionally, from January

2023, the delivery of the national Multiply programme commenced. This programme, part of the UK Shared Prosperity Fund (UKSPF), is worth £300k. It aims to improve adult numeracy through community based working and includes support with budgeting. In year one (to the end of March 2023), the Council supported 330 people. For years two (the current financial year) and three (2024/25 financial year) there will be a mix of direct delivery and commissioned VCS provision.

### ***Levelling Up, Regeneration and Economic Strategy***

- 3.41 Over £80m has been secured for city centre regeneration and transport infrastructure improvement and £59m Towns Fund money is being invested to regenerate Keighley and Shipley town centres. Working with the Mayoral Authority, the Council and partners will also be drawing on a portfolio of major transport schemes, worth in the region of £250m over the next three years. If successful this will bring jobs, improved transport links and economic development.
- 3.42 Bradford has received £7.5m from the UKSPF Fund via West Yorkshire Combined Authority to support: culture, ongoing regeneration, and local communities to meet their needs. The funding will be used to: support local groups and communities to address poverty and tackle inequalities; invest in the Voluntary, Community, Social Enterprise Sector (VCSE); build on the success of securing the City of Culture 2025 title; and support our towns to thrive.
- 3.43 The primary goal of the funding through UKSPF is to build pride in place and increase life chances across the UK. The Council has already provided £50k of grants to local cultural and creative projects, part of a total of £100k, with the second grant phase currently under way. Through UKSPF, funding has been secured to provide local small businesses in Keighley with grants to accelerate business growth and stimulate new jobs.
- 3.44 All the regeneration and skills programmes sit within an economic strategy which is in the process of being updated and renewed. The strategy will build on and join up with the Mayoral Authority strategy and new devolution powers.
- 3.45 The new economic strategy will be fundamental to the success of the anti-poverty strategy. This is because the economic strategy can help generate the jobs, growth and opportunities which will build pathways out of poverty and prevent people falling into poverty in the longer term.

**Table 3, Theme 3 Better Skills, Good Jobs and a Growing Economy**

| Priorities   | Programmes  | Progress and Outcomes   |
|--|---|---|
| Job experience programmes                                  | • Kickstart   | • Programme successfully ended in October 2022. Over 800 Kickstart placements – one of the highest rates in the country. 60 percent of participants subsequently got jobs   |
|  | • LCEP  | • Pilot programme started with 15 Care Leavers  |
| Integrate careers and technical education vocational offer | • SkillsHouse   | • To date 45,000 adults enrolled on education or training<br>• £300k for the implementation of the Multiply programme which aims to improve adult numeracy. The programme will run until the end of 2025. To date over 330 people have been supported   |
| High quality careers information, advice and guidance      | • Integrated careers service offer  | • In the last year, over 9,000 adults have been provided with careers advice and guidance and 7,088 young people. 16,000 young people supported with sector specific careers advice   |
| Levelling up and regeneration                              | • Range of regeneration programmes funded through a range of sources e.g. Towns Fund, UKSPF | • A range of programmes are being implemented such as One City Park, Darley St Market, renovation of the Alhambra, Towns Fund for Keighley and Shipley. These aim to create jobs, bring investment and new businesses, regenerate the city centre, Keighley and Shipley, and grow the district economy. For example, Darly St Market will create 400 new jobs and deliver an economic benefit of £32m over a 10-year period |
| Affordable, clean and accessible transport                 | • Range of transport infrastructure projects<br>• Devolution “Trailblazer” deal             | • Secured a portfolio of major transport schemes worth in the region of £250m over the next three years which will bring jobs, improved transport links and economic development<br>• Working with Mayoral authority to negotiate with Government for “trailblazer deal” devolution powers  |
| Sustainable, clean and inclusive economy                   | • Economic Strategy   | • The district’s economic strategy is currently being renewed. This will set the frame and aim to create the conditions for preventing people falling into poverty and providing pathways out of poverty<br>• A key part of this strategy will be developing good jobs and supporting the foundational economy  |

#### **Theme 4: Better Health, Better Lives**

*The poorest in our community die earlier, they spend more years in ill health and are least likely to have access to services. If we want all our citizens to enjoy the prospect of safe, long, happy and fruitful lives then we must tackle health poverty and inequalities.*

3.46 As the DBAPS makes clear, poor health can be both a cause and consequence of poverty. People with chronic illness and disability are at far more risk of poverty, face greater barriers escaping poverty and face

additional costs in daily living. Research shows that an increase in average net annual income of £1k in an area is associated with a 3.6 months increase in life expectancy for both men and women ([Health Foundation](#))

- 3.47 A range of programmes in Theme 4 are world leading and generating an evidence base on what works best in reducing poverty and health inequalities. This work will be further developed by the Health Determinants Research Collaboration.
- 3.48 Table 4 provides a summary of the Theme 4 priorities, programmes, progress and outcomes to date. Progress and achievements are highlighted below.

### ***Act Early***

- 3.49 The Act Early programme focuses its work on three themes: healthy livelihoods, healthy learning, healthy places. Across these three themes, Act Early continues to develop policies and programmes and provide research and evidence on what works to tackle inequality and disadvantage. The health learning programmes were commented on earlier in Theme 3. More widely, the healthy livelihoods and healthy places themes aim to ensure our children have the best start in life and that life expectancy and healthy life expectancy inequalities through the life course are reduced. Among the wide range of projects currently running are programmes aimed at developing physical activity and play activities for young people and programmes to reduce childhood obesity and improve overall health.

### ***Better Start Bradford***

- 3.50 This programme is now in its eighth year. It aims to give children the best start in life in terms of their health, wellbeing and life-chances by improving children's diet and nutrition; improving children's speech, language and communication skills; and improving children's social and emotional development.
- 3.51 In the past year work has focussed on:
- Jointly commissioning the Early Years Alliance to develop and support Play and Learn provision across the district. The Better Start Early Years team have supported the development and piloting of a quality toolkit to provide a framework for volunteers and practitioners delivering Play and Learn opportunities to families.
  - Expanding the Little Minds Matter (Infant Mental Health Service), Personalised Midwifery and Doula projects to additional disadvantaged wards in central Bradford through investment of Reducing Inequalities in Communities (RiC) CCG funding.
  - Working alongside Bradford Council and its health partners to develop the Bradford Start for Life, exploring how the learning and best practice developed within the programme can shape the offer, and whether Better Start projects can be mainstreamed across the district.

### ***Family Hubs and Welfare Advice Services***

- 3.52 Family Hubs are the central plank of the Prevention and Early Help Strategy (highlighted in Theme 3). Family hubs should be seen as an umbrella term which describes the collection of services working in a locality, including more targeted services deployed alongside other services to support the needs of children and families.
- 3.53 In the past year, funding of £5.8m has been secured for the Start for Life programme. The programme focuses on services for pre-birth to two years, providing essential support that any new family might need: midwifery, health visiting, mental health support, infant-feeding advice and specialist breastfeeding support, parenting support, safeguarding and services relating to SEND.
- 3.54 A Programme Team is in place with cross partner working groups including the Children and Family Trust, health and VCS organisations.
- 3.55 The hubs also house a range of welfare advice and support services (see Theme 1) which help to support people's mental and physical health and ensure they can access the benefits, services, advice and guidance they may need to support themselves and their families. They are also part of, and extend further, our community based provision of welfare advice services.

### ***Health Determinants Research Collaboration***

- 3.56 The Council and partners were successful in a £5m bid to set up a Health Determinants Research Collaboration (HDRC). The HDRC is now established. Over the next five years, the HDRC will help to generate the evidence base underpinning the development of locally based programmes by helping us understand what works best, for whom and in what contexts to improve health and wellbeing for our poorest citizens. The goal is to help overcome the widespread inequalities that exist in life and healthy life expectancy between our most and least deprived communities.

### ***Reducing Inequalities in Communities***

- 3.57 This five-year programme started in 2019 and currently has 21 projects running which aim to close the health gap for central Bradford communities affected by poverty. Projects recognise the impact of poverty and other determinants of health, aiming to reduce health risks and improve access to care from pre-conception until later life. This year work is focused on evaluating the projects so that successful elements can be implemented in other areas.
- 3.58 The programme includes a Welfare Benefits Advice Service that operates through trusted organisations to improve the financial position of people in marginalised communities and those with physical and mental health conditions. Between July 2020 and March 2023 4,088 people (14 percent above expectation) received support from this service with 1,699 people receiving support on complex issues. Twenty-six percent of cases related to

Personal Independence Payments and 10 percent to Universal Credit. Where a client received a financial benefit, the average amount was £603.05.

3.59 The Young People’s Social Prescribing project has supported 175 young people in areas affected by poverty (from 341 referrals) to be empowered, safe, emotionally, and physically well, and to develop positive relationships and essential skills. It has provided holistic assessments, 1:1 sessions, social groups and onward signposting, aiming to intervene early and avoid entrenched, complex issues which could affect health and financial security throughout adult life. The young people involved said that they were less lonely and had better relationships, were more connected to their communities and felt more motivated.

***Reducing Health Inequalities Alliance***

3.60 This alliance has been set up to promote work to reduce health inequalities across the Bradford District and Craven health care area. It brings together a range of partners from across the district and aims to develop a shared vision on reducing inequalities, develop the skills and capacities of services, share best practice and develop new programmes of work.

3.61 The Reducing Inequalities Alliance supports Core20PLUS5, NHS England’s approach to reducing health inequalities. This approach aims to improve health for people in the localities most affected by poverty by preventing ill health and mitigating risk, improving access to care, and joining up community services. The workstream focuses on five key clinical areas (maternity, severe mental illness, chronic respiratory disease, cancer, and high blood pressure), with smoking cessation as an overarching priority. To develop this approach locally, the Reducing Inequalities Alliance is working with Community Partnerships, who have defined their priorities and are designing interventions.

**Table 4, Theme 4: Better Health, Better Lives**

| <b>Priorities</b>                       | <b>Programmes</b>   | <b>Progress and Outcomes</b>  |
|---|---|---|
| <b>Providing the best start in life</b> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Act Early</li> </ul>             | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ongoing development of the programmes</li> <li>• Evaluation of existing programmes resulting in widespread roll out e.g. glasses in classes</li> <li>• New policy ideas being generated and lobbied for e.g. basic income for young people with mental health problems</li> </ul>  |
|   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Better Start Bradford</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Jointly commissioning the Early Years Alliance to develop and support Play and Learn provision across the district. Expansion of Little Minds Matter (Infant Mental Health Service)</li> <li>• Personalised Midwifery and Doula projects through investment of Reducing Inequalities in Communities CCG funding</li> <li>• Using Better Start Bradford expertise to apply for Start for Life Trailblazer status for Perinatal Mental Health &amp; Parent Infant Relationships and Infant Feeding to bring additional investment to the district</li> </ul> |

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|  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Healthy Start</li> </ul>  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Focus on increasing take up of this Government funded programme which provides food and milk for children aged 0-4. Take up has increased by 5 percent over the past year</li> </ul>  |
|  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Family Hubs Start for Life</li> </ul>                                       | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Completed plans for re-energising and re-launching the four main Hubs with linked sites and some co-located services</li> <li>• Sign up for the Start for Life programme completed, focusing on services for pre-birth to two years and essential support that any new family might need: midwifery, health visiting, mental health support, infant-feeding advice and specialist breastfeeding support, parenting support, safeguarding and services relating to SEND</li> <li>• Family Hub Practice Lead and a Healthy Relationships, Reducing Parental Conflict Practice Lead recruited</li> <li>• Start for Life Trailblazer status for Perinatal Mental Health &amp; Parent Infant Relationships and Infant Feeding submitted</li> <li>• Adopted the 'Nothing About Us Without Us' co-production strategy</li> </ul> |
| Development of Community health/welfare hubs                                 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Community Hubs</li> </ul>   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Joined up with broader welfare advice locality based model of working and five hubs supported by the Council</li> <li>• The Redressing Inequalities in Cities fund provided funding to support welfare advice in GP surgeries</li> <li>• Public Health funded new IT hardware and software costs among Council funded welfare advice providers and pump-primed the district wide Community Advice Network to develop our joined-up working</li> </ul>   |
| Evidence based policy to tackle health inequalities                          | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Establish a Health Determinants Research Collaboration</li> </ul>           | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• HDRC funding secured (£5m)</li> <li>• HDRC Director and Team appointed</li> <li>• Action plan developed and work progressing on five themes</li> </ul>  |
| Adopting population health and social determinants model of health provision | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Focus on social determinants of health and reducing inequalities</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Adoption of a social determinants model to drive developments in health policy and practice across the district</li> <li>• Reducing Inequalities in Communities projects to reduce inequalities in health risks and access to health care</li> <li>• Creation of Reducing Health Inequalities Alliance. The alliance aims to support and coordinate collective action to reduce inequalities in Bradford District and Craven</li> </ul>   |
| Core20PLUS5  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Health-focused projects to reduce inequalities</li> </ul>                   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Developing hyperlocal interventions to improve health and empower people to reach their personal, social and economic potential in the communities most affected by poverty</li> </ul>  |

## Theme 5: Better Housing, Inclusive and Sustainable Communities

*We want all our citizens to feel safe and nurtured in their communities, where decent homes and accessible services are provided, where cultural diversity is celebrated and where everyone can participate and play an active role in their community.*



- 3.62 Access to affordable, decent housing is key to reducing poverty and improving health outcomes. For example, at least 60,000 homes lack the most basic insulation. If insulation could be improved, this would not only help families save money but also improve health and quality of life.
- 3.63 Safe communities, with good transport, green spaces, play areas and accessible local services improve health and wellbeing, but the poorest in our district are least likely to live in these kinds of places.
- 3.64 Table 5 provides a summary of the Theme 5 priorities, programmes, progress and outcomes to date. Progress and achievements are highlighted below.

### ***A Place to Call Home, A Place to Thrive***

- 3.65 The district housing strategy sets out a range of programmes to increase housing quality, provide affordable homes, support vulnerable groups and reduce overcrowding and homelessness. In 2022-23, 143 affordable homes were built compared to 149 in 2021-22. Responsibility for affordable homes has now been devolved to the West Yorkshire Combined Authority.
- 3.66 There is a new policy focus on leading the way in strengthening policy and guidance on housing, streets and neighbourhood design to create liveable spaces that enable healthy lives. The ambition is to develop a number of active neighbourhoods where communities can live within easy walking distance of where they work, learn and play.
- 3.67 The Regeneration & Environment Scrutiny Committee is conducting a review of the Private Rented Sector across Bradford and the different ways of managing and improving the quality of housing provision.
- 3.68 There is also a range of programmes which support specific vulnerable groups. These are highlighted in Theme 6.

### ***Cultural, Digital and Social Inclusion***

- 3.69 Bradford will be the UK City of Culture in 2025 and as part of this there is an ambitious strategy, Culture is Our Plan, to develop a wide range of cultural, artistic and heritage activities and events. The plan creates up to 3,000 local jobs. It also has ambitious targets to give 250,000 people in the district's most deprived wards the opportunity to get involved with arts, culture and heritage activities and to ensure that 50 percent of the workforce is from underrepresented backgrounds. The completed digital inclusion strategy is now being rolled out across the district.

### ***Locality Working***

- 3.70 Locality working that recognises one size does not fit all, is now becoming embedded across our five Area Committee areas. The vision is to build safe, strong and active localities, where citizens and local leaders are empowered to work alongside public agencies and partners, to address local needs and issues and improve citizens' health and wellbeing.

3.71 Organisations within the localities are now working towards providing dedicated resources in each locality by joining up thinking, collaboration, service design and delivery to tackle local issues. Partners have also deployed the following additional resources to support the initiative: ten additional police officers working in localities, four Public Health Community Health Development Workers, five Act as One Locality Development Roles working in community partnerships, and five Community Implementers through the Reducing Inequalities Alliance.

**Table 5, Theme 5: Better Housing, Inclusive and Sustainable Communities**

| Priorities                    | Programmes  | Progress and Outcomes  |
|-------------------------------|---|--|
| Decent housing for all        | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A Place to Call Home, A Place to Thrive</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ongoing implementation of district wide housing strategy: A Place to Call Home, A Place to Thrive. 143 affordable homes were built in 2022-23. 5,000 people received LHA</li> <li>• A new policy focus on leading the way in strengthening policy and guidance on housing, streets and neighbourhood design to create liveable spaces that enable healthy lives. The ambition is to develop a number of active neighbourhoods where communities can live within easy walking distance of where they work, learn and play</li> <li>• The Regeneration &amp; Environment Scrutiny Committee are conducting a review of the Private Rented Sector across Bradford and the different ways of managing and improving the quality of housing provision</li> </ul> |
| Cultural and Social Inclusion | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Culture is Our Plan Engagement Strategy</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A new engagement strategy is being developed which will review how all our communities can access, participate in and benefit from the cultural and social opportunities being made available</li> <li>• Target set to give 250,000 people in the district's most deprived wards the opportunity to get involved with arts, culture and heritage activities</li> </ul>  |
| Digital Inclusion             | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Digital Inclusion Strategy</li> </ul>              | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Digital inclusion strategy developed and now being rolled out across the district</li> </ul>  |
| Locality Working              | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Area based teams</li> </ul>                        | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Organisations within localities are now working towards providing dedicated resources in each locality by joining up thinking, collaboration, and service design and delivering to tackle local issues</li> <li>• Partners have also deployed the following additional resources to support the initiative: ten additional police officers working in localities, four Public Health Community Health Development Workers, five Act as One Locality Development Roles working into community partnerships, five Community Implementers through the Reducing Inequalities Alliance</li> </ul>  |

## **Theme 6: Support for Vulnerable Groups**

*We want to ensure that our most vulnerable and marginalised citizens are protected from harm and that they and their families are provided with the services and support to enable them to secure their rights to maximise their potential to the fullest.*

- 3.72 The BDAPS points out that we can all be at risk of being in poverty; any one of us can suddenly have our lives turned up-side down by illness or injury, loss of a job or break up of a family. But some groups are much more at risk than others and need additional support. Highly vulnerable groups, such as people with disability or mental health problems, children in care, people with drug and alcohol problems and those who are homeless, are at much greater risk.
- 3.73 Table 6 provides a summary of the Theme 6 Support for Vulnerable Groups priorities, programmes, progress and outcomes to date. Progress and achievements for some of the programmes are highlighted below.

### ***Provision of Mental Health Services***

- 3.74 There is a range of programmes being run by a variety of services covering children and young people, working age adults, and older adults across a range of settings. Programmes for early years continue to be developed. There are mental health advisers in schools, community mental health champions and a mental health campaign is running aimed at people living in the most deprived areas and most vulnerable communities. A working group has been established to prepare a pilot proposal for a Universal Basic Income for young people with mental health difficulties.
- 3.75 The programmes are part of an overall 10 year mental health strategy for the district – Better lives, brighter futures. One of the fundamental aims of the strategy is to reduce inequalities.

### ***Support for Children and Young People in Care***

- 3.76 This is a priority area and covered in the new Children and Young People's Strategy. HSF funding has been drawn on to provide additional support for young people in care and those leaving care. Council Tax exemptions are provided for young care leavers and a pilot skills programme has been developed tailored to young people leaving care.

### ***Adult Services: Into Employment Programme***

- 3.77 This programme aims to support young disabled adults to gain skills and experience in the world of work. The programme started in September 2022, with a fully paid bursary and two-days on placement each week (term time only). The School of Rock and Media (SORM) offers qualifications and support for the other three days and will support employers. To date there have been two cohorts of young adults on the programme. From the first cohort of eight young adults, two secured permanent jobs with the Council, with another also expected to secure

Council paid employment. The remaining five have gone on to higher vocational Further Education courses in college, including a film/TV production arts course and an engineering access degree course. For the second cohort, so far three placements have been offered in the VCS and four in the statutory sector.

### ***Support for Those at Risk of Homelessness or Homeless***

3.78 A range of housing support programmes are currently running to support those at risk of homelessness and those who are homeless. There was a 70.6 percent success rate in preventing homelessness for 2022-23 (1,586 preventions). This compares to 52.8 percent success rate for England as a whole. The range of programmes currently running are:

- Discretionary Housing Payments: payments to help UC or Housing Benefit claimants with rent/housing costs
- Private Sector Lettings Scheme: a package of financial incentives to private landlords including Rent In Advance, damage liability, and 3 months tenancy sustainment support for housing homeless clients
- Housing First scheme: a package of landlord incentives to landlords who take our clients with complex need together with a high level of support for as long as needed
- Vulnerable Renters Support: a contribution to paying off/reducing arrears to tenants at risk of becoming homeless
- Homeless Prevention Fund: a small payment to clients to prevent homelessness and to sustain tenancies; for example, bedding and furnishings

### **Local Supported Employment Initiative**

3.79 This is a DWP funded programme (£350,000) which aims to support up to 100 adults with learning disabilities, autism or both to move into competitive employment and provide the help they need to maintain that employment. The programme was established in November 2022 and will run until 2025.

**Table 6, Theme Six: Support for Vulnerable Groups**

|                              | <b>Programmes</b>   | <b>Progress and Outcomes</b>  |
|------------------------------|---|---|
| Mental health services       | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Mental health service development</li> <li>• Universal Basic Income Pilot (UBI)</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 10 year mental health strategy for the district – Better lives, brighter futures. One of aims is to reduce health inequalities.</li> <li>• UBI working group established to explore feasibility and develop a pilot proposal for a UBI for young people with mental health issues</li> </ul> |
| Homelessness/housing support | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Discretionary Housing Payments (DHPs)</li> </ul>   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• DHPs continue to be allocated according to policy and funding is always spent fully every year. The aim is to prevent debt arrears and risk of homelessness</li> </ul>   |
|                              | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Private sector Letting Scheme</li> <li>• Housing First Scheme</li> </ul>                   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A range of programmes are running which, taken together, aim to prevent and reduce homelessness and provide support to people with complex housing support needs. For 2022-23 70.6 percent success rate in homelessness prevention (1,586 preventions)</li> </ul>                            |

|  |   |   |
|--|---|---|
|  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Homeless Prevention Fund</li> <li>• Vulnerable Renters Support</li> </ul>  |   |
|  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Veteran's homelessness scheme</li> <li>• No second night out</li> </ul>  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• New programme to support veterans in accessing sheltered housing and wrap around care</li> <li>• Support programme for rough sleepers including outreach work and delivery of cold weather provision</li> </ul>  |
| Children and Young People in Care                    | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• HSF funding</li> </ul>   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Additional funding to support care leavers, foster carers and Bradford Carers Resource (see appendix 2).</li> </ul>  |
|  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Support with period poverty</li> </ul>   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Hygiene products provided for children in care</li> <li>• Financial allowance paid to foster carers to cover cost of hygiene products</li> </ul>   |
|  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Council Tax Discounts and Exemptions</li> </ul>  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Care Leavers up to 25 are exempt from Council Tax</li> </ul>   |
| Job seekers with learning disabilities and or autism | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• LSE initiative to provide supported pathways into employment and provide support in maintaining employment.</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• £350k of new funding from the Department for Work and Pensions (DWP) as part of a new government initiative to provide extra support to job seekers with learning disabilities and autism</li> <li>• Up to 100 adults with learning disabilities, autism or both will be supported by the LSE initiative to move into competitive employment and provide the help they need to maintain that employment</li> </ul> |
| People with Drug and Alcohol Misuse Problems         | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Rough Sleepers, Drug and Alcohol</li> </ul>  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Rough Sleepers Drug and Alcohol Treatment approach project extended. It aims to reduce drug related offending and deaths</li> </ul>  |
| Young People at risk of involvement in serious crime | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Breaking the Cycle</li> </ul>  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 1,390 young people have now benefited from the Project team's intensive, intelligence led support, up from 800 in September 2022. A new Focussed Deterrent Care Project has supported over 500 young people to date</li> </ul>   |

## Theme 7: Participation and Voice

*We want to ensure that those living in poverty are heard and that they are actively engaged in developing and delivering the strategies and policies that affect their lives. This means adopting the “nothing done to us, without us” approach. This is fundamental to recognising the moral equality of all our citizens, poor or not, and ensuring those in poverty secure recognition, respect and equal rights. We also want to ensure that the voices and interests of our poorest citizens are represented in regional and national policy making.*

3.80 In the BDAPS action plan, the Anti-Poverty Events Network (APEN) was to provide the vehicle for co-production and community involvement of those with lived experience of poverty. The APEN would feed into the work of the DACG.

- 3.81 The APEN was an independent and autonomous community group which, due to resourcing and capacity issues, has now ceased.
- 3.82 However, the Council is working with a range of partners on the ground in communities and through a wide range of partnerships to ensure the voice of those living in poverty is heard.
- 3.83 Currently, the focus is on poverty proofing, partnership working, advocacy and lobbying, and locality based provision as ways of promoting participation and voice.
- 3.84 Table 7 provides a summary of the Theme 7 priorities, programmes, progress and outcomes to date. Progress and achievements are highlighted below.

### ***Socio-Economic Duty, Poverty Proofing and Equality Impact Assessments***

- 3.85 The adoption of the socio-economic duty and recognition of low income as a protected characteristic means that all Council policies and strategies must be poverty proofed as part of conducting equality impact assessments. Part of this process involves explaining how those affected by our policies and strategies have been consulted on them.
- 3.86 Members of the DACG act as anti-poverty champions within their own services and organisations and we are promoting the adoption of poverty proofing across the district as part of our Bradford approach.

### ***Partnership Working***

- 3.87 The BDAPS and all the programmes in the action plan are dependent on partnership working. Through partnership working, the DACG continues to raise awareness of poverty across the district, advocate for improving the life chances of those living in poverty and connect with our communities on the ground.
- 3.88 At regional level, there is ongoing work with a range of bodies such as the Mayoral Authority, Health Inequalities Alliance (HIA), regional local authority officer groups, Higher Education Institute (HEI) partners and Non-Governmental Organisations (NGOs).
- 3.89 Additionally, the DACG is working with the Royal Society of Arts (RSA) to support a research project on understanding barriers to transition into adult life for disadvantaged young people. It is also working with colleagues in Act Early on developing a pilot proposal for a Universal Basic Income Scheme for young people with mental health difficulties.

### ***Advocacy and Lobbying***

- 3.90 The BDAPS sets out a Bradford Approach. It is this approach, and the way it frames poverty, which structures the policies the DACG advocates for. In its advocacy and lobbying work, the DACG focusses on raising awareness of the lived reality of poverty, the ways in which current strategies, policies and programmes

might reinforce poverty and the ways in which we can better achieve the goals of protection, pathways, prevention and participation.

- 3.91 Council Officers have presented and promoted the Bradford approach to the Mayoral Authority and Yorkshire and Humber Chief Executives. Officers are currently working with the Mayoral authority on developing deeper devolution and utilising funding and powers to better meet our community needs and the DACG has contributed to government consultation on cost of living support.

**Locality Based Provision**

- 3.92 Together with VCS, health and other public services partners, the Council is working with local communities to bring services close to people, provide greater co-production and community involvement, and to better meet local needs. Two examples of this are the linking of our welfare advice and services provision and joining up with family hubs (highlighted in Themes 1, 2 and 4); and the move toward more integrated local provision of services based on local community needs analysis (highlighted in Theme 5).

**Table 7, Theme 7: Participation and Voice**

| <b>Priorities</b>   | <b>Programme</b>  | <b>Progress and Outcomes</b>   |
|---|---|--|
| Ensure the voice of those living in poverty is represented in all strategies, policies and programmes | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Poverty Equality Impact Assessment (EIA)</li> </ul>  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Adoption of socio-economic duty and recognition of low income as a protected characteristic</li> <li>• Poverty proofing incorporated as part of EIAs</li> </ul>   |
|   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Poverty Equality Champions</li> </ul>  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• DACG members act as anti-poverty champions in their services and organisations</li> </ul>   |
|   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Anti-Poverty Events Network</li> </ul>   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Network has now folded but there are a wide range of VCS and community organisations that contribute to programmes in the Anti-Poverty Strategy</li> </ul>  |
|   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Locality based services</li> </ul>   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• More locally based services tailored to the needs of specific communities</li> <li>• As part of locality working, a move toward coproduction of local plans directly with local communities and a greater focus on place based needs analysis</li> </ul>                                    |
| Ensure the Bradford voice is heard in regional and national policy                                    | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Regional and National Advocacy</li> <li>• Partnership Working</li> <li>• Locality working</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• BDAPS adopted as Bradford Approach and 4Ps set the goals for work across the district</li> <li>• Participation in Mayoral Authority and regional office groups to represent Bradford and advocate for local needs</li> <li>• Participation in HIA and dissemination of the BDAPS</li> </ul> |

|  |  |   |
|--|--|---|
|  |  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Working with a range of HEI partners on projects such as Act Early, HDRC, Child of the North</li> <li>• Providing briefing papers to national consultations advocating for better cost of living support</li> <li>• Successfully secured funding from Mayoral Authority (around £439k) to support Bradford services</li> </ul> |
|--|--|---|

## 4.0 CHALLENGES AND OPPORTUNITIES

### ***Local Authority/Statutory Funding***

- 4.1 The impact of inflationary pressures on the Council, other public sector services and the VCS pose threats to our ability to sustain key services and infrastructure. Inflationary costs far outstrip government funding and council tax increases. The rise in demand outstrips capacity. The strategy needs to maximise the benefits of working in partnership.

### ***Short Term Funding, Multiple Funding Streams and Fragmented, Ad Hoc Projects***

- 4.2 Many support programmes are government funded programmes. This poses two challenges. Firstly, delivering these programmes depends on drawing on the resource and skills of Council staff alongside our partners. While this is done really well, for example the HAF Programme was shortlisted for a Local Government Chronicle award and Bradford District 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. Secondly, the programmes are short term and ad hoc. There is no long term funding security. If funding streams end, our ability to provide emergency support will fall but demand will not.
- 4.3 The DACG will advocate for local welfare funding, currently delivered in the form of Household Support Fund and Discretionary Housing Payment, to be put on a permanent, sustainable footing with a greater emphasis on preventative services and the promotion of households' financial resilience.

### ***Lack Of Impactful National Strategy/Policy***

- 4.4 Most of the key policy decisions that determine levels of poverty are set nationally. The BDAPS must work in the context set by national policy. A key part of the DACG work is in raising awareness of the extent and impact of poverty across our district to advocate for better anti-poverty policy.



### ***Economic Uncertainty***

- 4.5 The economy continues to flatline, there are signs unemployment is rising and the full impact of interest rate rises has yet to work through on mortgage holders and renters. Rises will also impact on businesses and may well reduce investment and reduce consumer demand. Inflation could fall substantially over the coming year and real wages could rise. However, falling inflation will not reduce the price of basics such as food and energy, it will simply mean the price of these basics is now rising less quickly. The rise in real wages may not benefit the lowest wage earners and living standards look set for a continued squeeze. The impact on our citizens, communities, public services, businesses and VCS will continue to unfold against the backdrop of uncertainty and reduced resilience.

### ***Child Poverty***

- 4.6 Child poverty rates are among the highest in the country. Both DWP and Loughborough University figures show that since 2015, Bradford has experienced one of the largest rises in child poverty of all local authorities. The current strategic approach to tackling poverty takes a whole family approach to poverty. Children's Overview and Scrutiny Committee is in the process of holding an inquiry into child poverty.

### ***Realism***

- 4.7 As previously emphasised in this report, while there is much that can be done locally, many of the policies that determine poverty levels are set nationally. Further, the socio-economic profile of the district means that we are highly vulnerable to the impact of the cost of living crisis.
- 4.8 Setting realistic expectations, focussing on where local services can make the most difference and adopting an "intelligent accountability" approach to evaluation of anti-poverty strategies means being open about the scale of the challenge, the impact that local policy can have and the challenges local services face.

### **Evaluating the Impact of the BDAPS**

- 4.9 One of the challenges currently being considered by the APCG is how to evaluate the strategy. There are practical issues to consider. For example, real time data is not available for key indicators such as the number of people in poverty. Joining up local data sets is an ongoing challenge. But there are also complex issues of methodology. Poverty is an entrenched problem with systemic causes. It takes time to make change. Poverty is not solely or even primarily determined by policy at local level. Changes in key indicators such as the number of people in poverty are dependent on national economic and social policies. These indicators could improve or deteriorate regardless of the success or failure of the strategy and associated policies and programmes. The impact of the cost of living crisis shows this. To fully understand the impact of the BDAPS requires an evaluation programme that can help identify which policies and programmes are working, for whom they are working and in what contexts. For policy development, this requires work on three levels. First, mapping how the poverty profile of the district changes

over the five year life of the strategy. Second, evaluating how the BDAPS as a strategy is impacting on policy and practice. Third, evaluating the specific impacts of the policies and programmes in the action plan to figure out which programmes appear to work and should be continued. Work with HDRC colleagues and academic partners will explore the feasibility of setting up a Bradford poverty dashboard and annual poverty survey to provide better real time data and a robust evaluation strategy.

## **5.0 MOVING FORWARD**

- 5.1 Over the coming year the focus will remain on protecting our most vulnerable citizens and providing a safety net in the context of available resources. The Council, working with our partners across the public, private and VCS sectors and, most importantly, working with our communities, 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 help promote our four core goals of protection, prevention, pathways and participation.
- 5.2 The HDRC focus on what works to reduce poverty and health inequalities alongside collaboration with health partners and academic research colleagues, through projects such as Act Early and Better Start Bradford, will result in new programmes being developed and the building of an evidence base on what works. This will feed into the ongoing development of the BDAPS.
- 5.3 New forms of locality based working and co-production strategies are being developed and implemented. And despite the continued challenges of the cost of living crisis, the Council and partners are maintaining and developing the range of programmes which help provide a safety net for our poorest and most vulnerable citizens and help provide essential support. For example, through the cost of living survival guide, provision of welfare advice services and warm spaces/welcome spaces programme.
- 5.4 Protecting our most vulnerable communities will remain a priority but wider work will continue on programmes such as regeneration and skills, education, health and housing. Over the longer term, these programmes are fundamental to the goals of prevention, pathways and participation.

## **6.0 OTHER CONSIDERATIONS**

### **6.1 FINANCIAL & RESOURCE APPRAISAL**

Although there is a need to resource this area, this report has focussed on reporting progress over the past year and the intended focus for future anti-poverty work. However, going forward, consideration will need to be given to the implications of funding sources such as HSF ending and how to best resource anti-poverty work.

## **6.2 RISK MANAGEMENT AND GOVERNANCE ISSUES**

There are none arising from this report as this issue is 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 TACKLING THE CLIMATE EMERGENCY IMPLICATIONS**

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

### **7.7 IMPLICATIONS FOR CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE**

Children in Care are one of several 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 up to 25 are exempt from Council Tax.

### **7.8 ISSUES ARISING FROM PRIVACY IMPACT ASSESMENT**

There are no issues arising from the privacy impact assessment.

## **8.0 NOT FOR PUBLICATION DOCUMENTS**

None.

## **9.0 OPTIONS**

Not applicable, the document is for information and comment.

## **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: Bradford District Anti-Poverty Strategy. Attached as a separate document.

Appendix 2: Household Support Fund Programmes.

## **12. BACKGROUND DOCUMENTS**

12.1 Earwaker, R and Johnson-Hunter M (2023) Unable to escape persistent hardship: JRF's cost of living tracker, summer 2024. [Online]. Available here: [Unable to escape persistent hardship: JRF's cost of living tracker, summer 2023 | JRF](#)

Francis-Devine B (2023) Poverty in the UK: Statistics. House of Commons Library [Online] Available here [SN07096.pdf \(parliament.uk\)](#)

Harari D, Francis-Devine B, Bolton P and Keep M (2023) Rising Cost of Living in the UK. House of Commons Library [online] Available here [CBP-9428.pdf \(parliament.uk\)](#)

Health Foundation (2023) Relationship Between Income and Life Expectancy by Neighbourhood [Online]. Available here: [Relationship between income and life expectancy by neighbourhood - The Health Foundation](#)

JRF (2023) A Minimum Income Standard for the United Kingdom in 2023 [Online] Available here: [A Minimum Income Standard for the United Kingdom in 2023 | JRF](#)

National Institute of Economic and Social Research (2023). UK Heading Towards Five Years of Lost Economic Growth. [Online]. Available here: [UK Heading Towards Five Years of Lost Economic Growth - NIESR](#)

## Appendix 2: Household Support Fund Programmes Spend for 2022-23 and Indicative Spend for 2023-24

| HSF Scheme  | Brief Description  | Anti-Poverty Strategy Goal           | Oct 2022-March -2023 | March 2023-April 2024 |
|---|--|--------------------------------------|----------------------|-----------------------|
| <b>VCS Funding</b>  | 100 VCS organisations are tasked with working with vulnerable / disadvantaged families in need of food and are providing healthy food hampers. Additional resources provided for cost of food and increased activity levels.   | 80% Protection<br><br>20% Prevention | £1.1m                | £2.7m                 |
| <b>Foodbanks</b>  | Funding provided to Storehouse to ensure foodbanks can support our most vulnerable residents. There is a specific focus on supporting the faith sectors and underrepresented groups. An alternative funding stream of £150k will be available to foodbanks who do not use Storehouse to claim up to £10k for the year to buy suitable provision. | 66% Protection<br><br>33% Prevention | £0.3m                | £0.8m                 |
| <b>Warm Spaces (winter)<br/>Welcoming spaces (summer)</b> | One-off grants of £500 or £1k provided for small community and faith organisations to enable them to provide access to a warm space/welcome space and hot drink for local people.  | 50% Protection<br><br>50% Prevention | £0.23m               | £0.46m                |
| <b>Groups at risk of poverty</b>                          | A range of projects aimed at specific groups of people who will need additional support. The projects are delivered in partnership with VCS organisations to provide a tailored offer. These projects allow us to trial prevention schemes which will inform future-funding decisions.   |                                      |                      |                       |
|   | Bradford Carer's Resource (inc. Public Health contribution)  | 100% Protection                      | £0.05m               | £0.1m                 |
|   | Warm Homes, Healthy People   | 100% Prevention                      | Nil                  | £0.04m                |
|   | Child Safe Sleeping with Baby Bank   | 100% Prevention                      | £0.03m               | £0.146m               |
|   | Support for Care Leavers   | 100% Prevention                      | £0.02m               | £0.04m                |
|   | Fuel top-up assistance / essential goods scheme  | 100% Protection                      | £0.20m               | £0.75m                |
|   | Supporting Bradford's foster carers with fuel costs  | 100% Protection                      | Nil                  | £0.33m                |
|   | Support for local VCS projects through Area Committees   | 100% Protection                      | Nil                  | £0.181m               |
| <b>Direct Payment for Fuel Costs</b>                      | The remainder of the grant will be spent on direct payments to support low income households with the cost of energy and food.   | 100% Protection                      | £3.55m               | Circa £5.24m          |