

Anti-Poverty Strategy Action Plan 2024/25

Priority 1: Household Poverty				
Food insecurity and poverty				
Action needed	How will we get there?	Timescales	Responsibility	Measurement and evaluation
Work in partnership with the Stockton-on-Tees Food Power Network (SFPN) to address food poverty.	Ongoing support to the SFPN to develop and deliver of their strategic objectives.	June 2025	FSOT team	Increased food support for our communities.
	To work alongside the SFPN to develop a food insecurity plan to develop a common approach to food insecurity across the Borough.	June 2025		Improved partnership working between organisations to develop and tackle food insecurity.
	Continue to source and seek funding opportunities for venues where appropriate. To develop alternative provision to the crisis support provided by foodbanks.	Ongoing		A reduction in the numbers of Foodbank users.
Ongoing support and delivery of The Bread & Butter Thing (TBBT).	TBBT provision is supported by ongoing partnership work between the Council and VCSE.	Ongoing		The scheme supports 400 families each week across the five Hub locations.

	<p>To ensure that the volunteers are supported across each of the Hubs.</p> <p>Bi-annual events to bring together the hubs for training, support and to thank the volunteers for their time and efforts.</p>	<p>Ongoing</p> <p>June 2025</p>	<p>FSOT and CE team</p> <p>FSOT and CE team</p>	<p>A reduction in the numbers accessing TBBT Hub in those areas.</p> <p>Increase in the number of volunteers supporting the running of the TBBT hubs.</p>
<p>Increase of food provision and develop skills, where needed.</p>	<p>Develop food support, where required, for example, in areas of most need.</p> <p>Deliver a programme of local cookery courses to increase confidence, raise self-esteem, develop social and team working skills. Also, participants can learn new skills and cooking techniques, develop independent living skills and have a better understanding of healthy eating.</p>	<p>Ongoing</p> <p>June 25</p>	<p>SFPN FSOT and CE team</p> <p>LSC and FSOT / CE team</p>	<p>To monitor and evaluate any additional food provision provided to communities where needed.</p> <p>Number of cookery courses provided.</p>
<p>Maximise Free School Meals (FSM) Take Up.</p>	<p>Ongoing work with schools and other partners to maximise take up of FSM.</p>	<p>Dec 24</p>	<p>Childrens Services FSOT and CE team</p>	<p>Ensure all eligible pupils can access entitlement.</p>

<p>Maximise promotion and support of Holiday Activity and Food DFE funded programme to provide holiday activities, food and advice.</p>	<p>Continue to support and promote Holidays are Fun (HAF) programme to ensure children have access to activities and food during school holidays.</p> <p>Promote Household Support Fund (HAF) applications through the HAF Programme. Eligible households will receive help towards cost of living needs.</p>	<p>March 25</p>	<p>Childrens Services FSOT and CE team</p>	<p>Increase the number of children accessing HAF funded activity.</p> <p>Increased number of children accessing HAF funded provision.</p>
<p>Increase community capacity to grow own food.</p>	<p>To support the work of VCSE organisations to help the local community learn the skills and access the resources needed to grow their own food. This will reduce reliance on higher priced fruit and veg sold by supermarkets and have further benefits of community cohesion, exercise and being outdoors.</p>	<p>March 25</p>	<p>SFPN FSOT and CE team</p>	<p>Increased number of families having access to fresh produce and improved skills to grow own food.</p>
<p>Ensure food provision is accessible to our most isolated communities.</p>	<p>Consideration to be given to develop a mobile food service which allows 'cheaper food options' to be provided</p>	<p>March 25</p>	<p>SFPN FSOT and CE team</p>	<p>Mobile food service operating across the Borough to reach the more isolated communities.</p>

	<p>across areas of the Borough where needed and where there is no food support.</p> <p>Using the Volunteer Driver scheme to help people who are isolated to access low cost food options, such as TBBT.</p>			
Promotion of food services and support currently on offer.	<p>Develop a marketing and communications plan to ensure that the current food offer is promoted better to reach those most vulnerable in local communities.</p> <p>Work alongside North Tees General Hospital and GP surgeries to ensure that all patients, carers and staff are made aware of the current food offer.</p> <p>Work alongside RAS drop-ins and services to ensure refugees and asylum seekers know about food support available.</p>	<p>Dec 24</p> <p>Dec 24</p> <p>Dec 24</p>	<p>Marketing and Comms team FSOT and CE team</p> <p>FSOT team</p> <p>FSOT team</p>	<p>Increase take up of those families who need access to food support.</p> <p>Increased take up of patients, carers and staff of food support offer.</p> <p>Increased take up by RAS of current food support offer.</p>

	<p>Work alongside post-16 young people in colleges to ensure that all sixth forms are made aware of what support is available around food support.</p> <p>Explore how we decrease the need for foodbank usage by ensuring access to advice and support services. Promote the Council's Learning and Skills Courses.</p>	<p>Mar 25</p> <p>Mar 25</p>	<p>FSOT team</p> <p>FSOT team</p>	<p>Increased take up by post-16 young people of current food support offer.</p> <p>A decrease in the number of individuals needing to access the foodbank.</p>
Tackling fuel poverty				
Action needed	How will we get there?	Timescales	Responsibility	Measurement and evaluation
Establish a Fuel Poverty Forum	Bring together statutory, voluntary and energy providers to develop a fuel poverty action plan.	Ongoing	FSOT and Infinity Partnership	Coordination and of fuel poverty reduction initiatives.
Develop the Community Spaces offer	Continue to develop the network of Community Spaces ensuring coverage across the Borough. The spaces provide outreach advice, community support and a warm, safe space for residents who might be struggling to pay energy bills.	March 25	FSOT and CE team	<p>Increase in the number of individuals accessing the Community spaces offer available in the borough</p> <p>Improve accessibility of warm spaces</p>

	<p>Monitor and evaluation the Community Spaces Offer with reporting into the Health & Wellbeing Board</p> <p>Continue to develop outreach support services for areas of need i.e Employment & Training Hub roadshow, Welfare Support, Training, Funding support for venues etc.</p> <p>The Welfare Support Team to provide briefings to Community Spaces staff so they know where to signpost customers to.</p> <p>Bring together the Community Spaces bi-annually to thank and provide training support needed.</p>			<p>Increase in the number of services and activities /resources being provided at Community Spaces</p> <p>Improve awareness with community partners to promote the Community spaces and to raise awareness of their importance</p> <p>Increase in the funding accessed by Community Spaces to provide increased services and activities for communities</p>
<p>Work alongside energy providers and Northumbrian Water to</p>	<p>We will work with energy companies and Northumbrian Water to ensure that residents on low incomes receive all</p>	<p>Mar 25</p>	<p>FSOT and CE team</p>	<p>Increased family incomes</p>

access support for our residents.	support they are entitled to, including discretionary schemes.			
Develop Warm Boxes scheme.	Identify opportunities to access funding for Warm Boxes.	Dec 25	FSOT and CE team	Secured funding for Warm Boxes. The number of Warm Boxes provided to those families who need these the most.
Continue to promote and support residents to access Warm Homes Healthy People (WHHP) Scheme.	Promote WHHP scheme.	March 25	WHHP team Infinity FSOT and CE team	Increase in the number of residents accessing WHHP scheme.
Support the reduction of Fuel Poverty across the Borough and increase energy efficiency of homes.	Work alongside the SBC Domestic Energy Efficiency Service and engage in its stakeholder group. Engage with and promote the Green Doctor Service to help residents access ways to improve energy efficiency in their homes.	Ongoing	HIA/DEEO	Increase the number of residents accessing the DEE service.

	<p>Promote use of the DEE service. maximising service promotion potential.</p> <p>Actively participate providing input with a Fairer Stockton lens to the group, network, seeking opportunity to support the group.</p>			
<p>Continue to promote and support residents to sign up for the Community Big Switch.</p>	<p>Promote Community Big Switch</p> <p>Assist families who are experiencing fuel poverty via campaigns such as Big Switch and income maximisation.</p>	<p>March 25</p>	<p>WHHP team Infinity FSOT and CE team</p>	<p>Increase in the number of families registering for the Community Big Switch.</p>

Income Maximisation				
Action needed	How will we get there?	Timescales	Responsibility	Measurement and evaluation
Work on a national level to collect evidence of the factors that are causing poverty and seek to bring these to the attention of policy makers.	SDAIS will convene a social policy group that will bring together agencies to collect evidence on specific welfare problems and submit this evidence to the relevant authority.	Ongoing	SDAIS	Ensuring preventative (and not just reactive) measures are implemented which will support other areas of this action plan and wider work to tackle poverty and inequality.
Widen access to targeted Debt management and support.	Work alongside Infinity Partnership to see how best we can support those affected by debt and target those most affected.	March 2025	Infinity Partnership	Ensuring a high proportion of people who need debt advice can access it.
	Through Moneywise, to widen access to payroll deduction for credit unions and access to affordable credit.	March 2025	Moneywise / FSOT and CE team	An increase in the number of payroll deduction members at Moneywise.

	Promote the Money and Pension Advice Service to provide free debt management support.	Dec 2025	Infinity Partnership FSOT and CE team	An increase in the take up of Pension Credit.
Undertake a transformation review of the Council's Debt Management Service.	Support financially vulnerable households to maximise their income.	March 2025	Welfare Support team	Improve the provision of co-ordinated debt, benefit and other advice.
Raise awareness of Cost of living support and information. Aid those residents who are digitally excluded, to access the same support and outcomes as others by making sure there's a suitably targeted non-digital offer.	Commit to on-going work to develop the <u>COL HUB</u> which is on the Council's homepage, acting as a 'one-stop shop' for vital information and practical support for residents and businesses on fuel, energy and housing, money and debt, food insecurity and poverty, health and wellbeing, skills and employment and out-of-hours/emergency help. Review its content on an ongoing basis to ensure it offers up-to-	March 2025	FSOT and CE team	The number of households supported through Cost of Living initiatives.

	<p>date information from partner organisations.</p> <p>Continue to promote and develop an annual support booklet for local communities.</p> <p>Develop a programme of 'Here to Help' events and drop ins across the Borough to provide local support and access to residents in their neighbourhoods. Work with Family Hubs and promote their drop-in sessions/events.</p> <p>Continue to develop a quarterly <u>newsletter</u> for all employees and partners, with up to date and supporting information for those working with those communities affected by the Cost of Living.</p>			
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	<p>Develop Cost of Living related projects which supports several Council services and partner organisations that work with vulnerable individuals and families as identified.</p> <p>Attend Employee Engagement Events and arrange drop-in sessions to support We will support the continuing operation of our cost-of-living situation response for as long as it is needed. Council employees affected by the cost of living situations.</p>			
<p>Maximise benefits take up.</p>	<p>Work alongside Infinity Partnership members to continue to ensure that we continue to promote benefit take up in areas where there is poor take up.</p>	<p>March 2025</p>	<p>Infinity Partnership FSOT and CE team</p>	<p>Increase in the percentage of entitled benefits take up by residents from the Borough. For example, increase in take up of</p>

				Attendance Allowance and water social tariffs.
	Purchase social policy data analytic software that provides valuable insight to help target financial support for low income households.	March 2025	RBWT/FSOT	Increase in percentage of entitled benefits take up by residents from the Borough.
	Ensure that we have localised information on different local benefits in Community Spaces and at other neighbourhood events.	June 2025	Infinity Partnership FSOT and CE team	Increase in the percentage of entitled benefits take up by residents from the Borough.
	Explore the development of a Money Angels (Volunteer led Scheme).	Dec 2025	Infinity Partnership FSOT and CE team	Increase in the percentage of entitled benefits take up by residents from the Borough.
Support into Employment and Training.	Increase the number of residents accessing opportunities through the Employment & Training Hub, through the delivery of the 'Hub	Ongoing	Economic Development team	Number of residents registered with the Hub and the number of residents into

	on Tour' programme that promotes the service within local communities.			employment and training.
Digital exclusion.	Continue to work alongside Good Things Foundation (Databank) to provide support to those vulnerable individuals and families to provide free mobile data, calls and texts. Promote the availability of social tariffs for telephone and data usage.	March 2025	FSOT Team	Increased support those who are digitally excluded.
	Work alongside Infinity Partnership to explore how we can co-ordinate an improved and more accessible services for those digitally excluded.	June 2025	Infinity Partnership FSOT team	
	Increase the digital skills of those who are digitally excluded by offering training, appropriate	March 2025	LSC FSOT team	Increased trained residents in digital skills / qualifications.

	devices, and affordable connectivity.			
	Support partner organisations and community groups to develop sustainable activities to support low income residents to access the internet and develop digital skills.	March 2025	LSC FSOT team	Increased trained residents in digital skills / qualifications.
Furniture Poverty	Explore how to support residents who may be affected by furniture poverty. This includes working alongside the Thirteen furniture recycling scheme and promotion of charitable organisation Zarach, which aim to tackle bed poverty.	March 2025	FSOT Team / Thirteen	Increased number of residents supported with furniture poverty.
Employability and Training	Develop ways for Asylum Seekers to access training and development opportunities which	Ongoing	Economic Development Team	Number of residents registered with the Hub and the number of residents into employment and training.

	will prepare them for when they are able to seek paid employment.		FSOT Team	
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Priority 2: Child Poverty				
Action needed	How will we get there?	Timescales	Responsibility	Measurement and evaluation
Bring together key partners to respond and discuss emerging and current Child Poverty needs.	Organise quarterly events that will bring together partners who will contribute towards supporting those children in poverty.	July 2025	FSOT team	Quarterly events held to bring together key stakeholders to address any emerging issues relating to Child Poverty.
Support for post 16 further education students.	Engage with post 16 providers around support for students.	Dec 2025	FSOT team	Direct support to post-16 young people.
Develop the FSM auto enrolment scheme.	Continue to deliver on FSM auto-enrolment scheme.	Dec 2025	FSOT team	All FSM eligible young people auto-enrolled.
Develop an approach to support families with school uniform costs.	Devise an action plan which will: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> work with schools and governors to address the issues around the affordability of school uniform provide options to expand the provision of pre-loved uniforms and ensure that this explored 	March 2025	FSOT team	Members update on satisfaction levels with the delivery of School Uniform action plan. Maximisation of family income.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Devise an action plan clearly outlining the steps to be taken to address these issues • Meet with Multi-Academy Trust school improvement leads and governance leads to advocate the need for affordable school uniforms and the ongoing promotion of pre-loved ones. 			<p>Increased pre-loved school uniform provisions across the Borough.</p> <p>A decrease in badged school uniforms across the Borough.</p>
School Meals.	Look at the costs of school meals across the Borough and ensure that children from low-income families are not disadvantaged – those not eligible for FSM, but may be struggling.			Understanding of the picture across the Borough and measure to support low-income families.
Healthy Start Vouchers.	<p>Promote the take up of Healthy Start vouchers to eligible families across the Borough.</p> <p>Work alongside Infinity and promote the take up of Health Start vouchers to eligible families across the Borough.</p>	March 2025	Childrens Services/ FSOT team/ Infinity Partnership	An increase in the number of families taking up Healthy Start Vouchers.

Childcare	Promote the take up of two and three-year-old childcare to eligible families across the Borough.	March 2025	Childrens Services	An increase in the number of childcare places taken up across the Borough.
Develop a plan to address costs of travel to and from school for the RAS community.	Explore possibilities about how Asylum Seeker families are able to access free or reduced cost travel to and from school.	March 2025	FSOT team	Increased family income for RAS families.
Supporting young people in rural areas.	Develop ways for those in isolated areas or who don't have their own transport to access after school and extracurricular activities.	Dec 2025	FSOT team and CE team	Increased take up activities for young people from rural / isolated areas.
Provide access to low-cost or free activities for children, young people and families.	Find out what low-cost or free activities are available and develop ways to empower organisations and businesses to expand this offer.			Increased provision of low-cost and free activities for children, families and young people.

Priority 3: Participation and Voice				
Action needed	How will we get there?	Timescales	Responsibility	Measurement and evaluation
Ensure the voice of Children & Young People is incorporated into our Anti-Poverty work.	<p>Work alongside:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Childrens Participation Manager in Childrens Services • BMBF • Youth United Stockton-on-Tees <p>To ensure the voices of those children young people affected by poverty is fed into the Child Poverty work.</p>	Ongoing	Childrens Services FSOT and CE team	Increase in the voices of young people in decision making.
Ensure the voice of those affected by poverty is central to the work being developed around Anti-Poverty.	Continue to support the Anti-Poverty group with meetings held every 8 weeks to help monitor progress and evaluate the work of the strategy and action plan.	Ongoing	FSOT and CE team	Increased participation and engagement from those with lived experience.

	Ensure the voices of the Refugee and Asylum Seeker Community are heard and fed into our Anti-Poverty work by representation on our Lived Experience Forum.			
Supporting those without a voice who are not currently engaged through existing forums/networks.	<p>Work directly with those communities who may not be traditionally part of the wider network of communities for example homelessness, gypsy traveller communities, care leavers, single parent/ carer families, service veterans etc.</p> <p>We will work with SFPN to support affordable and culturally appropriate food for residents who are food insecure for those from BAME communities.</p>	March 2025	FSOT team	Increased participation, engagement and voices of wider communities.
Poverty Proof Decisions.	Embed poverty impact assessments into decision-making.	October 2024	FSOT team	Implementation of Equality Poverty Impact Assessments into decision making.

Priority 4: Health & Wellbeing				
Action needed	How will we get there?	Timescales	Responsibility	Measurement and evaluation
Minimize risk of Social isolation & Loneliness.	Continue to support and build the Community Spaces programme.	June 2025	FSOT and CE team H&WB board	Building new relationships and connections in the community.
	Bring together services providing this support to ensure that these services are better / more promoted to those communities most affected.	September 2025	FSOT and CE team	Increased engagement and participations across local communities.
	Work alongside social prescribing services to enable GPs to prescribe social interventions in additional to medical treatment.	March 2025	FSOT and CE team	A reduction of those who deemed themselves isolated and lonely.
	Increase and encourage more local groups/residents associations to be developed for increased opportunities for involvement in the local area, to enable them to access support / grants to help address local issues related to poverty.	Ongoing	FSOT and CE team	

Improve access to services.	<p>Explore options to improve access to services for those most in need.</p> <p>Explore options to expand The Church of England’s Parish Nursing Ministries UK in relevant Community Spaces across the Borough.</p>	June 2025	FSOT Team Public Health	Increased number of referrals into services.
	<p>Establish a working group to explore how we progress initiatives such as links with hospital discharges, waiting lists, health visitors, midwives. Etc.</p>	March 2025	Public Health Infinity FSOT team	Improved access to health services.
	<p>Maximise opportunity to connect those fulfilling service criteria to access the SBC Home Improvement Agency offer and Domestic Energy Efficiency service.</p> <p>Supporting residents to obtain support and assistance to remain independent, warm, safe and secure in a home of their choosing.</p>			<p>Increased number of referrals.</p> <p>Improvement in residents’ mental health and wellbeing (accessing the Garden Assist - Launching June 2024).</p>

<p>Extend Mental Health outreach support offer.</p>	<p>Increase the amount of outreach of Mental Health support services across local areas.</p> <p>Work with Mental Health support services to make them aware of wider services on offer to support their clients.</p>	<p>March 2025</p>	<p>Mental health support services FSOT team Public Health</p>	<p>Increased number of referrals and those accessing mental health support.</p>
<p>Strengthen suicide prevention.</p>	<p>Work with Tees Suicide Strategic Prevention Group coordinator to explore services to suicide prevention across the Borough.</p>	<p>March 2025</p>	<p>Tees Suicide Strategic Prevention Group Public Health</p>	<p>A reduction in the number of suicides across the Borough.</p>
<p>Reduce risk of Hygiene Poverty.</p>	<p>Explore how we support our residents with accessing hygiene products in partnership with SFPN.</p>	<p>Sept 2025</p>	<p>FSOT and CE team SFPN</p>	<p>An increase in family income.</p>