

Item

ANTI-POVERTY STRATEGY ANNUAL REPORT 2017/18



To:

Councillor Richard Johnson, Executive Councillor for Communities
Community and Environment Scrutiny Committee [28/06/2018]

Report by:

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Wards affected:

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

Not a Key Decision

1. Executive Summary

- 1.1 The Council produced a revised and updated Anti-Poverty Strategy for the period from April 2017 to March 2020. 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.
- 1.2 The revised Anti-Poverty Strategy sets out 5 key objectives and 57 associated actions to reduce poverty in Cambridge over the next three years. This report provides an update on progress in delivering key actions identified for 2017/18, with a particular focus on new areas of activity introduced in the strategy.

2. Recommendations

2.1 The Executive Councillor is recommended to:

- a. Note the progress in delivering actions to reduce poverty in Cambridge during 2017/18
- b. Approve the inclusion of an additional action relating to Cambridge Northern Fringe East, set out at 5.2 in this report, in the Anti-Poverty Strategy action plan for 2017-2020

3. Background

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- 3.1 The Council produced a revised and updated Anti-Poverty Strategy for the period from April 2017 to March 2020. The revised strategy was approved by the Executive Councillor for Communities on 10 October 2017. The Council's revised 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.
- 3.2 The revised Anti-Poverty Strategy sets out 5 key objectives for the Council's work to reduce poverty over the next three years and 57 associated actions. The key objectives are:
 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. Progress during 2017/18

4.1 Full details of progress made during 2017/18 against the 57 actions in the revised Anti-Poverty Strategy is provided in the table at Appendix A, including information on performance against key outputs and outcomes where this is available at this stage.

4.2 Objective 1 - Key activities in 2017/18 which helped people on low incomes to maximise their income and minimise their costs included:

- Supporting 5 Cambridge employers to become accredited with the Living Wage Foundation as **Living Wage** employers. This helped to increase the number of accredited employers in the city from 51 in March 2017 to 58 in March 2018.
- Providing £6.25 million in **Council Tax Support** to approximately 6,400 households.
- Funding 114 voluntary and community groups through the Council's £900k **Community Grants** programme to deliver 162 services and activities to help reduce social or economic inequality among Cambridge residents with the greatest needs.
- Continuing to provide £260,000 funding to the Citizen's Advice Bureau (CAB) through the Community Grants for **debt advice** for city residents, including free legal, debt and money advice to 12,959 city residents, financial capability support to 699 debt clients and specialist welfare rights casework for 399 cases.
- Continuing to provide a dedicated **Advice Hub** in the Council's Customer Service Centre (CSC). From January 2017 to December 2017, Citizens Advice Bureau (CAB) saw 822 residents at the Advice Hub and a range of other partners including Cambridge Online, Credit Unions, City Homes Rent Advice and CSC staff also provided support.
- Continuing to employ a **Fuel and Water Poverty** Officer and procuring Peterborough Environment City Trust (PECT) to deliver a Winter Warmth campaign through the Sharing Prosperity Fund. A total of 270 home visits were completed through these projects, 176 low income

residents were supported to install energy efficiency improvements, and estimated energy bill savings for residents of £114,500 were generated.

- Directly supporting 23 residents through the process of having **water meters** installed. We have also worked with South Staffordshire Water to give residents receiving Discretionary Housing Payments (DHP) access to up to 80% reductions in their water bill, which has led to more than £41,000 support to the most vulnerable.
- Continuing to provide grant funding to voluntary and community organisations to provide **low cost furniture** to 742 low income households.

4.3 Objective 2 - Key activities in 2017/18 to increase community pride, raise skills and aspirations, and improve access to higher value employment opportunities for people on low incomes included:

- Employing 12 City Council **apprentices** since 2014/15 (10 funded through the Sharing Prosperity Fund), of which 2 have secured permanent employment with Council services.
- Continuing to provide grant funding for a **learning and development service** for homeless people based at Wintercomfort and an **employment worker** at Cambridge Housing Society. In total 218 people were supported to gain employment or access training, educational placements or learning and development activities.
- Holding a successful **Volunteer for Cambridge Fair** in October 2017 at the Guildhall, which was attended by 81 organisations and 843 people. Of 68 organisations that completed feedback forms, 73% signed up new volunteers on the day, and of 161 attendees that completed feedback forms, 93% said they had signed up to volunteer on the day.
- Supporting 15 volunteer **digital champions** through the Sharing Prosperity Fund to deliver a total of 266 digital inclusion sessions in City Council sheltered housing schemes, which were attended by 139 older people.
- Funding Cambridge Online through the Sharing Prosperity Fund to provide drop-in 'Microhub' **digital inclusion sessions** at City Council community centres and other community venues, which were attended by 195 people.

- Providing 6 **community days** and 6 skip days in low income areas of the city to save residents money from disposing of bulky waste and encourage a sense of pride and engagement in neighbourhoods. A total of 32,818 kg of bulky waste was collected at community days in 2017/18.

4.4 Objective 3 - Key activities in 2017/18 which have helped improve health outcomes for people on low incomes included:

- 31,422 entries to Council-owned **sports and swimming facilities** by people holding concession memberships for receiving means-tested benefits.
- Supporting a **free exercise referral scheme** through the Sharing Prosperity Fund for patients in low income areas of the city, which resulted in a total of over 360 residents undertaking the 12 week exercise scheme, with over 8,500 visits between them to sessions and classes.
- Funding Cambridge Sustainable Food through the Sharing Prosperity Fund to provide 39 **cookery skills sessions** in low income areas which were attended by 193 people.
- Funding CAB through the Sharing Prosperity Fund to provide an **outreach advice service** at GP practices and community settings to support residents with mental health problems (such as anxiety or stress) resulting from debt, employment and welfare rights matters. In 2017/18, the adviser supported 357 patients and generated financial gains of £533,630 for these patients (which equates to £1,495) per patient.

4.5 Objective 4 - Key activities which have helped people with high housing costs, increased numbers of affordable homes, and improved the condition of people's homes included:

- Completing 143 **new City Council-owned homes** at a number of different sites across the city, including Virido, Uphall Road, Ekin Close, Fulbourn Road, Peter Cowell Close/Hawkins Road and Water Lane.

- Working with developers through the planning process and with Registered Providers to help enable delivery of a further 288 **affordable homes** on strategic growth sites and other locations across the city.
- Increasing the number of units of **temporary accommodation for homeless people** from 83 to 95.
- Supporting 108 **single homeless people** who do not need supported housing to move into private rented accommodation.

4.6 Objective 5 - Key activities which have helped support groups of people that are more likely to experience poverty and social isolation, included:

- Providing 716 universal, open access **play sessions for children** in neighbourhoods across the city, including low income neighbourhoods. There were a total of 26,328 child visits to these universal sessions.
- Commissioning a theatre company through the Sharing Prosperity Fund to develop and deliver a play focussing on **financial literacy** issues. 13 performances of 'Money Matters' were delivered in 10 schools, which reached a total of 1,750 students. 'Reality Cheque', a financial literacy board game has been developed and will be distributed to 16 schools.
- Providing a programme of **free swimming sessions** through the Sharing Prosperity Fund for toddlers and parents at the Kings Hedges and Abbey swimming pools, which attracted more than 3,000 total attendances by families on low incomes.
- Providing a total of 2900 **free lunches for families** during the school holidays. Of these, 2218 lunches were served in city council community centres, and 682 lunches were provided by local churches.
- Providing £730,000 through the **Cambridgeshire Home Improvement Agency** to enable more than 130 older, disabled and low income residents to access support to repair, maintain or adapt their homes.
- Providing 1324 **older people with support** in 2017/18, in our sheltered housing schemes, through our visiting support service, or with a community alarm. 52 of these people have been supported to increase their non-housing related incomes by a total of just over £206,000 per annum.
- Providing a dedicated post funded through the Sharing Prosperity Fund to **support older people** who are identified as not accessing benefits

and well-being services. From August 2017 to March 2018 the project has helped individuals claim a total of £92,000 a year in extra non-housing related income.

- Providing regular **free health sessions**, which were promoted to BAME communities and women on low incomes. 3 monthly sessions were held during 2017/18, with an average of 20 women attending each of the sessions.

5. Additional action for inclusion in the APS Action Plan

5.1 The proposed redevelopment of the Cambridge Northern Fringe East (CNFE) site presents an opportunity to regenerate a large-scale brownfield site on the edge of the city. It could potentially create significant employment, skills and training opportunities for local communities and provide significant numbers of new homes to meet local demand for housing, including affordable housing. The Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Combined Authority, working with Cambridge City Council, Anglian Water and other key partners, has submitted a bid to Government for £193m of Housing Infrastructure Funding (HIF) to help facilitate the scheme .

5.2 It is proposed that an additional action relating to CNFE is included in the existing action plan for the Anti-Poverty Strategy 2017-2020. This additional action is shown in the table below:

Action	Lead officer and service	Completion date	Performance measures
<p>Ensure that the proposed development and regeneration of the Cambridge Northern Fringe East area benefits neighbouring disadvantaged communities, including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • maximising local employment, skills and training opportunities, • helping to meet local demand for housing, including affordable housing (subject to the outcome of a bid for funding from the Housing Infrastructure Fund) • improving physical and social linkages. 	Fiona Bryant, Strategic Director	The timescales for the completion of the CNFE Area Action Plan will be outlined in the review of the Local Development Scheme in 2018. Development on site is programmed to start in 2024/25.	The number of affordable homes and jobs will be determined through the formal planning process, including the adoption of the Cambridge Northern Fringe East Area Action Plan. These performance measures will be firmed up as the project develops.

6. Implications

(a) Financial Implications

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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.

(b) Staffing Implications

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 revised Anti-Poverty Strategy prior to it being approved on 10 October 2017. A revised Equality Impact Assessment has been produced following comments from the Equalities Panel in November 2017. This revised EqiA 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 Implications

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) Community Safety Implications

There are no community safety implications associated with the updates provided in this report.

6. Consultation and communication considerations

This revised strategy was 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.

The Council will produce an accessible summary document to help raise awareness and facilitate engagement with the public and other partners.

7. Background papers

No background papers were used in the preparation of this report.

8. Appendices

Appendix A – APS Annual Progress Report 2017/18

9. Inspection of papers

To inspect the background papers or if you have a query on the report please contact David Kidston, Strategy and Partnerships Manager, tel: 01223 - 457043, email: david.kidston@cambridge.gov.uk.