

# Arts and Leisure Select Committee

## Review of Child Poverty

### Outline Scope

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<b>Which of our strategic corporate objectives does this topic address?</b>	
<p><u>Sustainable Communities Strategy</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- Wellbeing and achievement for adults, children and young people</li></ul> <p>This includes the Council Plan objectives of increasing the number of people in training / education and reducing the number of NEETs; and the Tees Valley Unlimited Business Plan objective of improved economic inclusion.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- The work links in the general to the vision for Economic Renaissance in Stockton.</li><li>- Core improvement themes, particularly economic regeneration and transport; children and young people; and healthier communities and adults.</li></ul> <p><u>Joint Health and Wellbeing Strategy 2013-2018</u></p> <p>The Strategy identified 'giving every child the best start in life' as the key priority for the Health and Wellbeing Board. The work is also relevant to the Strategy vision, particularly in relation to the following key themes: give every child the best start in life; enable all children, young people and adults to maximise their capabilities and have control over their lives; create fair employment and good work for all; create fair employment and good work for all; ensure a healthy standard of living for all; create and develop healthy and sustainable places and communities; and strengthen the role and impact of ill-health prevention.</p>	
<b>What are the main issues and overall aim of this review?</b>	
<p>Though the prevalence of child poverty in Stockton Borough as a whole matches the England average (21.8%), there is great inequality between wards and many wards have a greater prevalence of child poverty than the England average. For example 47.6% of children in Stockton Town Centre live in poverty<sup>1</sup>. Child poverty and income inequality in particular, have significant impacts on the health and life chances of the most disadvantaged in the population<sup>2</sup>.</p> <p>Under the Child Poverty Act (2010), local authorities are required to cooperate with partner authorities to reduce and mitigate the effects of child poverty in their local areas. Local authorities must prepare and publish an assessment of the needs of children living in poverty in the area; and prepare a joint child poverty strategy. Child poverty is linked to several key factors which Stockton-on-Tees Borough Council aims to address through its policies and partnership working, including:</p>	

- Raising aspirations
- Tackling worklessness
- Re-focussing on early intervention
- Improving health and wellbeing
- Maximising household income
- Creating 'family-friendly' neighbourhoods

The review aims to gain a greater understanding of child poverty in Stockton and what steps can be taken locally to help address it and / or mitigate the effects.

The work should be carried out in the context of relevant current national policy drivers e.g. the welfare reforms and the current economic downturn, recommending any policies, services and interventions that may mitigate the impact of these factors.

This review has close links with the separate review of Welfare Reform and Financial Inclusion, and links to the Further Education/Employability review.

**The Committee will undertake the following key lines of enquiry:**

Following recent work by the North East Child Poverty Commission, the review seeks to understand:

- The extent of child poverty in Stockton and related levels of need and impact
- The policies, services and interventions in place to address child poverty in Stockton in the context of national policy and evidence of best practice
- How well current policies, services and interventions address the extent of child poverty in Stockton and the related need, including any potential gaps
- The changes that may be made to policies, services and interventions based on best practice, national recommendations, evidence base and data

In addition to the steps listed above to assess the extent of the issue and provide recommendations in addressing it locally, the following steps may also be explored:

- Use and add to the evidence base
- Examine institutional behaviour e.g. co-production; localised elements of welfare reform
- Give people living in poverty a voice

**Who will the Committee be trying to influence as part of its work?**

Cabinet, Health and Wellbeing Board, NHS, Clinical Commissioning Group, Registered providers of housing, key local partners including children's services providers, relevant VCS agencies and schools.

**Expected duration of review and key milestones:**

9 months.

### What information do we need?

Existing information (background information, existing reports, legislation, central government documents, etc.):

- The Joint Strategic Needs Assessment (JSNA) which provides key data on population need, service provision, policy context, evidence base, gaps in service provision to meet need and recommended commissioning intentions. Particularly relevant JSNA topics include: poverty; children; employment; and housing.
- North East Child Poverty Commission research
- Sheffield Hallam University Review – The local and regional impact of welfare reform
- Implementation of welfare reform by local authorities, Report of House of Commons Communities and Local Government Select Committee (April 2013)
- Family Poverty Framework 2011-13

New information:

The JSNA provides a strategic overview of service provision against need, however there is no topic specific to child poverty and further more detailed needs assessment or access to more data as it becomes available, may be required in future. It is understood some research / mapping is being undertaken by academic institutions in the North East e.g. FUSE (The Centre for Translational Research in Public Health).

Map out range of support and services available.

**Who can provide us with further relevant evidence? (Cabinet Member, officer, service user, general public, expert witness, etc.)**

**What specific areas do we want them to cover when they give evidence?**

North East Child Poverty Commission

Definitions of child poverty.  
Research on child poverty in the region and intelligence on action being taken by other Local Authorities regarding the issue

Tees Valley Public Health Shared Service

Public Health intelligence on population demographics and need related to child poverty

SBC Welfare Reform lead officers

Baseline report setting out the 'known' local situation, relevant SBC service provision and impact of welfare reform on child poverty; impact of housing benefit changes on child poverty, examples of benefit entitlements

VCS – through Catalyst

Other VCS services in place to support families and children in poverty

Local engagement and involvement groups including people and families in poverty, Youth Assembly

'Real-life' illustration of the impact of poverty on families and children, views of young people on child poverty

Children, Education and Social Care Officers	Impact of poverty on children requiring the support of social care, mental health services
Stockton Public Health team	Impact of child poverty on physical and mental health
Local Food Banks and local Credit Unions – information from the Welfare Reform and Financial Inclusion Review	Overview of services provided, opportunities for joint working and links to broader work on child poverty
Independent policy think-tank or officer who can talk about influencing policy nationally, regionally or locally	Understanding of the local policy action that can be taken / levers available to address child poverty and how this fits with national policy; and how national policy may be influenced / national research can be contributed to
<p><b>How will this information be gathered? (eg. Financial baselining and analysis, benchmarking, site visits, face-to-face questioning, telephone survey, survey)</b></p> <p>Desk top analysis and discussion at Committee meetings.  Good practice from other areas will be identified and the evidence base assessed.  Appropriate engagement/ consultation with families in poverty</p>	
<p><b>How will key partners and the public be involved in the review?</b></p> <p>Key partners will be invited to contribute as outlined above.</p>	
<p><b>How will the review help the Council meet the Public Sector Equality Duty?</b></p> <p>The review will seek to ensure that there is no disadvantage of access to relevant services for protected groups. It will also consider how targeted support can be offered to vulnerable groups as needed, to meet their additional needs in relation to child poverty.</p>	
<p><b>How will the review contribute towards the Joint Strategic Needs Assessment, or the implementation of the Health and Wellbeing Strategy?</b></p> <p>The review will contribute to the delivery of the Joint Health and Wellbeing Strategy key priority: 'giving every child the best start in life' and other related objectives set out in the Strategy Delivery Plan. Additional data and information may result from the review which can be added to the JSNA.</p>	
<p><b>Provide an initial view as to how this review could lead to efficiencies, improvements and/or transformation:</b></p> <p>The review may help inform service redesign / planning / commissioning to meet current / emerging need and potentially increase value for money.</p> <p>The review may also share the outcomes / benefits of the Welfare Reform and Financial Inclusion review, namely:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Refined approaches to implementing welfare reform following experience of early implementation</li> <li>• Improved methods of projecting local needs</li> </ul>	

- A Council strategy for tackling financial inclusion to ensure services are focussed and efficient, including an SBC policy in response to evolving local services such as food banks.

## Review of Child Poverty

## Project Plan

<b>Chair (Project Director)</b> Cllr Jean O'Donnell	<b>Scrutiny Officer (Project Manager)</b> Judy Trainer
<b>Departmental Link Officers</b> Sarah Bowman (Consultant in Public Health)	<b>Finance Link Officer</b> TBC

KEY TASK	DETAILS/ACTIVITIES	DATE	RESPONSIBILITY
<b>Scoping of Review</b>	Information gathering		Scrutiny Officer Link Officer
<b>Tri-Partite Meeting</b>	Meeting to discuss aims and objectives of review	28 May 2013	Select Committee Chair and Vice Chair, Cabinet Member(s), Corporate Director(s), Scrutiny Officer, Link Officer
<b>Agree Project Plan</b>	Scope and Project Plan agreed by Committee	5 June 2013	Select Committee
<b>Publicity of Review</b>	Press Briefing at start of review	TBC	Chair, Link Officer, Press Officer Scrutiny Officer
<b>Obtaining Evidence</b>	Evidence gathering	24 July 2013 4 September 2013 16 October 2013 27 November 2013	Select Committee

<b>Members decide recommendations and findings</b>	Review summary of findings and formulate draft recommendations	22 January 2014	Select Committee
<b>Circulate Draft Report to Stakeholders</b>	Circulation of Report	January/ February 2014	Scrutiny Officer
<b>Tri-Partite Meeting</b>	Meeting to discuss finding of review and draft recommendations	TBA	Select Committee Chair and Vice Chair, Cabinet Member(s), Corporate Director(s), Scrutiny Officer, Link Officer
<b>Final Agreement of Report</b>	Approval of final report by Committee	19 February 2014	Select Committee, Cabinet Member, Corporate Director
<b>Consideration of Report by Executive Scrutiny Committee</b>	Consideration of report	4 March 2014	Executive Scrutiny Committee
<b>Report to Cabinet/Approving Body</b>	Presentation of final report with recommendations for approval to Cabinet	13 March 2014	Cabinet/ Approving Body