

Exploration of links between poverty and inequality through our Anti-poverty Strategy

The Council recently approved a revised Anti-Poverty Strategy for 2017 to 2020, which sets out how the Council will work with a range of partners to support residents on low-incomes living in Cambridge. To read the Strategy, go to: <https://www.cambridge.gov.uk/anti-poverty-strategy>. For this item of the Equalities Panel we will explore:

- The relationship between poverty and inequality for some equality groups in Cambridge
- How some objectives and actions in the anti-poverty strategy supports particular equalities groups

Members of the Panel will be invited to discuss in groups how poverty impacts on different equalities groups and consider whether there is further work that the Council could do to these residents.

In preparation for this item, you can read our Equality Impact Assessment on the Anti-Poverty Strategy.

This item will be led by David Kidston, Strategy & Partnerships Manager, and Helen Crowther, Equality and Anti-poverty Officer.

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:

Revised Anti-Poverty Strategy 2017-2020

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

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.

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.

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

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 revised 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:

- Older people are more likely to be living in households receiving benefits than the population as a whole. For example, 16% of pensioners in Cambridge are living in a household claiming Housing Benefit and/or Council Tax support in 2017¹, compared to 10.6% of all Cambridge residents.
- More than one in five (22%) of all children in the city in 2017 are living in households that are claiming Housing Benefit and/or Council Tax Support

One of the objectives for the revised strategy focusses explicitly on helping address the impact of poverty on children and older people:

- Objective 5 - Supporting groups of people that are more likely to experience poverty and social isolation, including children and young people, low income families, people with disabilities, older people, women, and BAME residents.

A number of actions in the revised strategy are likely to have a positive impact on children and young people including:

- Continuing to provide open access activities for children and young people in local

¹ Cambridge City Council, 2017, Housing Benefit and Council Tax support data

(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)

neighbourhoods across Cambridge, including low income neighbourhoods

- Commissioning a theatre production to be delivered in secondary schools and community settings in Cambridge, to raise awareness of money issues and financial decisions and the effect these can have on young people's lives
- Continuing to provide free swimming lessons for children who either come from low income families or cannot swim at the key stage 2 assessment point
- Continuing to work with Cambridgeshire County Council to provide nursery provision at Ross Street Community Centre and Buchan Street Neighbourhood Centre
- Continuing to provide a programme of free lunches in community facilities and other venues with partners for low income families during school holidays, to reduce costs for families when free school meals are not available, reduce social isolation and provide opportunities for families to access other services

A number of actions in the revised strategy are likely to have a positive impact on older people including:

- Continuing to work towards at least 2% of new social housing being 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
- Continuing to support the Cambridgeshire Home Improvement Agency (HIA), along South Cambridgeshire and Huntingdonshire District Council, to provide 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
- Continuing to provide good quality modern sheltered housing schemes for older people
- Continuing to provide a city-wide support service for older people, working with health and social care services at Cambridgeshire County Council and local housing associations
- Funding a dedicated post to provide additional support for older people in Cambridge who are in financial need to maximise their access to low income benefits (with a particular focus on those aged 85+, single, living alone and Asian women over 65)
- Continuing to run and support groups for older people in community facilities operated by the Council and partner organisations in low income areas of Cambridge
- Working with partners and voluntary groups to develop and deliver a programme of inclusive and accessible events as part of the annual "Cambridgeshire Celebrates Age" festival
- Recruiting volunteers to work with the Council's Independent Living Service and provide social support for older people, and signpost older people to befriending schemes delivered by voluntary and community organisations
- Continuing to provide targeted sports development work in partnership with Forever Active and Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Clinical Commissioning Group (CCG), including work to reduce falls amongst older people

(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 revised 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:

- People with disabilities are less likely to be economically active. 39.5% of working age people with disabilities (Equality Act core work-limiting disabled) in Cambridge were economically in 2016, compared to 20.1% of the working age population in Cambridge as a whole².
- A recent report by the Joseph Rowntree Foundation found that once account is taken of the higher costs faced by those who are disabled, half of people living in poverty nationally are either themselves disabled or are living with a disabled person in their household³

One of the objectives for the revised strategy focusses explicitly on helping address the impact of poverty on people with disabilities:

- Objective 5 - Supporting groups of people that are more likely to experience poverty and social isolation, including children and young people, low income families, people with disabilities, older people, women, and BAME residents.

A number of actions in the revised strategy are likely to have a positive impact on older people including:

- Continuing to work towards at least 2% of new social housing being 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.
- Continuing to support the Cambridgeshire Home Improvement Agency (HIA), along South Cambridgeshire and Huntingdonshire District Council, to provide 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
- Continuing to fund an expanded 'Advice on Prescription' project, to provide outreach support for residents experiencing mental health issues due to low income, debt or addiction at East Barnwell Health Centre, Nuffield Road Medical Centre, Arbury Road Surgery, and Trumpington Medical Centre
- Continuing to provide move on accommodation for adults recovering from mental ill health, in conjunction with the Cambridgeshire County Council and Metropolitan Housing Group
- Developing and contributing to a city wide Equalities and Diversity Network, building on the Equality Pledge, to enable shared learning, a strong cross sector voice, and effective partnership working. 5 training sessions will be delivered for the 15 organisations that are part of the Equality and Diversity Network. The sessions which will focus on different equalities groups, including BAME, women, people with disabilities and LGBTQ.

² Office for National Statistics, 2017, Annual Population Survey

³ Tinson, Aryton, Barker, Born, Aldridge and Kenway, 2016, "Monitoring Poverty and social exclusion", JRF <https://www.jrf.org.uk/report/monitoring-poverty-and-social-exclusion-2016>

(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:

- Women in Cambridge are less likely to be in employment than men. Employment rates were lower for working age women (71.5%) in Cambridge than for working age men (82.6%) in 2016.
- Women in Cambridge earn less on average than men, because they are more likely to be working in lower paid occupations and are more likely to be working part-time. The average earnings for women in Cambridge with the lowest 25% of earnings is £214.50 per week or less, compared with £419 or less for men with the lowest 25% of earnings .
- 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. Lone parent families are more likely to be receiving benefits than other households, with almost 4 out of 5 (77%) of lone parent families in the city receiving Housing Benefit and/or Council Tax support in 2017 .

A number of actions in the revised strategy are likely to have a positive impact on women including:

- Promoting the living wage within the City, which should result in more employers 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, including women on low incomes. 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%).
- Continuing to provide regular free health sessions for BAME women.
- Continuing to work with Cambridgeshire County Council to provide nursery provision at Ross Street Community Centre and Buchan Street Neighbourhood Centre.
- Developing and contributing to a city wide Equalities and Diversity Network, building on the Equality Pledge, to enable shared learning, a strong cross sector voice, and effective partnership working. 5 training sessions will be delivered for the 15 organisations that are part of the Equality and Diversity Network. The sessions which will focus on different equalities groups, including BAME, women, people with disabilities and LGBTQ.

(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 ethnically 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 the 2011 Census, 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).

As part of the development of the revised Anti-Poverty Strategy, we reviewed available evidence on the nature of poverty. While ethnic minority residents in Cambridge have a range of income levels, evidence suggests that some ethnic groups in Cambridge may be more likely to experience poverty. For example:

- BAME residents are less likely to be employed than the population as a whole. 67.1% of BAME working age residents were in employment in 2016, compared to 77.4% of the working age population as a whole⁴.
- stakeholders consulted as part of the development of the original strategy 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.

A number of actions in the revised strategy are likely to have a positive impact on BAME residents including:

- Developing and contributing to a city wide Equalities and Diversity Network, building on the Equality Pledge, to enable shared learning, a strong cross-sector voice, and effective partnership working. 5 training sessions will be delivered for the 15 organisations that are part of the Equality and Diversity Network. The sessions will focus on different equalities groups, including BAME, women, people with disabilities and LGBTQ).
- Continuing to provide regular free health sessions for BAME women.

⁴ Office for National Statistics, 2017, Annual Population Survey

(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 57 initial actions which aim to have a positive impact on people on low incomes.

8. Sign off

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

Date of completion: September 2017