

# MUNICIPAL YEAR 2012/2013 REPORT NO. 43

**MEETING TITLE AND DATE:**  
**Council 19 September 2012**

**Agenda – Part: 1**

**Item: 9**

**REPORT OF:**

Directors of Regeneration, Leisure & Culture and Schools & Children's Services

**Subject:** The Drive Towards Prosperity: Enfield's Child and Family Poverty Strategy

**Wards: All**

**Key Decision No: 3381**

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**Cabinet Member consulted:**  
**Cllrs Goddard and Cllr Orhan**

## 1. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

- 1.1 *The Drive Towards Prosperity: Enfield's Child and Family Poverty Strategy* meets the Council's statutory duty, under The Child Poverty Act 2010 to produce a Child Poverty Strategy.
- 1.2 The Action Plan identifies seven Aims, each with a key priority, and two major and challenging ambitions. The Aims also act as Enfield's Life Chance Indicators in the absence of a nationally issued set. The performance measures set against them will monitor how effectively Enfield is at reducing the number of children, and their families, who live in poverty.
- 1.3 The Enfield Strategic Partnership has endorsed the Strategy and adopted combating child and family poverty as one of its "cross cutting" issues. The work of partners across the ESP was mapped as part of the development of the strategy and their contribution to delivering the seven Key Aims is identified within the Action Plan.
- 1.4 A Strategic Action Plan has been devised to develop a framework for activities to address child and family poverty as a cross cutting theme. The Action Plan identifies the key interventions for which the individual Strategic Partnership Thematic Action Groups (TAGs) will be responsible and also links into the recommendations of other major Council strategies.

## 2. RECOMMENDATIONS

Following on from Cabinet (18 July 12) Council is asked to:

- 2.1 approve the Child and Family Poverty Strategy and the Strategic Action Plan, incorporating consultation feedback;
- 2.2 note that the individual TAGs of the ESP will drive forward, co-ordinate and monitor progress towards achieving the aims, priorities and ambitions of the Strategy;
- 2.3 approve the seven Key Aims and Priorities identified within the Strategic Action Plan (Appendix 1);
- 2.4 approve the two challenging ambitions to:
  - reduce the percentage of children living in poverty, by 2020, to 25% (compared to 36% in 2008); and
  - narrow the gap between the most and least deprived wards, in child poverty terms, from the current gap of 42% to 30% also by 2020.

### 3. BACKGROUND

#### Wider Policy Context

- 3.1 The Child Poverty Act 2010, which received Royal Assent in March 2010, fulfilled the Labour Government's commitment to enshrine the 2020 child poverty target in legislation. It:
- established four separate child poverty targets to be met by 2020/21;
  - required the Government to publish a Child Poverty Strategy by March 2011 to be revised every three years, setting out policies to meet the targets;
  - established a Child Poverty Commission to provide advice;
  - required the UK Government to publish annual progress reports; and
  - placed new duties on local authorities and other 'delivery partners' in England to work together to tackle child poverty.
- 3.2 The new duties for local authorities in England under Part 2 of the Act came into force in May 2010. Local authorities must:
- promote cooperation between the authority, its partner authorities, and any such other persons or bodies as the authority sees fit, in order to make arrangements to mitigate the effects of child poverty in its area. This includes the ability to establish a pooled fund between all partner authorities;
  - prepare and publish a local needs assessment of children living in poverty in its area;
  - prepare a joint child poverty strategy in relation to its area including measures the local authority and its partners propose to take to reduce and mitigate the effects of poverty;
  - consult with such children or organisations working with or representing children and other person or bodies as the authority thinks fit;
  - have regard to the joint child poverty strategy in exercising their functions.
- 3.3 *The Drive Towards Prosperity: Enfield's Child and Family Poverty Strategy* meets the Council's statutory duty, under The Child Poverty Act 2010 to produce a Child Poverty Strategy. This is a major, cross Council and cross partnership strategy which addresses one of the major issues we have to deal with as a Council.
- 3.4 The Coalition confirmed they wish to proceed with implementing the Child Poverty Act 2010 and have a strong interest in the local agenda
- 3.5 Enfield published a Child Poverty Needs Assessment in October 2010 and produced its draft Child and Family Poverty Strategy in 2011. The Child Poverty Needs Assessment was used to consult how to make the Strategy more robust and to develop an action plan.
- 3.6 Neil Rousell, the Director of Regeneration, Leisure and Culture was identified as the Enfield Child Poverty Champion.

## **The Drive Towards Prosperity: Enfield's Child and Family Poverty Strategy**

- 3.7 The Strategy provides an opportunity for Enfield to adopt an holistic approach to the way we address child and family poverty. It seeks to identify, coordinate and build on the extensive child and family poverty focused activity in the Borough, identifying natural synergies of working practices across the Council together with its key stakeholders in order to build “resilience” and identify key pilot interventions to pursue.
- 3.8 A full public consultation process on the draft strategy was carried out over a period of 12 weeks from September to November 2011. The consultation process is detailed in the Stakeholder Engagement Flowchart, included in the Strategy. This consultation process included “road shows” at Area Based Partnerships (ABPs), DMTs, Matrix groups and Thematic Action Groups (TAGs) to establish buy-in to a wider circle of responsibility for the strategy.
- 3.9 As part of the consultation process on the draft strategy and the development of the action plan, a mapping of existing provision took place. This was facilitated through a range of action planning workshops and consultation events which took place with key audiences/sectors. These included the ESP stakeholders, Heads of Service and Key Stakeholders, VCS, Faith Forum, Strategic Business Forum, Over 50s Forum, the Benefits Forum, the Wellbeing Board and primary and secondary headteachers.
- 3.10 Four focus groups with children and young people were undertaken by Enfield Children's and Young Persons Services (ECYPS), to better understand young people's perceptions of the issues relating to “poverty” and to identify actions that the young people feel must happen in order to tackle poverty.
- 3.11 Key messages from the consultation process identified the need to focus activity on the following:
- Lack of jobs
  - Improving training pathways, work placements, volunteering opportunities and apprenticeships and mentoring schemes
  - The impact of welfare reforms and financial support
  - Mental health/ disability and wellbeing
  - The need for more effective working together
  - Sustainable housing
  - Fuel poverty related issues
  - Mobility
  - Low cost activities for children and young people

### **Next Steps**

- 3.12 The current Poverty Steering Group will be reviewed and refreshed. Chaired by the Child Poverty Champion its remit will be to
- focus on performance management of the strategy as a whole

- review the Risk Assessment to minimise risk and
- identify the key interventions which work and additional funding opportunities.

It will provide regular progress reports to the ESP and Members.

3.13 The Steering Group will also review Background section of the Strategy and will need to take account of the impact of changes to the welfare benefits system and mechanisms for measuring poverty.

3.14 In the context of reducing resources the TAGs will be asked to review the Aims for which they have responsibility to streamline the range of actions identified, and developing baselines and performance measures. They will ensure that there is a clear focus on:

- recognising and supporting interventions which work;
- ensuring accountability and holding services to account for delivery
- targeting interventions on specific areas already identified for focus by the Area Boards

#### **4. ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS CONSIDERED**

4.1 The Child Poverty Act 2010 requires all councils to produce a strategy. *The Drive Towards Prosperity: Enfield's Child and Family Poverty Strategy*, accompanied by a focused Action Plan, is considered to be the most effective approach to addressing the issues identified.

4.2 The aims, actions and performance measures identified within the Strategic Action Plan are drawn from a range of other council or partnership plans and strategies and do not therefore require additional resources. However, the drawing together of these actions under the seven Aims should enable smarter working between service providers and offers the potential for budget savings.

4.3 The Action Plan identifies seven Aims and a key priority within them. These aims also act as Enfield's Life Chance Indicators in the absence of a nationally issued set. The performance measures set against them will monitor how effectively Enfield is at reducing the number of children, and their families, who live in poverty.

#### **5. REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATIONS**

5.1 *The Drive Towards Prosperity: Enfield's Child and Family Poverty Strategy* is based on the initial Child Poverty Needs Assessment and feedback received during consultation. The Strategy will help Enfield to address some of the Borough's key challenges while maximising the benefits of strategic opportunities such as neighbourhood regeneration. The focus is on economic prosperity, job creation and education and training pathways healthier lifestyles and wellbeing. Many of the projects that will emerge from this strategy deliver multiple benefits, to society, the economy and the environment.

## **6. COMMENTS OF THE DIRECTOR OF FINANCE, RESOURCES AND CUSTOMER SERVICES AND OTHER DEPARTMENTS**

### **6.1 Financial Implications**

There are no specific additional resource requirements identified within this report. The individual proposals within this Poverty Strategy and Strategic Action Plan will need to be subject to an appraisal of resource requirement prior to its implementation. The correct processes and necessary approval procedures will then be followed to ensure that any required funding is identified and in place.

Where possible the plan will be delivered by extending and adapting existing services and will need to be within the existing budgetary resources of the Council. It may be possible to access external funding to deliver the ambitions of the Strategy, however this funding may be subject to successful bidding process.

### **6.2 Legal Implications**

- 6.2.1 Section 21 of the Child Poverty Act 2010 imposes duties on local authorities, including London boroughs, to work with 'partner authorities' (defined in s22 and including local bodies such as the police, Transport for London and health, as well as 'such other persons or bodies as the authority thinks fit') in order to reduce and mitigate the effects of child poverty in their area (s21(1)). This duty is part of the overall government strategy set out in s2 of the Act, which imposes a duty on the Secretary of State to ensure that targets are met in relation to four different measures of child poverty, set out in section 3-6, in the target year. The target year is defined as the financial year starting 1 April 2020 (s2(2)).
- 6.2.2 Section 22 (1) requires the arrangements made under s21 by local authorities to include the preparation and publishing of a 'local child poverty needs assessment', defined as 'an assessment of the needs of children living in poverty in its area' (s22(1)). There is provision for regulations, setting out matters to be included, but no regulations have yet been made. Part 2 of the Act came into force on 25 May 2010.
- 6.2.3 The Child and Family Poverty Strategy addresses the duty imposed by s21(1) of the Act. A large number of stakeholders have been consulted in its preparation. Statutory authority for the Strategy is given by s21(1) of the Act. The local child poverty needs assessment, a statutory requirement under s22(1), has been prepared and fed into the preparation of the Strategy.

### **6.3 Property Implications**

There are no Property implications.

## **7. KEY RISKS**

- 7.1 A detailed risk register has been prepared in relation to *The Drive Towards Prosperity: Enfield's Child and Family Poverty Strategy* and is available as a background paper.
- 7.2 The Strategy Group will review and refresh the register to reflect the work of the TAGs and the changing National context.

## **8. IMPACT ON COUNCIL PRIORITIES**

### **8.1 Fairness for All**

*The Drive Towards Prosperity: Enfield's Child and Family Poverty Strategy* aims to be inclusive, benefiting people of all communities in the borough. The Strategy tackles issues around spatial inequalities in health, access and income issues relating to employment, and the specific requirements of different parts of the community.

### **8.2 Growth and Sustainability**

Sustainability is at the core of the Strategy seeking to promote sustainable economic growth in relation to poverty.

### **8.3 Strong Communities**

*The Drive Towards Prosperity: Enfield's Child and Family Poverty Strategy* will provide opportunities for people to work more with each other, community organisations and the Council to tackle the cross cutting issue of child poverty.

## **9. EQUALITIES IMPACT IMPLICATIONS**

A Predictive Equalities Impact Assessment was carried out during the development of this Strategy. The following key issues were identified:

- the Strategy to become an instrument of the ESP theme of Prosperous Communities and become a corporate initiative;
- Enfield's Child Poverty Champion to advance the Strategy through the Regeneration, Leisure and Culture and Schools and Children's Services Departments.
- the ESP to monitor the development and progress of the Strategy's 3-year Action Plan through the various Area Boards.

## **10. PERFORMANCE MANAGEMENT IMPLICATIONS**

- 10.1 The Enfield Strategic Partnership (ESP), through its Thematic Action Groups (TAGs), will have responsibility for the performance management of the Strategy and, in particular, the Aims, Priorities and Actions identified in the Strategic Action Plan (Annexe 1). The ESP has endorsed the strategy as one of its “cross cutting” issues to address and it will hold all partners to account for action identified.
- 10.2 The Action Plan identifies the specific TAG with responsibility for monitoring each of the seven Aims. TAGs will be asked to review and streamline the actions currently identified.
- 10.2 Performance measures have also been identified within each of the seven Aims. These have been drawn from a range of existing performance management frameworks. TAGs will be provided with regular reports on target and performance information.
- 10.3 An annual report to both the ESP and Area Based Partnerships on the implementation and progress of *The Drive Towards Prosperity: Enfield’s Child and Family Poverty Strategy* will be produced. Feedback will be cascaded to DMTs on a quarterly basis to ensure natural synergies and robust reporting mechanisms are in place. The Enfield Youth Parliament will also monitor progress against the Young Peoples Expectations.

### **Background Papers**

Child Poverty Needs Assessment (2010)

Draft Child and Family Poverty Strategy (2011)

ESP Board Paper – “Implementing the Child and Family and Poverty Strategy,” 5<sup>th</sup> July 2011

ESP Thematic Action Groups Briefing Paper – “Implementing the Child and Family and Poverty Strategy,” (12<sup>th</sup> December 2011 to Employment and Enterprise Board, 16<sup>th</sup> December 2011 to the Children’s Trust Board)

Predictive Equalities Impact Assessment (2011) – Draft Child and Family Poverty Strategy Consultation and Implementation

Child and Family Poverty Strategy Risk Assessment

Copies of

*The Drive Towards Prosperity: Enfield’s Child and Family Poverty Strategy* and *The Strategic Action Plan* have been placed in the Members’ Library and Group Offices.

## The Road Towards Prosperity: Enfield's Child and Family Poverty Strategy 2012

### Key Aims and Strands of Work

**Aim 1:** Developing employment, education, training and skills

**Priority:** *Readiness for Work; provide young people and adults with the skills they need to access employment*

**Aim 2:** Maximising income and supporting financial resilience

**Priority:** *Ensure appropriate, targeted and accessible information, advice and guidance is available to assist access to work and entitlements*

**Aim 3:** Supporting families to achieve their aspirations

**Priority:** *Empower confident parenting practices*

**Aim 4:** Improving children and young people's experiences

**Priority:** *Increase inclusive opportunities for young people to engage in activities outside the home and ensure that young people have access to positive activities*

**Aim 5:** Narrowing the gap – reducing health inequalities

**Priority:** *Encourage healthy lifestyles within families with a particular focus on early intervention and prevention programmes*

**Aim 6:** Encouraging the development of sustainable housing

**Priority:** *Improve the quality of homes and neighbourhoods and contribute to strong communities*

**Aim 7:** Reducing and preventing crime

**Priority:** *Engage and build positive relationships with young people, focussing particularly on those who are most disaffected*

### Child and Family Poverty Ambitions

By 2020 we will have:

- reduced the percentage of children living in poverty to 25% (compared to 36% in 2008); and
- narrowed the gap between the most and least deprived wards, measured in terms of child poverty, from the current gap of 42% to 30%.