

# Cambridge City Council Equality Impact Assessment

Completing an Equality Impact Assessment will help you to think about what impact your strategy, policy, plan, project, contract or major change to your service may have on people that live in, work in or visit Cambridge, as well as on City Council staff.



## 1. Title of strategy, policy, plan, project, contract or major change to your service:

Anti-Poverty Strategy (Progress update June 2016)

## 2. What is the objective or purpose of your strategy, policy, plan, project, contract or major change to your service?

The City Council's Anti-Poverty Strategy aims 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 to households on low incomes to experience financial pressures.

The City Council carried out public consultation on the draft Anti-Poverty Strategy between 27 October 2014 and 30 January 2015. The Strategy was approved by the Executive Councillor for Finance and Resources at Strategy and Resources Committee on 23 March 2015.

The strategy identifies 7 key objectives for City Council activity to address poverty, which are set out in the table below. It also identifies 61 actions that City Council services plan to undertake from 2014/15 to 2016/17 to address the key issues.

## 3. Who will be affected by this strategy, policy, plan, project, contract or major change to your service? (Please tick those that apply)

- Residents
- Visitors
- Staff

## 4. What type of strategy, policy, plan, project, contract or major change to your service is this? (Please tick)

- New
- Revised
- Existing

## 5. Responsible directorate and service

Directorate: Chief Executive's Department

Service: Corporate Strategy

## 6. Are other departments or partners involved in delivering this strategy, policy, plan, project, contract or major change to your service?

No

Yes (please give details):

The Anti-Poverty Strategy is a corporate strategy, so many of the City Council's services have contributed to the delivery of the Strategy, either through delivering particular actions or through refocussing existing services. However, the key services which are currently represented on the Project Board are Housing Services, Community Services, Corporate Strategy, Environmental Services, and Revenues and Benefits. We have also engaged with a wide range of partners as part of the development and delivery of the Strategy to date

## 7. Potential impact

**(a) Age** (any group of people of a particular age, including younger and older people – in particular, please consider any safeguarding issues for children and vulnerable adults)

As part of the development of the Anti-Poverty Strategy, we reviewed available evidence on the nature of poverty. This suggests that some age groups of people in Cambridge may be more likely to experience poverty. For example:

- In 2013, 17% of children in Cambridge were living in a household that was claiming housing benefit.
- Pensioners make up a third of all households claiming Housing Benefit in Cambridge. Nearly one pensioner household in five (18%) in the City is claiming Housing Benefit, while more than one in three (38%) of single pensioner households (74%) in the City are claiming Housing Benefit.
- Children and young people - 15.3% child poverty in Cambridge, 12.6% in Cambridge. Highest in Abbey (26.7%), King's Hedges (25.8%), East Chesterton (23.9%)

Two of the objectives and associated actions for the Strategy are helping address the impact of poverty on children and older people:

- Reducing the impact of poverty on children and helping low income families with the cost of raising a child
- Ensuring that vulnerable older people and people with disabilities get the services that they need and reducing the social isolation they can experience

A number of actions have had a positive impact on young people and older people:

- Recruiting 7 apprentices in City Council services and identifying opportunities for a further 8 apprentices by 2018, which has had a positive impact on the skills and employability of

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those that benefit from the apprenticeships created, including young people.

- Providing direct support for 535 older people through the Council's Independent Living Service (ILS), and assessing the support needs of a further 300 older people, who were found to be coping well without support.
- Delivering a programme of 15 classes per week around Cambridge for the over 55s in partnerships with Forever Active and the Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Clinical Commissioning Group's Falls Prevention Team. There have been 4,976 attendances by older people at these classes to date.
- Supporting the Steering Group for the Cambridgeshire Celebrates Age festival in 2015/16. We have helped shape a programme of 31 inclusive events delivered by a range of providers, including several by the Council.
- As the campaign to promote the living wage within Cambridge results in more businesses and other organisations within the city paying at least a Living Wage to their staff, this is having a positive impact on those residents who are currently not paid the Living Wage. There may be a disproportionate representation of some of the protected characteristics amongst those who are currently paid less than the Living Wage in the city. For example, recent national research by the Resolution Foundation (Low Pay Britain, 2012) found that people aged 16-20 (76%), 21-30 (27%) and 60+ (23%) are most likely to receive less than the living wage. However, further research would be needed to demonstrate the impact on particular groups within Cambridge, as trends may differ from those observed nationally.

**(b) Disability** (including people with a physical impairment, sensory impairment, learning disability, mental health problem or other condition which has an impact on their daily life)

Evidence identified in the Anti-Poverty Strategy shows that having a disability or long-term health condition can limit an individual's ability to work, reduce their income, and increase their dependence on benefits. For example:

- Disabled people are four times more likely to be out of work than non-disabled people
- Since 2010 the pay gap between disabled and non-disabled people has widened by a third, and disabled people in work are currently paid 10% less on average than people without disabilities
- Disabled people pay on average an extra £550 per month on costs related to their disability
- Children in families with at least one disabled person are almost twice as likely to live in poverty

The following objective for the Strategy is helping address the impact of poverty on people with disabilities: 'Ensuring that vulnerable older people and people with disabilities get the services that they need and reducing the social isolation they can experience'. Associated actions which are having a positive impact on people with disabilities include:

- Continuing to fund the Cambridgeshire Home Improvement Agency (HIA), which provides people living in Cambridge who are elderly or vulnerable, who have disability needs, or who are on a low income, to repair, maintain or adapt their homes. The HIA provided 76

people in Cambridge with Disabled Facilities Grants (DFGs), and 11 with discretionary grants during 2015/16.

- Continuing to ensure that at least 2% of new social housing is fully wheelchair accessible, with a further 8% to meet other specialist needs provided there is an identified need and appropriate support for the residents is available
- Working with the Citizen's Advice Bureau to pilot an outreach advice service at Barnwell Medical Practice, which has supported 64 patients who are experiencing mental health issues as a result of debt or other financial issues.
- Continuing to provide move on accommodation for 40 adults recovering from mental illness, working with Cambridgeshire County Council and Metropolitan Housing Group

### **(c) Gender**

Available quantitative evidence and feedback from stakeholders suggests that women are more likely to experience low income and poverty than men. This is for a variety of reasons, including:

- Employment rates are lower for women (72.9%) in Cambridge than for men (90.4%).
- On average, women in Cambridge also earn less than men. The average weekly earnings for women working full-time in Cambridge is £560.5 per week, compared with £582.2 per week for men in the city.
- Women are more likely to be in part time, low paid, and less secure work than men. The percentage of female employees in the lowest 4 occupational categories (32.4%) is higher than the percentage of male employees (26.1%) in Cambridge.
- Women rely more on benefits and tax credits than men, in particular due to their caring responsibilities. Nationally on average, one-fifth of women's income is made up of welfare payments and tax credits compared to one-tenth for men.
- The majority of lone parents are women, and it is more difficult for single parents to cover basic costs, and luxuries such as family holidays, as they tend to have lower incomes than couples.

As the promotion of the living wage within the City results in more businesses and other organisations within the City paying a Living Wage to their staff, this will have a positive impact on those residents who are currently not paid the Living Wage. Recent national research by the Resolution Foundation (Low Pay Britain, 2012) found that a higher proportion of women (25%) receive less than the living wage than men (15%). However, further research would be needed to demonstrate the impact on particular groups within Cambridge, as trends may differ from those observed nationally.

### **(d) Pregnancy and maternity**

No differential impact on those who are pregnant or on maternity leave has been identified through this assessment, particularly as a result of the objectives for the strategy and the projects that are currently being delivered.

**(e) Transgender (including gender re-assignment)**

No differential impact on transgender people has been identified through this assessment, particularly as a result of the objectives for the strategy and the projects that are currently being delivered.

**(f) Marriage and Civil Partnership**

No differential impact on people due to their marriage or civil partnership status has been identified through this assessment, particularly as a result of the objectives for the strategy and the projects that are currently being delivered.

**(g) Race or Ethnicity**

Cambridge continues to be one of the most diverse places in the country outside of London, with an increasing proportion of its population made up of ethnic groups that are not white. In 2011, 17.5% (or 21,700 people) identified themselves as belonging to other ethnic groups, compared to 10.0% in 2001. The largest of these groups in 2011 were Bangladeshi, Chinese and Indian, representing an aggregated proportion of the population of 7.9% (or 9,716 people).

While ethnic minority residents in Cambridge have a range of income levels, stakeholders consulted as part of the development of this strategy and consultation carried out as part of the review of the council's Community Grants identified some ethnic groups which are more likely to be on low incomes or find it hard to access work due to language or skills barriers. For example, Bangladeshi women are more likely to experience a range of barriers, including lack of English language skills, limited access to IT equipment, and cultural barriers associated with engaging with men.

No differential impact on particular ethnic groups has been identified through this assessment, either from the proposed objectives for the strategy or the activities currently funded through the Sharing Prosperity Fund. However, it may be that as the strategy develops further, actions or projects are identified which have an impact on particular ethnic groups.

**(h) Religion or Belief**

No differential impact on people due to their religion or belief has been identified through this assessment, particularly as a result of the objectives for the strategy and the projects that are currently being delivered.

**(i) Sexual Orientation**

No differential impact on people due to their sexual orientation has been identified through this assessment, particularly as a result of the objectives for the strategy and the projects that are currently being delivered.

**(j) Other factors that may lead to inequality – in particular – please consider the impact of any changes on low income groups or those experiencing the impacts of poverty (please state):**

The overall aim of the Anti-Poverty Strategy is to improve the standard of living and daily lives of those residents in Cambridge who are currently experiencing the impacts of poverty. The action plan sets out 60 initial actions which aim to have a positive impact on people on low incomes. For example:

- Providing additional support to credit unions in the city will help residents on low incomes to access banking services and affordable credit and avoid loan sharks. This work has helped increase credit union membership by 68 people over the first five months and 76 young people have opened savings accounts with a credit union as a result of the Junior Savers project.
- Delivering the Council's Fuel and Water Poverty Action Plan is helping to reduce utility bills for residents. For example, extensive promotion of the Cambridgeshire County Council collective energy switch scheme has resulted in more than 400 Cambridge residents taking up cheaper energy deals.
- Providing a successful programme of free swimming lessons for 290 younger children from low income families, and providing 50% reductions in entry prices to Council-owned swimming facilities for 7,600 people on low incomes.

## **8. Sign off**

Name and job title of assessment lead officer: David Kidston, Strategy and Partnerships Manager

Date of completion: 15 June 2016