



To: Executive Councillor for Finance and Resources:
Councillor George Owers

Report by: David Kidston, Strategy and Partnerships Manager

Relevant scrutiny
committee: Strategy & 20/10/2014
Resources
Scrutiny
Committee

Wards affected: Abbey Arbury Castle Cherry Hinton Coleridge
East Chesterton King's Hedges Market Newnham
Petersfield Queen Edith's Romsey Trumpington
West Chesterton

ANTI-POVERTY STRATEGY

Key Decision

1. Executive summary

1.1 Following a review of available evidence and initial consultation with stakeholders, the City Council has developed a draft Anti-Poverty Strategy. The aim of the strategy is to improve the standard of living and daily lives of those residents in Cambridge who are currently experiencing poverty, but also to alleviate issues that can lead households on low incomes to experience financial pressures. The strategy will bring greater focus and coordination to the Council's existing efforts to address poverty, while identifying areas where the Council can have even greater impact. This report sets out the consultation undertaken to date and seeks approval for wider public consultation on the draft strategy.

2. Recommendations

The Executive Councillor is recommended:

1. To approve the draft Cambridge City Council Anti-Poverty Strategy for public consultation
2. To endorse the four objectives for the draft Cambridgeshire Child Poverty Strategy

3. Consultation on Cambridge City Council Anti-Poverty Strategy

- 3.1 The City Council has developed a draft Anti-Poverty Strategy (attached at Appendix C). The aim of the strategy is to improve the standard of living and daily lives of those residents in Cambridge who are currently experiencing poverty, but also to alleviate issues that can lead households on low incomes to experience financial pressures.
- 3.2 The strategy identifies the key issues relating to poverty in Cambridge, based on a review of available empirical evidence, and initial consultation with stakeholders. It also identifies 7 objectives for City Council activity to address poverty, and some detailed actions that City Council services will undertake during 2014/15 and 2015/16 to address the key issues.
- 3.3 During July and August 2014, 15 face-to-face meetings were held with representatives of local organisations that are working to address different aspects of poverty in the city. A stakeholder workshop was also held on 5 September 2014, which brought together key stakeholders to consider the key issues in Cambridge, and identify interventions which have been successful, both in Cambridge and in other towns and cities. A list of organisations engaged as part of this initial consultation is provided at Appendix A.
- 3.4 It is proposed that officers will carry out full public consultation on the draft strategy from 27 October 2014 to 16 January 2015. A final draft of the strategy will then be brought to Strategy and Resources Committee on 23 March 2015 for approval by the Executive Councillor. During the public consultation period the Council will consult with a wider range of partner organisations and will actively seek the views of local residents. The consultation will involve:
- Publishing the draft strategy and a questionnaire survey on the City Council website. The survey will be publicised via the Council's Twitter account, a media release and other corporate communications channels, and sent directly to relevant partner organisations;
 - Workshops with voluntary and community organisations, local businesses, Cambridge University and Anglia Ruskin University, and faith groups.
 - Engagement with vulnerable residents via local organisations and agencies that they trust.

4. Cambridgeshire Child Poverty Strategy

4.1 The Child Poverty Act 2010 sets a national target to eradicate child poverty by 2020. The Act places a statutory duty on local authorities and other partners to work together to tackle child poverty in the local area, with a specific requirement to produce a local needs assessment and joint local child poverty strategy. In Cambridgeshire, this work is led by the Cambridgeshire Children's Trust through the multi-agency Child Poverty Champions Group, where Cambridge City Council is represented. The Children's Trust, through the Child Poverty Champions Group, produced 'Breaking the Cycle', the first joint Child Poverty Strategy, which covered the period from 2011-2014. The Champions Group is currently leading the development of the second Cambridgeshire Child Poverty Strategy to cover the period from 2015 onwards.

4.2 The second Child Poverty Strategy is currently at an early draft stage, but we will circulate the final strategy to members when it is available in January 2015. Four key objectives for the strategy have been identified through a workshop held on 11 July and other consultation with key stakeholders, and members are asked to endorse these joint objectives:

Objective 1: Building Communities. Families in poverty can access a range of help from within their local community – linking with other families, voluntary organisations and public services.

Objective 2: Building Futures. Adults and young people have the skills and opportunities to access employment and become financially secure.

Objective 3: Supporting the most vulnerable. For the most vulnerable families and where there is a risk of crisis, organisations step in quickly, coherently and decisively to find solutions.

Objective 4: Communication, information and advice.

Organisations understand the issues facing people in poverty and the impact this can have, and make information, advice and support as easy to access as possible.

4.3 City Council officers are engaged in the Child Poverty Champions Group, which brings together representatives from partner organisations across the Cambridgeshire Children's Trust to lead work to combat child poverty. Officers are working closely with colleagues at Cambridgeshire County Council to ensure that there are strong links between the Child Poverty Strategy and Anti-Poverty Strategy. We have identified a number of key actions that the City Council can

deliver which will contribute to the objectives of the Child Poverty Strategy. These actions are set out in Appendix B.

5. Implications

(a) Financial Implications

The Anti-Poverty Strategy will primarily seek to co-ordinate and refocus City Council activity so that it focuses on tackling poverty where possible. However, some additional one-off, fixed term initiatives which contribute to the objectives of the Anti-Poverty Strategy will be supported by the 'Sharing Prosperity Fund'. A £500,000 financial contribution to the Fund was approved at full Council on 24 July 2014.

(b) Staffing Implications (if not covered in Consultations Section)

It is anticipated that much of the work to develop and deliver the Anti-Poverty Strategy will be achieved within existing staff resources. However, some of the initiatives proposed to support the Anti-Poverty Strategy (e.g. Living Wage Co-ordinator, and the Youth Apprenticeship Programme) will involve the recruitment of a limited number of additional staff.

(c) Equality and Poverty Implications

An initial Equality Impact Assessment has been carried out and is attached for information at Appendix D.

(d) Environmental Implications

Some of the activities already identified in the action plan are likely to have a medium positive environmental impact. For example:

- The proposed Water Meter Anti-Poverty Scheme will promote take-up of water meters and water efficiency measures to residents in low income areas of the City, and reduce water consumption and associated carbon emissions.
- The proposed additional promotion of energy efficiency measures to residents in low income areas of the City will reduce energy consumption and associated carbon emissions.

(e) Procurement

One of the actions included in the Strategy is for the City Council to seek accreditation from the Living Wage Foundation as a Living

Wage. As part of this, the City Council has adopted a Living Wage policy in respect of contractors. As set out in a separate report by the Head of Legal Services to this Committee on 14 July 2014, the this policy requires contractors to pay the Living Wage to Qualifying Staff unless it would be unlawful or inappropriate to do so.

(f) **Consultation and communication**

See 3.3 and 3.4 above.

(g) **Community Safety**

There are no specific community safety implications for the Strategy as a whole, but some of the actions identified as the Strategy develops may have a positive impact on community safety.

6. Background papers

There are no background papers for this report.

7. Appendices

Appendix A - Organisations consulted to date

Appendix B - Cambridge City Council actions for inclusion in the Cambridgeshire Child Poverty Strategy

Appendix C – Equality Impact Assessment

Appendix D – Draft Anti-Poverty Strategy

8. Inspection of papers

To inspect the background papers or if you have a query on the report please contact:

Author's Name: David Kidston
Author's Phone Number: 01223 - 457043
Author's Email: david.kidston@cambridge.gov.uk

Appendix A - Organisations consulted to date

Abbey People Neighbourhood Action Group
Barnwell Baptist Church
Bedfordshire Pilgrims Housing Association (BPHA)
Cambridge City Foodbank
Cambridge Council for Voluntary Service
Cambridge Credit Union
Cambridge Cyrenians
Cambridgeshire County Council
Cambridgeshire Ethnic Community Forum
Cambridgeshire Police
CamHealth – GPs from East Barnwell Health Centre and Arbury Road Surgery
CHS Group
Citizen Advice Bureau
Future Business
Guidance Employment and Training (GET) Group
Kings Hedges Neighbourhood Partnership
Rainbow Savers Credit Union
University of Cambridge
Winter Comfort

Appendix B - Cambridge City Council actions for inclusion in the Cambridgeshire Child Poverty Strategy

Priority 1: Building Communities

Key issue/priority	What can your organisation do?
Neighbourhoods	Refocus grants and support to volunteer organisations that help families in need.
Neighbourhoods	Provide additional space in community centres for local pre-school childcare Promote local free/affordable activities for families – e.g. through newsletters to council tenants/social housing
Neighbourhoods/Financial Inclusion	Support credit unions to make them more accessible to in need families

Priority 2: Building Futures

Key issue/priority	What can your organisation do?
Maintaining affordable and warm homes	Continue to invest in heating and energy efficiency improvements and get residents where possible on the lowest energy tariffs to help families manage household bills.

Priority 3: Supporting the most vulnerable

Key issue/priority	What can your organisation do?
Maximise family support networks and access to work and schooling	Continue to invest in the provision of Emergency Accommodation in Cambridge in order to keep homeless children at the same school and their parents in employment.

Priority 4: Communication and information

Key issue/priority	What can your organisation do?
Financial Inclusion/employability/housing affordability/health inequalities/digital inclusion etc.	Ensure that Cambridge City Council's developing Anti-poverty strategy links to, and helps support, the objectives of the Child Poverty Strategy
Debt Advice	Provide funding support to CAB