



To: Executive Councillor for Communities
Report by: David Kidston, Strategy and Partnerships Manager
Relevant scrutiny committee: Community 5/10/2017
Services
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 2017-2020

Key Decision

1. Executive summary

1.1 The Council's first Anti-Poverty Strategy was approved by the Executive Councillor for Finance and Resources at Strategy and Resources Committee on 23 March 2015. The strategy set out the Council's strategic approach to addressing poverty in Cambridge during the period April 2014 to March 2017.

1.2 The 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; and to help alleviate issues that can lead households on low incomes to experience financial pressures.

1.3 The Council has produced a revised and updated Anti-Poverty Strategy for the period from April 2017 to March 2020, which is presented for approval by the Executive Councillor. The revised Anti-Poverty Strategy sets out 5 key objectives and 57 associated actions to reduce poverty in Cambridge over the next three years.

2. Recommendations

2.1 The Executive Councillor is recommended to:

- Approve the revised Anti-Poverty Strategy for 2017-2020

3. Background

- 3.1 The Council's first Anti-Poverty Strategy was approved by the Executive Councillor for Finance and Resources at Strategy and Resources Committee on 23 March 2015.
- 3.2 The Anti-Poverty Strategy aimed: to improve the standard of living and daily lives of those residents in Cambridge who are currently experiencing poverty; and to help alleviate issues that can lead households on low incomes to experience financial pressures.
- 3.3 Based on a review of available evidence and extensive consultation with stakeholders and residents, the first Anti-Poverty Strategy identified 7 objectives for City Council activity to address poverty. The key objectives were:
- 1 Helping people on low incomes to maximise their income and minimise their costs
 - 2 Increasing community pride, raising aspirations and making the move into work easier
 - 3 Reducing the impact of poverty on children and helping low income families with the cost of raising a child
 - 4 Reducing the link between poor health and poverty
 - 5 Ensuring that vulnerable older people and people with disabilities get the services that they need and reducing the social isolation they can experience
 - 6 Helping people with high housing costs, increasing numbers of affordable homes, and improving the condition of people's homes
 - 7 Working in partnership to tackle wider barriers to employment and engagement
- 3.4 The first strategy also set out a total of 61 detailed actions that City Council services to be undertaken from 2014/15 to 2016/17 to help achieve the objectives outlined above. A summary of progress in delivering the key actions is provided in section 6.0 of the revised Anti-Poverty Strategy, which is attached at Appendix B to this report. More detailed progress reports on all 61 actions are provided in the Anti-Poverty Strategy review report, which is listed as a background paper for this report in section 7.0 below.
- 3.5 Some of the actions in the first Anti-Poverty Strategy were funded through the dedicated Sharing Prosperity Fund (SPF), which was established to provide resources to fund fixed-term projects that support the 7 objectives of the first Anti-Poverty Strategy. These projects range from promoting the Living Wage to local employers, to

providing practical advice to residents in poverty on reducing their fuel and water bills.

- 3.6 Some of the actions in the first Anti-Poverty Strategy were funded through mainstream service budgets, ranging from constructing new affordable homes in the city, to supporting eligible residents to receive their full allocation of Housing Benefit and Council Tax support.

4. Revised Anti-Poverty Strategy 2017- 2020

- 4.1 The Council has produced a revised and updated Anti-Poverty Strategy for the period from April 2017 to March 2020, which is attached as Appendix B to this report.

- 4.2 The revised strategy has been informed by:

- consultation with stakeholders and Council staff. Details of the consultation carried out are provided in section 7(f) of this report.
- the impact of projects funded through the SPF and mainstream service budgets.
- the learning from projects and actions carried out over the first three years of the strategy, and the implications for future Council action to reduce poverty in Cambridge.
- a review of available data regarding the nature of poverty, inequality and social mobility in Cambridge.
- national research on poverty and good practice from other local authorities that are actively focussing on tackling poverty.
- the impact of changes in national policy and the national economy on poverty in Cambridge.

- 4.3 It is proposed that the existing objectives for the Council's Anti-Poverty strategy (set out at 3.3 above) should be refined to reflect the key issues identified through the review of data on poverty, inequality and social mobility and the learning from projects delivered over the past three years. The revised Anti-Poverty Strategy proposes 5 key objectives for the Council's work to reduce poverty over the next three years:

1. Helping people on low incomes to maximise their income and minimise their costs
2. Increasing community pride, raising skills and aspirations, and improving access to higher value employment opportunities for people on low incomes

3. Improving health outcomes for people on low incomes
 4. Helping people with high housing costs, increasing numbers of affordable homes, and improving the condition of people's homes
 5. Supporting groups of people that are more likely to experience poverty and social isolation, including children and young people, older people, women, people with disabilities, and BAME residents
- 4.4 The revised strategy will continue to balance measures to reduce costs and increase incomes for residents in immediate financial difficulty, with measures to improve life chances for people in poverty in the longer-term. Objective 2 has been amended to provide a more explicit focus on working with partners to raise skills and improve access to higher value employment opportunities for people on low incomes, to address the issues around inequality and social mobility.
- 4.5 Evidence suggests that there are a number of factors that may be contributing to income inequality and limited social mobility for people on low incomes in Cambridge, including:
- lower levels of educational attainment for young people from low income households.
 - a combination of a highly skilled workforce and a predominance of jobs which require high levels of skills in Cambridge, which may limit the opportunities of low-skilled, lower paid employees to progress into higher paid employment.
- 4.6 A new objective is also proposed to provide a clearer focus on supporting a range of equalities groups, (children and young people, older people, women, lone parent households, people with disabilities, and BAME residents), which evidence suggests are more likely to experience poverty and isolation. The new proposed Objective 5 brings together Objectives 3 and 5 in the previous strategy, which focussed on children, low income families, older people and people with disabilities.
- 4.7 The revised Anti-Poverty Strategy includes an updated action plan which sets out 57 actions that the Council will take over the next three years to deliver the objectives of the strategy. The key areas of focus for the Council's approach going forward will be:
- Supporting residents to access benefits and responding to the impacts of welfare reform.
 - Working with voluntary sector partners to provide debt advice and financial advice.

- Promoting and signposting residents to sources of affordable finance.
- Supporting residents in fuel and water poverty to reduce their energy and water bills.
- Continuing to promote the Living Wage to employers in Cambridge.
- Working with businesses to identify ways that they might use their skills, capacity and resources to support achievement of shared objectives around poverty and disadvantage.
- Working with partners to support low income residents into higher paid employment and raise skills, attainment and life chances.
- Continuing to promote digital access for residents on low incomes.
- Continuing to promote volunteering as a means to develop skills and employability and build communities.
- Promoting community pride and cohesion through supporting a range of community events and celebrations.
- Working with partners to improve health outcomes for people on low incomes, including physical and mental health.
- Constructing new Council homes and working with social landlords and developers to deliver more affordable homes.
- Providing housing, employment and skills support for homeless people in Cambridge.
- Delivering a range of projects to support groups of people that are more likely to experience poverty, including women, children and young people, lone parent households, older people, people with disabilities, and BAME people.

5. Sharing Prosperity Fund

- 5.1 The Anti-Poverty Strategy recognises that over time new projects will be identified as our understanding of the changing needs in the city increases, and as the learning from pilot projects is identified.
- 5.2 A dedicated Sharing Prosperity Fund was created in 2014 to support pilot projects which contributed to the objectives of the Anti-Poverty Strategy. To date a total of £1,336,950 million has been allocated to the SPF. As shown in the table in Appendix A, a total of £540,820 has been spent on project delivery from 2014/15 to 2016/17. A further £740,110 has been committed to projects to be delivered in 2017/18 and 2018/19, including rephrasing of some spend that was originally scheduled to take place in previous years.

- 5.3 Due to underspends across some projects, there is £54,020 remaining in the fund which is currently unallocated to projects. Officers are currently developing project proposals for considerations by the Executive Councillor.
- 5.4 To date funding for 23 projects from the Sharing Prosperity Fund has been approved. The first 10 projects listed in the table in Appendix A were approved either through the Budget Amendment in July 2014 or through the Budget Setting Report (BSR) in February 2015. Funding for some of these projects has subsequently been extended.
- 5.5 A further 13 projects were approved by the Executive Councillor between September 2015 and March 2017, following consideration by officers at the Anti-Poverty Strategy Project Board. These approvals were made in accordance with the approvals process agreed at full Council on 25 February 2015.

6. Implications

(a) Financial Implications

The Anti-Poverty Strategy primarily seeks 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 have been supported by the SPF. Further details are provided in section 5.0 above and Appendix A.

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

Much of the work to deliver the Anti-Poverty Strategy is being achieved within existing staff resources. However, some of the initiatives being taken forward (e.g. Living Wage promotion, financial inclusion activity and fuel and water poverty activity) have involved the recruitment of a limited number of additional staff, usually on fixed-term contracts.

(c) Equality and Poverty Implications

An Equality Impact Assessment was carried out for the original Anti-Poverty Strategy. An updated Equality Impact Assessment has been produced for the revised strategy, which is published for information on the Council's website here: <https://www.cambridge.gov.uk/equality-impact-assessments>

(d) Environmental Implications

Some of the activities being delivered as part of the Anti-Poverty Strategy have a medium positive environmental impact. For example:

- Work to promote take-up of water meters and water efficiency measures to residents in low income areas of the City will reduce water consumption and associated carbon emissions.
- The additional promotion of energy efficiency measures to residents in low income areas of the City will reduce energy consumption and associated carbon emissions from households in these areas.

(e) Procurement

The Council has achieved accreditation from the Living Wage Foundation as a Living Wage Employer. As part of this, the City Council has adopted a Living Wage policy in respect of contractors. This policy requires contractors to pay the Living Wage to Qualifying Staff unless it would be unlawful or inappropriate to do so. Officers are monitoring the Council's compliance with this policy on an ongoing basis.

(f) Consultation and communication

The first Anti-Poverty Strategy was informed by extensive consultation with stakeholders and residents. This, consultation included:

- Publication of the draft strategy and a questionnaire survey on the City Council website, which received 59 responses The survey was publicised via: the City Council's Twitter account, a media release and other corporate communications channels; direct messages to residents associations, members of Cambridge Community and Voluntary Services (CCVS), organisations funded by City Council grants, and other relevant partner organisations; and the Cambridge Network, which has a membership of more than 1500 businesses based in Cambridge.
- Focus groups with low income residents, delivered as part of regular service user meetings organised by the City Council and partner agencies. These included: Wintercomfort service users meeting, Sheltered Schemes Residents' Association, Tenants and Leaseholders Forum, Hanover Court Residents Association meetings, and Cherry Hinton Mingle Munch.
- A stakeholder workshop, 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.
- 25 face-to-face meetings with representatives of local organisations that are working to address different aspects of poverty in the city. Officers also attended stakeholder groups to discuss the strategy with other local organisations, such as the Equalities Panel, Local Health Partnership,

Guidance Employment and Training (GET) Group, and the Homelessness Service Information Group.

This revised strategy has been informed by further internal and external consultation, including:

- Consultation with academics, statutory partners and voluntary and community groups through a half-day Anti-Poverty Summit, which was held on 30 June 2017 and was attended by more than 50 delegates.
- Consultation with City Council managers, including through a workshop held in November 2016 and subsequent meetings of the Council's Anti-Poverty Strategy Project Board in March and June 2017.
- Consultation with City Council frontline staff with experience of working with low income residents through workshops held on 4 and 11 August 2017.

Subject to approval of the revised Anti-Poverty Strategy, the Council will produce an accessible summary document to help raise awareness and facilitate engagement with the public and other partners.

(g) Community Safety

There are no specific community safety implications for the Strategy.

7. Background papers

More detailed information on how each of the 61 actions in the APS have been progressed during 2014/15 -2016/17 can be found on the Council's website at: <https://www.cambridge.gov.uk/antipoverty-strategy>

8. Inspection of papers

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

Appendix A – Sharing Prosperity Fund expenditure to date and future allocations to projects

No.	Project	Actual spend			Allocations		Total
		2014/15	2015/16	2016/17	2017/18	2018/19	
1	Community Clear out days	8,000	1,000	0	0	0	9,000
2	Living Wage Campaign	8,080	31,870	3,900	7,000	0	50,850
3	Fuel and Water Poverty	0	55,400	41,740	74,400	0	171,540
4	Promotion of collective energy switching	220	4,280	0	2,500	0	7,000
5	Youth Apprenticeship Scheme	0	63,000	99,140	152,860	0	315,000
6	Free swimming lessons for children	0	10,000	9,000	9,000	0	28,000
7	Rental Support for Cambridge City Foodbank	0	14,000	14,000	14,900	0	42,900
8	Outreach advice project in health centres	0	25,000	35,000	35,000	0	95,000
9	Digital Access Strategy	0	15,000	9,370	40,630	0	65,000
10	Junior Savers Pilot Project	0	3,000	320	6,680	0	10,000
11	Expansion of Credit Union services	0	0	0	50,000	0	50,000
12	Cooking workshops for families	0	7,000	15,000	17,140	17,700	56,840
13	Summer holiday free lunch programme	0	2,000	3,730	1,270	0	7,000
14	Single Homelessness Service	0	0	36,400	0	0	36,400
15	Money and Debt Management in Schools	0	0	0	25,000	0	25,000
16	Tenancy buddies	0	0	0	3,000	0	3,000
17	'Activate' arts and cultural leadership project	0	0	2,370	67,630	0	70,000
18	Financial Inclusion Officer	0	0	23,000	50,000	0	73,000
19	Cambridge City Time Credits	0	0	0	25,000	25,000	50,000
20	Free Exercise Referral Programme	0	0	0	7,000	7,000	14,000
21	Energy Project Development Officer	0	0	0	50,000	0	50,000
22	Reducing Pensioner Poverty	0	0	0	30,000	0	30,000
23	Act Up	0	0	0	23,400	0	23,400
	Subtotal	16,300	231,550	292,970	692,410	49,700	1,282,930