



Cabinet Report

Report of: Jayne Ludlam, Executive Director, Children, Young People and Families

Report to: Cabinet

Date: 18th March 2015

Subject: Tackling Poverty Strategy

Author of Report: Anna Brook
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Key Decision: YES

Reason Key Decision: Affects 2 or more wards

Summary:

The Child Poverty Act (2010) places a statutory duty on local authorities and named partners to co-operate to assess need around child poverty and to formulate strategies in response to this need. We also need to meet the growing need in our city in the context of continuing difficult economic circumstances and reducing resources within the public sector. Our work to tackle child poverty was central to the city's Child & Household Poverty Strategy (2012-14). We are now building on this and taking it to a new level with the new Tackling Poverty Strategy (2015-18), which has been developed by partners from across the city. The development of the refreshed strategy has been overseen by the Tackling Poverty Partnership Reference Group, chaired by Dean Peter Bradley, with representatives from the City Council, the Clinical Commissioning Group, SY Police, Jobcentre Plus, South Yorkshire Passenger Transport Authority and others drawn from the Sheffield Executive Board and the Voluntary, Community & Faith sector.

The Needs Assessment allows us to understand the challenges to which the new strategy must respond. The strategy sets out our vision of a Sheffield in which people can afford to meet their fundamental needs, establishes how we will work towards meeting this challenge over the next three years and describes the ambitious approaches that will be needed to make significant reductions in poverty in the longer-term.

Reasons for Recommendations:

Approving and implementing the Tackling Poverty Strategy will provide a clear city wide focus to reducing child poverty and household poverty and inequalities in the city, in line with the Council's Corporate Plan commitments and the recommendations set out in the Fairness Commission report. The strategy is a statutory document under the Child Poverty Act 2010.

Recommendations:

Cabinet is recommended:

- to endorse the vision for tackling poverty in the City
 - to approve the Needs Assessment
 - to approve the City's Tackling Poverty Strategy, developed in partnership with other stakeholders in the city
 - to approve the Strategic Outcomes, noting that any activities or actions developed in future under the broad headings of the strategic programmes will need to be dealt with, case by case, as new decisions in their own right
 - to approve the actions in the strategic programmes to which the Council has committed, within existing resources
 - to endorse the strategy and refer it to the Sheffield Executive Board, the Local Enterprise Partnership, the Combined Authority and to the local Equality Hub Network for their consideration
 - to ask contributing partners to review and report on progress on an annual basis.
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Background Papers: None

Category of Report: **OPEN**

Statutory and Council Policy Checklist

Financial Implications
NO Cleared by: Liz Gough
Legal Implications
YES Cleared by: Nadine Wynter
Equality of Opportunity Implications
YES Cleared by: Adele Robinson
Tackling Health Inequalities Implications
YES Cleared by: Jeremy Wight
Human Rights Implications
NO
Environmental and Sustainability implications
NO
Economic Impact
YES Cleared by: Edward Highfield
Community Safety Implications
NO
Human Resources Implications
NO
Property Implications
NO
Area(s) Affected
All
Relevant Cabinet Portfolio Lead
Cllr Jackie Drayton and Cllr Mazher Iqbal
Relevant Scrutiny Committee
Overview and Scrutiny Management
Is the item a matter which is reserved for approval by the City Council?
NO
Press Release
YES

Tackling Poverty Strategy

1.0 SUMMARY

1.1

The Child Poverty Act (2010) places a statutory duty on local authorities and named partners to co-operate to assess need around child poverty and to formulate strategies in response to this need. We also need to meet the growing need in our city in the context of continuing difficult economic circumstances and reducing resources within the public sector. Our work to tackle child poverty was central to the city's Child & Household Poverty Strategy (2012-14). We are now building on this and taking it to a new level with the new Tackling Poverty Strategy (2015-18), which has been developed by partners from across the city.

1.2

The development of the refreshed strategy has been overseen by the Tackling Poverty Partnership Reference Group, chaired by Dean Peter Bradley, with representatives from the City Council, the Clinical Commissioning Group, SY Police, Jobcentre Plus, South Yorkshire Passenger Transport Authority and others drawn from the Sheffield Executive Board and the Voluntary, Community & Faith sector.

1.3

Our vision and Strategy has been shaped and informed by our Needs Assessment, building on local, national and international research into poverty, by reviewing the outcomes in our previous plan and, most importantly, by listening to the voices of those people in Sheffield experiencing poverty.

1.4

The Needs Assessment allows us to understand the challenges to which we must respond in the strategy. The strategy sets out our vision of a Sheffield in which people can afford to meet their fundamental needs, establishes how we will work towards meeting this challenge over the next three years and describes the ambitious approaches that will be needed to make significant reductions in poverty in the longer-term.

2.0 WHAT DOES THIS MEAN FOR SHEFFIELD PEOPLE?

2.1

Our strategic programmes, set out in the Tackling Poverty Strategy, and the firm commitments set out in our action plan will help us work towards our vision and goals.

2.2

We know that we need to go further than the commitments that we have made so far as a city. So, working with our partners, we want to be more ambitious and far-reaching. We will use our vision and strategic framework as a guide and build on the commitments we have already

made. We will develop bolder and more ambitious actions, create opportunities and respond to changing needs and emerging evidence.

Critically, if we are to have a chance of achieving our aim to reduce poverty in the future, this continued work must include exploring ways to tackle the issues that are currently outside of our direct control as well as those that we influence more easily. We must also evaluate how effectively each of our actions reduces poverty.

- 2.3 Our vision is for all people in Sheffield to be able to afford to meet their fundamental needs.
- 2.4 Our goals are to make things better for people in Sheffield who are struggling and in poverty, to tackle some of the root causes of poverty and to give our children the best chance of a poverty-free future. We have set out what success would look like in more detail on pages 14-15 of the strategy document.

3.0 OUTCOME AND SUSTAINABILITY

- 3.1 The Tackling Poverty Strategy Partnership used the following to develop the strategic programmes and to shape the commitments and aspirations that are included in the strategy:
- the needs of people in poverty in Sheffield
 - the evidence available about the most effective ways to meet these needs
 - the responses to the consultation.

Our analysis of these things suggests that we need to maintain a balance between making things better for people who are in poverty and tackling some of the deep-rooted causes of poverty.

- 3.2 Our Action Plan, attached to our Strategy is a 'living' document and as such will be monitored reviewed and scrutinised, added to and amended throughout the lifetime of the new strategy.
- 3.4 We will use our vision and strategic framework to guide us in responding to changing needs and emerging evidence.
- 3.5 It is the intention of elected members and partners to explore further actions that might be taken in the context of the devolution negotiations with government. Any additional actions and activity that might emerge will need to be dealt with case by case as new decisions in their own right under the broad headings of the agreed strategic programmes.

Actions identified as firm commitments, for which the Council is identified as having responsibility, in the Action Plan attached to the strategy will need to be delivered within existing resources.

There are some actions in our strategy that are aspirational and are not

currently deliverable within existing resources, but the Council, working with the key agencies and our partners across the city, commit to seeking ways of doing differently and working to secure the additional funding that might be necessary.

Any additional commitments made in the future would need to be dealt with, case by case, as new decisions in their own right.

4.0 MAIN BODY OF THE REPORT

Including Legal, Financial and all other relevant implications (if any)

4.1 How the Strategy will be used?

The strategy sets out our vision and strategic programmes. As such it will be the key reference point for the further development of the ambitious approaches needed to make significant reductions in poverty in the longer-term. Progress will be monitored, with performance being formally reported to elected members, senior officers and partners.

4.2 Financial Implications

Actions identified as firm commitments, for which the Council is identified as having a responsibility in the strategy will need to be delivered within existing resources. Beyond this, the aspirations set out in the strategy which cannot be delivered within existing resources will be subject to joint working between the Council, key agencies and partners with a view to seeking ways of doing differently and of securing the additional funding that might be necessary. Any additional commitments made in the future would need to be dealt with, case by case, as new decisions in their own right.

4.3 Legal Implications

There are no immediate legal implications associated with this report. The Child Poverty Act (2010) places a statutory duty on local authorities and named partners to co-operate to assess need and formulate strategies in response to this need. The named partner authorities to whom the duty applies include the Police, the Youth Justice Service Probation, Health and Jobcentre Plus.

4.4 Equality of Opportunity Implications

External factors beyond the control of the city and the Council mean that poverty is expected to increase over the lifetime of the strategy. The strategy seeks to alleviate the impact of this trend. Health should also be less negatively affected than it would be without the strategy.

As a Public Authority, in accordance with Section 149 of the Equality Act 2010 and in discharge of the Public Sector Equality Duty, the Council has paid due regard to the needs of those who share protected characteristics under the Act and those in greatest need in formulating this strategy.

Some of the proposals in this report may involve the taking of action to assist persons sharing 'protected characteristics' within the meaning of the 2010 Act to overcome or minimise disadvantage, reduce barriers, or otherwise meet their needs. This is permitted by Section 158 of the Act 2010.

An Equality Impact Assessment has been completed for the strategy. All Council portfolios will be expected to produce appropriate Equality Impact Assessments for subsequent relevant decisions, or new policies, projects and actions, including the commitments and aspirations outlined in this strategy.

4.5 Tackling Health Inequalities Implications

Poverty is one of the wider determinants of health and wellbeing. Reducing poverty levels should have a positive impact on health. External factors mean poverty is expected to increase over the lifetime of the strategy. The strategy seeks to alleviate the impact of this. Supporting people to escape poverty should reduce the number of people in poor health and mitigating the worst effects of poverty should reduce the adverse impacts on the health of people in poverty.

4.6 Economic Impact

Poverty reduction boosts the economy through increased productivity and disposable income. It benefits household budgets and it saves government money through increased tax receipts and reduced benefit payments. The adoption of the living wage can play an important part in this. The Tackling Poverty Strategy is key to removing barriers and ensuring local residents are able to access economic opportunity. We must simultaneously create the conditions for economic growth and promote opportunities and inclusion for a sustainable and fair city economy.

5.0 ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS CONSIDERED

5.1 An alternative option would have been to develop a strategy just focused on children and young people. We took a conscious decision not to do that as we believe that we cannot tackle poverty for children without tackling poverty and building resilience in individuals, families and the communities in which they live. With this in mind, with increasing concerns over widening poverty in the city and in the light of the evidence set out by the Fairness Commission, we have therefore chosen to broaden our approach. Whilst the Tackling Poverty Strategy (2015-18) will incorporate the statutory Child Poverty Strategy it will be encompassed within a strategic approach and document designed to tackle all-age poverty.

6.0 REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATIONS

6.1 The purpose of this report is to seek endorsement and approval, from Cabinet, for the Needs Assessment, the Tackling Poverty Strategy (which incorporates the Child Poverty Strategy) and the associated

Action Plan. In particular, this report seeks Cabinet endorsement for:

- the vision
- the strategic programmes
- the initial commitments made by the Council for the actions that fall within its areas of responsibility.

6.2 Approving and implementing the Tackling Poverty Strategy will provide a clear, city-wide focus on reducing Child Poverty and household poverty and inequalities, in line with the Council's Corporate Plan commitments, and the recommendations set out in the Fairness Commission report. The strategy is also a statutory document under the Child Poverty Act (2010).

7.0 RECOMMENDATIONS

7.1 Cabinet is recommended:

- to endorse the vision for tackling poverty in the City
- to approve the Needs Assessment
- to approve the City's Tackling Poverty Strategy, developed in partnership with other stakeholders in the city
- to approve the Strategic Outcomes, noting that any activities or actions developed in future under the broad headings of the strategic programmes will need to be dealt with, case by case, as new decisions in their own right
- to approve the actions in the strategic programmes in the Action Plan to which the Council has committed, within existing resources
- to endorse the strategy and refer it to the Sheffield Executive Board, the Local Enterprise Partnership, the Combined Authority and to the local Equality Hub Network for their consideration
- to ask partners to review and report on progress on an annual basis.

Anna Brook
Policy & Strategy Officer
9th March 2015