

STRONGER COMMUNITIES PARTNERSHIP

Stronger Together: Stronger Voice: Stronger Neighbourhoods: IN STOCKPORT

BOARD MEETING

Date of Meeting: Tuesday 8th June 2010

Time: 2.00 pm

Venue: **CONFERENCE ROOM, 4TH FLOOR, STOPFORD HOUSE, PICCADILLY, STOCKPORT. PLEASE REPORT TO RECEPTION.**

Enquiries to: Craig Ainsworth, Democratic Services, 0161 474 3204, craig.ainsworth@stockport.gov.uk

AGENDA

1. [Minutes of the business meeting held on 16th March 2010](#)
(Enclosed)
2. **Matters arising**
3. **Declarations of interest**
4. **THIRD SECTOR**
Review of voluntary and community sector infrastructure
Presentation of results by Commission for the New Economy and GMCVO (Greater Manchester Centre for Voluntary Organisation)
5. **COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT**
Update on development of Action Delivery Plan and engagement portal
Report by Steph MacKenzie, Policy and Projects Manager, Stockport Council
(Enclosed)
6. **COMMUNITY COHESION**
Position statement
Report by Steve Brown, Head of Community Safety, Stockport Council.
(To Follow)
7. **SOCIAL INCLUSION**
Child Poverty Consultation

Viki Packman, Head of Integrated Prevention Services, Children & Young People's Directorate, Stockport Council. (Enclosed)

8. Information Exchange

9. Future agenda items

Compact
Annual Report
College in the Community
Transforming Social Care

10. Dates of future meeting

- Tuesday 7th September 2010, 2.00pm in Meeting Room 6 at the Town Hall
- Tuesday 7th December 2010, 2.00pm in Meeting Room 6 at the Town Hall
- Tuesday 1st March 2011, 2.00pm in Meeting Room 3 at the Town Hall

STRONGER COMMUNITIES PARTNERSHIP BOARD MEETING

Meeting: 16 March 2010
At: 2100pm

PRESENT

Councillor Helen Foster-Grime – Executive Councillor (Communities) Chair (in the Chair)

Judith Faux - SCVS

Carol Morrison – Service Director (Communities), Communities, Regeneration and Environment Directorate, Stockport Council

Keith Alcock – Stockport College

Catherine Eckersley – Faith Communities

Councillor Ann Smith – Stockport Council

Councillor Suzanne Wyatt – Stockport Council

April Higson - Stockport Homes

Ian Roberts – Stockport Action for Voluntary Youth

Jane Ball – Stockport NHS Foundation Trust

Jerry O’Keeffe – Stockport NHS Primary Care Trust

Margaret Brade – Age Concern/ MOVES

Kieran McMahon – Disability Stockport

Also In attendance

Steve Brown – Head of Community Safety (Stockport Council)

Craig Ainsworth – Head of Area Governance & Partnerships (Stockport Council)

Stephanie MacKenzie - Policy and Projects Manager (Stockport Council)

Julie Farley - Policy and Projects Manager (Stockport Council)

Vince Fraga – Head of Modernisation, Adult Social Care (Stockport Council)

Jo Foskett – Partnership Office

Sue Thomas- Policy and Projects Manager (Stockport Council)

Helen Lee - Policy and Projects Officer (Stockport Council)

1. ELECTION OF CHAIR

RESOLVED – That Councillor Helen Foster-Grime be elected Chair of the Partnership Board until the next Annual Council Meeting.

Councillor Helen Foster-Grime in the Chair

2. APPOINTMENT OF VICE-CHAIR

RESOLVED – That Judith Faux be appointed Vice-Chair of the Partnership Board until the next Annual Council Meeting.

3. NOMINATION OF THE STRONGER COMMUNITIES PARTNERSHIP'S REPRESENTATIVE ON THE STOCKPORT PARTNERSHIP

Two nominations were received

RESOLVED – That a secret vote be held

The votes cast were as follows:

Councillor Helen Foster-Grime - 6

Margaret Brade – 6

Margaret Brade suggested that Councillor Helen Foster-Grime should represent the Partnership Board on the Stockport Partnership and she would continue as her deputy.

RESOLVED – That Councillor Helen Foster-Grime be appointed to represent the Partnership Board on the Stockport Partnership and Margaret Brade should continue as her deputy.

4. MINUTES

The minutes the meeting held on 14 December 2009 (copies of which had been circulated) were approved as a correct record.

5. MATTERS ARISING

Steve Brown, Head of Community Safety (Stockport Council) reported that over a hundred people had attended the Participatory Budgeting event undertaken in Adswold & Bridgehall and a similar event would be held in Offerton on 20 March 2010.

6. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Councillor Suzanne Wyatt declared a personal interest in any matters concerning the Citizen Advice Bureau as an employee of that organisation.

7. FEEDBACK FROM STOCKPORT PARTNERSHIP BOARD

Jo Foskett submitted a copy of the resume of the meeting of the Stockport Partnership Board held on 2 February 2010 (copies of which were circulated) considered by the Council's Corporate Resource Management & Governance Scrutiny Committee on 23 February 2010

RESOLVED – That the report be noted.

8. PERFORMANCE MANAGEMENT FRAMEWORK FOR THE STRONGER COMMUNITIES PARTNERSHIP

Sue Thomas, Policy and Projects Manager, Stockport Council submitted a report (copies of which had been circulated) of the Stronger Communities Partnership Performance Sub Group providing indicators and targets for the Stronger Voice theme and propose useful indicators for Community Cohesion.

RESOLVED – (1) That a target of 32% be set for 2010/11 in relation to NI4 (% of people who feel they can influence decisions in their locality, and that raising the target for 2011/12 to 34% is considered at a later date.

(2) That a target of 36% be set for 2010/11 in relation to the indicator ‘% people who feel well informed about how to get involved in decision making’ as recommended in the report.

(3) That a report be submitted to the next meeting of the Board highlighting threats and risks likely to affect performance against community cohesion indicators.

(4) That the thematic sub groups be requested to report quarterly to this Board in relation to actions being taken to achieve the targets set by this Board.

9. THIRD SECTOR

i) Voluntary and community sector infrastructure review and economic impact assessment

Julie Farley, Policy and Projects Manager, Stockport Council submitted a report (copies of which had been circulated) updating the Board on the review of voluntary and community sector services in Stockport. The review aimed to assess the value and economic impact of the sector and identify current and future infrastructure needs. This review was being carried out as a joint initiative between MOVEs (Meeting of Voluntary Sector Executives) and the Council and was being overseen by the Thriving Third Sector Sub Group.

RESOLVED – That the report be noted

ii) Main Grant Scheme Impact Report

Julie Farley, Policy and Projects Manager, Stockport Council submitted a report (copies of which had been circulated) providing an overview of the grant process, and summary of the End of Year monitoring information submitted by voluntary organisations receiving a grant in the 2008/9 financial year. And the report set out the findings from that exercise.

RESOLVED – That the report be noted

10. NEIGHBOURHOOD RENEWAL - INTERIM ARRANGEMENTS FOR DELIVERY OF THE NEIGHBOURHOOD RENEWAL STRATEGY; RECOMMENDATIONS TO THE STOCKPORT PARTNERSHIP BOARD

Carol Morrison, Service Director (Communities), Stockport Council, submitted a report (copies of which had been circulated) updating the Board on the statutory city-region Better Life Chances pilot and the development of Neighbourhood Management governance arrangements within the Priority 1 areas including the creation of a “Neighbourhood Management Board” reporting to the Stockport Partnership Board.

RESOLVED – (1) That the report be noted

(2) That this Board would wish to continue to receive regular progress reports in relation to city-region Better Life Chances pilot and the development of Neighbourhood Management.

11. COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT - COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT STRATEGY – FIRST DRAFT OF ACTION DELIVERY PLAN

Stephanie MacKenzie, Policy and Projects Manager, Stockport Council submitted a report (copies of which had been circulated) informing the Board that the community engagement strategy for Stockport ‘A Stronger Voice: A Stronger Place’ had been adopted by the Stockport Partnership Board on 2 February 2010. The report invited the Board to consider a first draft ‘Action Delivery Plan’ prepared by the Engaging Communities Advisory Group setting out how the strategy would be implemented based on a summary of existing actions from across the other thematic partnerships in Stockport and a number of proposed new actions.

RESOLVED - (1) That the report and proposed Action Plan be noted

(2) That a report be submitted to the next meeting of the Board in relation to the development of the ‘Engagement Portal’.

(3) That this Board would support a new ‘Grassroots’ award at the ‘Proud of Stockport’ citizen awards for Community Group of the Year and this Partnership taking the lead in relation to organising the ‘2011 Proud of Stockport’ Awards.

12. EVALUATION OF PARTNERSHIP

Stephanie MacKenzie, Policy and Projects Manager, Stockport Council submitted a report (copies of which had been circulated) reminding the Board that it had previously identified the need to change and review its purpose and key objectives since agreeing a new Terms of Reference, basis for membership and Improvement Plan in November 2008. The report included a summary of the evaluation questionnaire recently sent out to Board members and attendees.

RESOLVED – (1) That the report be noted.

(2) That the report be referred to the MOVEs Board to consider how the voluntary sector could better shape and contribute to this Board.

13. INFORMATION EXCHANGE

There were no items raised under this item

14. FUTURE AGENDA ITEMS

RESOLVED – That the following items be considered at a future meeting of the Partnership Board:

- Compact
- Annual Report
- Community Cohesion
- College in the Community
- Transforming Social Care

15. DATE OF NEXT MEETING

RESOLVED -

Tuesday 8th June 2010, 2.00pm in Conference Room, 4th Floor, Stopford House

Tuesday 7th September 2010, 2.00pm in meeting room 6 at the Town Hall

Tuesday 7th December 2010, 2.00pm in meeting room 6 at the Town Hall

Tuesday 1st March 2011, 2.00pm in Committee Room 3 at the Town Hall

The meeting closed at 3.33 pm

Report to: Stronger Communities Partnership
Report of: Engaging Communities Advisory Group
Date: 8th June 2010

Subject: Community Engagement Strategy – Action Delivery Plan

Background

The community engagement strategy 'A Stronger Voice: A Stronger Place' was adopted by the Stockport Partnership Board on 2nd February 2010 and the first draft of the delivery plan was considered by the Stronger Communities Partnership at the last meeting in March.

The appendix to this report is the updated 'Action Delivery Plan' which sets out how the strategy will be implemented.

Action Delivery Plan

The Action Delivery Plan is structured around the three strategic objectives of the community engagement strategy and the high level actions attached to those objectives.

The majority of actions are under Strategic Objective 1 'A Stronger Voice (Listening and Hearing)'. The reason for this is that many of the outcomes that we seek for Strategic Objective 2 are reliant on us having robust systems set up under the first objective. The Engaging Communities Advisory Group are therefore focusing for the first year of this delivery plan on Strategic Objectives 1 and 3 and will review the whole plan with specific focus on Strategic Objective 2 in 2011. The group will also keep the delivery plan under review in terms of relevant directives coming from the new Coalition government.

One of the significant actions is the development of the online 'engagement portal' which is a new partnership web page that acts as a central hub for information about engagement and is linked to all the different partnership and organisational websites. The Council is currently in a position where it has to update its 'Corporate Register of Consultation' and so their central IT service has undertaken to do the work on the portal to put in place a facility that is fit for purpose. The partnership requested further information about the proposed portal, which will be brought to the meeting on 8th June.

Recommendations

The Stronger Communities Partnership is asked to:

1. Agree the Action Delivery Plan subject to any amendments it wishes to see made;
2. Strongly lend its support to the development of the online 'engagement portal' described in the Action Delivery Plan.

Further information is available from Steph MacKenzie on 0161 218 1180 or 07527 387 250 or email stephanie.mackenzie@stockport.gov.uk

A Stronger VOICE: A Stronger PLACE

Stockport's community engagement strategy: ACTION DELIVERY PLAN 2010 - 2011

STRATEGIC OBJECTIVE 1: A Stronger VOICE (Listening and Hearing)

OUTCOME: Communities are engaged and empowered to bring about positive change

ACTION 1A: More and better opportunities for engagement

Delivery	Responsibility for delivery	Target Date	Financial implications / risks / barriers	Link to indicator
Develop a more strategic approach to consultation including enlarging and relaunching the Citizen's Panel to include a wider electronic panel base and consultation on themes common to the partnership and giving a wider perspective to its remit	Corporate Consultation, Stockport Council and Stockport Partnership Office	Report to Stockport Partnership 26 May 2010		NI 4: % people who feel they can influence decisions
Develop a co-ordinated programme of engagement activities by theme: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ensure that each thematic partnership has a range of engagement opportunities in place that can be demonstrated to be effective Identify where there are any gaps or weaker areas of practice across the partnerships and put processes in place for these to be addressed 	Stockport Partnership Office	September 2010		NI 4: % people who feel they can influence decisions
Develop an online ' Engagement Portal ' for the Stockport Partnership – a new partnership web page that acts as a central hub for information about engagement and is linked to all the different partnership and organisational	Engaging Communities Advisory group / Council Information	Website to go live in Autumn 2010	Project proposal received corporate Council support 22 March 2010 (IMSG). Technical specification	NI 4: % people who feel they can influence decisions

Delivery	Responsibility for delivery	Target Date	Financial implications / risks / barriers	Link to indicator
websites. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Draw up specification for what the portal / site should look like and fundamental development tasks to ensure future phases work properly ▪ Portal to include routine opportunities to fill out surveys online ▪ 'Register your interests' - develop an engagement register on the portal for people to say what they are interested in (by topic / area) and how they would like to be involved / willing to be contacted. Could receive text / email alerts – receive info about what's on in their area / be invited to events / be part of focus groups etc 	Management Strategy Group, Corporate Consultation Office		being drawn up and Council IT dept now taking proposal forward. Resource implication for development / management. Reputational risks if implemented and not well managed.	% people who feel well informed about how to get involved in local decision making
Work jointly to promote and support the development of community networks , led by the third sector, building on existing infrastructure	MOVES, Stockport Council	Network event in September 2010	Further timescales and milestones to be determined subject to the completion of the review of third sector infrastructure	NI 4: % people who feel they can influence decisions
Put in place processes to enable the statutory right to petition	Chief Executive's Directorate, Stockport Council			NI 4: % people who feel they can influence decisions
Put in place a common approach to the evaluation of engagement activities and events, linked to the relevant indicators, to ensure the quality of events and evidence of success	Engaging Communities Advisory Group	January 2011		Local indicator to be worked up

ACTION 1B: Improving the co-ordination of engagement activities across organisations and sectors

Delivery	Responsibility for delivery	Target Date	Financial implications / risks / barriers	Link to indicator
Engaging Communities Advisory Group supported by all partners and oversees consistent approach to engagement across partnerships and organisations. Remit to ensure shared information, resources and development across partners	Vince Fraga / Steph MacKenzie, Adult Social Care, Stockport Council	Ongoing	Engagement and commitment from all partners / partnerships	Evidence of implementation of this Action Delivery Plan
Set up and manage a virtual network of engagement / involvement practitioners	Corporate Consultation, Stockport Council	Formal launch of network in Autumn 2010		Evidence of all partners working to the Stronger Voice strategy
Review the community engagement mechanisms in place across the wider Stockport Partnership and establish a more co-ordinated approach to community representation on the Stockport Partnership and thematic partnerships	Stockport Partnership Office, MOVES	Report to Stockport Partnership in May 2010	Linked to the review of third sector infrastructure and dependent on the establishment of the new infrastructure service	NI 4: % people who feel they can influence decisions
Put in place a Forward Plan and archive on the Engagement Portal so that all partners have access to a shared, searchable database – by area / theme / date. For all engagement / consultation activity, updated quarterly, so that all practitioners can see what is being planned from the early stages. Used to populate the public facing Diary of	Engaging Communities Advisory Group to oversee. To be managed by Corporate Consultation, Stockport Council	Initial information to be pulled together over Summer 2010 for launch in Autumn 2010	Needs to be strongly linked in with 'Local Information System' developments	% people who feel well informed about how to get involved in local decision making

Delivery	Responsibility for delivery	Target Date	Financial implications / risks / barriers	Link to indicator
Events. This also needs to provide the function of an archive or 'evidence bank' so that we have a repository for 'soft' information, shared access to detailed reports from completed research and summary reports, and the ability to analyse data.				

ACTION 1C: Putting in place **resources** to support all levels of engagement – for communities and for practitioners

Delivery	Responsibility for delivery	Target Date	Financial implications / risks / barriers	Link to indicator
For communities -				
Use the review of the voluntary and community sector infrastructure services to put in place a new infrastructure service that provides supported mechanisms for enhancing community engagement and a 'Stronger Voice' for communities in decision making processes across the Stockport Partnership	Stockport Council, MOVES	October 2010	Subject to the conclusions of the review	% people who feel well informed about how to get involved in local decision making NI 4: % people who feel they can influence decisions
Develop an information pack about the range of engagement activities available to people. The pack will include information about the many different ways to become involved on the different levels and will provide a list of useful	Engaging Communities Advisory Group – led by SCVS and the Partnership	September 2010		% people who feel well informed about how to get involved in local decision making

Delivery	Responsibility for delivery	Target Date	Financial implications / risks / barriers	Link to indicator
contacts from partner organisations (paper version of the online 'How to' guide for communities below)	Office			
Publish the information pack on the engagement portal as a 'How to' guide for communities . To include information about the different ways of getting involved and links to further information (and register), including clearer engagement information for each partnership and links through to partnership websites. Engagement opportunities specific to each website – e.g. the voluntary and community sector networks and forums that are linked to each one and how to become more involved as a community representative	Engaging Communities Advisory group	Autumn 2010		% people who feel well informed about how to get involved in local decision making
For practitioners -				
Publish a 'How to' guide for practitioners on the engagement portal. To include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Information and advice for practitioners on how to carry out engagement activity, and how to evaluate it Guidance to assist practitioners to include people from diverse groups in their engagement activity Best practice, including best practice in the engagement and involvement 	Engaging Communities Advisory group	Autumn 2010	Dependent on input from individual members of the group	NI 4: % people who feel they can influence decisions

Delivery	Responsibility for delivery	Target Date	Financial implications / risks / barriers	Link to indicator
of vulnerable and seldom-heard groups across partnerships <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Case studies from the range of practice 				
Regularly review the practitioners guidance to ensure it is effective and up to date	Corporate Consultation Office, Stockport Council	Quarterly, from Spring 2011		
Raise awareness of new policies, approaches and opportunities for engagement on all levels, for example 'Co-production'	Engaging Communities Advisory group	From Autumn 2010	Part of knowledge management approach of the portal	
Identify where there are gaps in support (for both communities and practitioners) and where it is necessary to put additional mechanisms in place	Engaging Communities Advisory group	First review by end 2010		

ACTION 1D: Harnessing the pride, ambition and skills of our local communities

Delivery	Responsibility for delivery	Target Date	Financial implications / risks / barriers	Link to indicator
Continue to promote volunteering across the borough and with a particular focus on the priority areas	SCVS Neighbourhood Renewal	Ongoing		NI 6: formal volunteering
Explore the possibility of putting in place an accredited volunteering scheme that applies to all age ranges	SCVS	November 2010	PRG bid to be submitted to the next round (November 2010)	NI 6: formal volunteering

Promote and further develop Stockport's Area Committees as the key civic approach to harnessing the efforts and ambitions of local people and communities and empowering them to get involved in their local areas and engage as citizens in local decision making	Chief Executives Directorate, Stockport Council			NI 4: % people who feel they can influence decisions
Support community representatives and provide training opportunities to enable engagement to be more effective	MOVES		Subject to the outcomes of the third sector infrastructure review	NI 4: % people who feel they can influence decisions
Develop Stockport's approach to understanding and defining User Led Organisations in partnership with the pilot work being undertaken on 'Right to Control' with a view to developing infrastructure support for User Led Organisations	Adult Social Care, Stockport Council	End 2010	Being managed as part of the Greater Manchester 'Right to Control' pilot	NI 4: % people who feel they can influence decisions

ACTION 1E (i): Providing community development support (or similar) where needed - Targeting and supporting vulnerable groups and priority neighbourhoods

Delivery	Responsibility for delivery	Target Date	Financial implications / risks / barriers	Link to indicator
Carry out an options appraisal to determine the future direction of the Council's Community Development function in the Communities, Regeneration and Environment Directorate	Head of Community Safety and Neighbourhoods, Stockport Council	December 2010		NI 4: % people who feel they can influence decisions

Delivery	Responsibility for delivery	Target Date	Financial implications / risks / barriers	Link to indicator
Develop existing community development support provided by the third sector and create a coherent approach to community development across the borough	Stronger Communities Partnership / MOVES	December 2010	Subject to the outcomes of the third sector infrastructure review	NI 4: % people who feel they can influence decisions
Implement the Action Plan for Objective 2 of the Neighbourhood Renewal Strategy that contains actions for engaging with communities in Priority One areas 'Stronger local communities where people feel that they can improve their area'	Neighbourhood Renewal Team	See detail in plan	Ongoing developments in Stockport's approach to Neighbourhood Management being overseen by the Place Board	See detail in Objective 2 Action Plan for indicators
Implement the Connecting Communities project in Offerton	Neighbourhood Renewal Team			

ACTION 1E (ii): Providing community development support (or similar) where needed - Targeting and supporting diverse groups

Delivery	Responsibility for delivery	Target Date	Financial implications / risks / barriers	Link to indicator
Implement the PVE strategy in line with recommendations from the OAK report, ' <i>Partnership Approach to Community Engagement and Involvement</i> '	Safer Stockport Partnership			See PVE action plan for detail

Delivery	Responsibility for delivery	Target Date	Financial implications / risks / barriers	Link to indicator
Further develop the third sector BME Network in Stockport	SCVS		Largely dependent on Basis 2 Lottery funded approach across Greater Manchester	NI 4: % people who feel they can influence decisions

ACTION 1F: Building the skills of practitioners to carry out engagement effectively

Delivery	Responsibility for delivery	Target Date	Financial implications / risks / barriers	Link to indicator
Put in place a training programme so that staff within the partner organisations are equipped with the knowledge and skills to carry out appropriate engagement activity including using Equality Impact Assessments, and to use the intelligence gained to inform service planning, design and delivery	Corporate Consultation, Stockport Council	October 2010		Local indicators to be developed
Include raising awareness of the ' Compact Code of Practice for Participation and Consultation' within the training above	Third Sector sub-group and Corporate Consultation	October 2010		

STRATEGIC OBJECTIVE 2: STRONGER PLACE (Responding and Embedding)

OUTCOME: Quality services that reflect and respond to the needs, aspirations and priorities of local communities

ACTION 2A: Using the principles agreed by all organisations

Delivery	Responsibility for delivery	Target Date	Financial implications / risks / barriers	Link to indicator
Promote and embed the Stronger Voice principles in practice, using the 'How to' guide for practitioners	Engaging Communities Advisory group	2011	Dependent on engagement portal development	NI 4: % people who feel they can influence decisions
Put in place monitoring arrangements to ensure that practitioners are carrying out engagement activity in accordance with the guidance	Corporate Consultation Office, Stockport Council	2011	Dependent on engagement portal development	Local indicator to be developed

ACTION 2B: Analysing the views of local people and users of services alongside other local information and data and:

ACTION 2C: Building a culture that values and uses the information intelligently – understanding what it is telling us

Delivery	Responsibility for delivery	Target Date	Financial implications / risks / barriers	Link to indicator
Ensure that Stockport has the right skills, knowledge and capacity in place to carry out effective analysis of the views of local people and users of services, and that this information can be analysed alongside other data to plan, design and deliver services	All agencies, Stockport Partnership	2011	Linked to the development of the Local Information System	% people who believe local public services act on residents' concerns

Delivery	Responsibility for delivery	Target Date	Financial implications / risks / barriers	Link to indicator
Ensure that information and intelligence gained through engagement activity can be disaggregated and analysed by equality group	Engaging Communities Advisory Group	2011	As above	% people who believe local public services act on residents' concerns
Ensure that engagement is explicitly part of our commissioning, prioritisation and funding processes	Engaging Communities Advisory Group	2011		
Put in place systems for capturing both formal and informal feedback about services	Engaging Communities Advisory Group	2011		% people who believe local public services act on residents' concerns

ACTION 2D: Working out what is the appropriate, realistic and timely response or intervention and **ACTION 2E: Making changes** as a result of what we find out

Delivery	Responsibility for delivery	Target Date	Financial implications / risks / barriers	Link to indicator
Good practice to be identified - for example, the Safer Stockport Partnership track responses to engagements with the community through an audited action plan to enable an informed and consistent response to community priority setting – and examples used as part of training programme in section 1F above to embed this aspect of engagement in practice	Engaging Communities Advisory Group	2011	Dependent on input from individual members of the group	% people who believe local public services act on residents' concerns

Develop systems to establish on a routine basis what changes have been made as a result of engagement, linked to performance management system Covalent so that we are evidencing where action has been taken , linked to objectives.	Engaging Communities Advisory Group, Corporate Consultation	2011		% people who believe local public services act on residents' concerns
Systems established above ask practitioners whether changes that have been made as a result of engagement activity have had an impact on / for any of the equality groups	Engaging Communities Advisory Group, Corporate Consultation	2011		% people who believe local public services act on residents' concerns

STRATEGIC OBJECTIVE 3: EXCELLENT COMMUNICATIONS (Publicity and Feedback)

OUTCOME: Our communities are confident that their views are heard and that they are making a difference

ACTION 3A: Publicising and promoting all engagement opportunities

Delivery	Responsibility for delivery	Target Date	Financial implications / risks / barriers	Link to indicator
<p>Publish an online Diary of 'What's going on' Clickable map of what is happening / available in each area with drop down themed menus - allows people to see all the up and coming engagement opportunities open to them at a borough, area or neighbourhood level. This should include</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ consultations (and the option to contribute online where possible) ▪ any relevant events ▪ any relevant groups/forums/networks 	Engaging Communities Advisory group / Council Online Steering Group	Autumn 2010	Drawn from Forward Plan in 1B above and therefore dependent on this being implemented	% people who feel well informed about how to get involved in local decision making
Co-ordinate the publication of information about engagement opportunities across all agencies and promoted through all media. To commence in Autumn 2010 and include the launch and promotion of the portal	Engaging Communities Advisory group	Autumn 2010 and then ongoing	In negotiation and resources being identified	% people who feel well informed about how to get involved in local decision making
Publicity about engagement opportunities targeted to equality groups	Engaging Communities Advisory Group	Autumn 2010	As part of campaign approach	% people who feel well informed about how to get involved

ACTION 3B: Giving people feedback about the results of engagement activity and telling people what has been changed (or not changed) as a result - 'You said, we did'

Delivery	Responsibility for delivery	Target Date	Financial implications / risks / barriers	Link to indicator
Specific feedback to be made available to all participants – good practice to be identified and examples used as part of training programme in section 1F above to embed this aspect of engagement in practice	Engaging Communities Advisory group, Corporate Consultation	2011		% people who believe local public services act on residents' concerns
Publish 'You said, we did' feedback to the public about actions resulting from engagement – what have we done as a result? (Or if no changes have been made, why not)	Engaging Communities Advisory group	To commence in Autumn 2011	Dependent on portal development as above.	% people who believe local public services act on residents' concerns

ACTION 3C: Monitoring what we do to see if it is working and publicising the impact it has

Delivery	Responsibility for delivery	Target Date	Financial implications / risks / barriers	Link to indicator
Annual report of engagement published online. To include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Performance management information to demonstrate the impact on high level empowerment and satisfaction indicators. ▪ Case studies of successful engagement activity where positive impact has been evident 	Engaging Communities Advisory group	June 2011	Dependent on input from individual members of the group	% people who believe local public services act on residents' concerns

ACTION 3D: Celebrating what local people achieve by being engaged and empowered

Delivery	Responsibility for delivery	Target Date	Financial implications / risks / barriers	Link to indicator
Celebrate achievements through the 'Proud of Stockport' citizen awards scheme	Stockport Council	Ongoing	Already in place	% people who agree public services promote residents' interests
Stronger Communities to sponsor a new award at the 'Proud of Stockport' awards – e.g. a 'Grassroots' award for Community Group of the Year	Stronger Communities Partnership Board	2011	To be determined	% people who agree public services promote residents' interests
Evaluate the success of the awards scheme	Engaging Communities Advisory Group	2011	To be determined	
Better co-ordination and promotion of other award schemes and good news stories across the partnership	Engaging Communities Advisory Group	To commence Autumn 2010		% people who feel well informed about how to get involved in local decision making
Put in place a 'Rewards and Recognition' policy so that there is a consistent approach across the partnership	Adult Social Care	2010		
Explore the possibility of a 'thank-you card' scheme to recognise the contributions that people make through being engaged	Engaging Communities Advisory Group	2011	To be determined	

Report to: Stronger Communities Partnership
Date: 8 June 2010

Report of Head of Integrated Prevention Services, Children and Young People's
Directorate, SMBC

Child Poverty Strategy

Purpose of the Report

To consult this board on the development of Stockport's Child Poverty Strategy.

Background

This Child Poverty Strategy 2010-13 for Stockport has been developed in accordance with the duty placed upon local authorities by the Child Poverty Act, March 2010. The Child Poverty Strategy Group would appreciate your input with regard to the consultation questions attached as well as any other general comments you may have about the document.

All feedback will be collated and considered in August, following the three month consultation period, and used to inform the future work of the strategy group. Any responses to this exercise will be taken into account in refining the strategy document further and ultimately in developing an action plan to deliver this agenda.

Thank you for taking the time to participate in this consultation exercise.

Consultation Questions

Section 1:

Do you have any comments about the definition of child poverty in Stockport in 1.3, pg.6?

Section 3:

Do you have any additional analysis that should be considered as part of the strategy?

Section 6:

Are the aims and objectives clear in 6.1, pg.19?

Are there any other relevant strategies that contribute to addressing child poverty and ought to be included in Section 6.2.1, pg.21?

Section 7:

Do you have any comments about the 5 'we will' priorities identified in the strategy pg.31-33?

Are there any additional priorities that you think ought to be included?

Do you agree have any comments about the proposed actions listed under each 'we will' priority, pg.31-33?

Are there any measures, performance or national indicators, that you think ought to feed into any of the priorities? Please explain you rationale.

STOCKPORT CHILD POVERTY STRATEGY 2010-13

DRAFT- APRIL 2010

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1. Introduction

1.1 Background

1.1.1 In March 1999 the Government announced a pledge to halve the level of child poverty in the UK by 2010/11 and eradicate it within the following decade. The Child Poverty Act, March 2010, enshrined this promise in legislation and established a national accountability framework to meet the targets. As a part of this framework the duty has been placed upon Local Partnerships to carry out a needs assessment of child poverty within their area and to develop a strategy to combat the causes and consequences of child poverty at a local level.

1.1.2 The child poverty problem is a complex and multi faceted one which interacts with a wide range of other local issues, strategies and agendas. It is important to realise that this is not exclusively a children's agenda but a community wide one. Research shows that when children experience poverty they can lack the opportunities and experiences enjoyed by their peers leading to a gap in achievement and well being between those who have and those who have not. Children who fall behind their peers are at risk of low aspirations, social exclusion, poor health and limited life chances in the future. Child poverty is a burden to local services and wastes talent at the expense of the whole community.

1.2 Defining Child Poverty

1.2.1 The Child Poverty Bill defines 'child' as a person under the age of 16 or a young person whose parents qualify for child benefit. We feel that this definition would exclude some particularly vulnerable young people in the 16-19 age range, particularly those Not in Education, Employment or Training (NEET). We believe that it is important that these groups are included in any definition of child poverty and so the Stockport Child Poverty Strategy, in keeping with our Children's Plan, will include all children and young people aged 0-19.

1.2.2 Under the Bill 'poverty' is defined in terms of income using a tiered approach of absolute low income, relative low income, material deprivation combined with low income and persistent poverty. The relative poverty measure will be the most widely used and currently 2.9 million children live in relative poverty in the United Kingdom, one of the highest figures in Europe.¹

Child poverty means growing up in a low income household

The *Relative Low Income* measure captures those children living in a household whose income is less than 60% of the contemporary median, equivalised by household type.

The *Combined Low Income* and Material Deprivation measure captures those children whose household income is less than 70% of the median, and who go without a range of necessary items and activities.

The *Absolute Low Income* measure captures children in households that fall below a specific poverty line, which rises each year in line with prices.

The *Persistent Poverty* measure captures children who have lived in relative low income in at least three of the last four years.²

1.2.3 In real terms the relative poverty baseline of 60% of the national median income would equate to approximately £195 per week for a single adult with two dependent children under 14; and £279 per week for a couple with two dependent children under 14.³ This figure is measured after deduction of income and council tax and housing costs, therefore representing what the household has available to spend on all other needs, from food and heating to travel and entertainment.

¹ 'Measuring Child Poverty', Department for Work and Pensions, December 2003

² Draft Interim Statutory Guidance February 2010

³ The latest national statistics on Households Below Average Income (HBAI) for 2007/08

1.3 Defining Child Poverty in Stockport

1.3.1 As an authority Stockport tends to mimic national trends very closely, therefore we would expect our baseline relative low income measure (60% of the median income) to be near to the national average. **In Stockport the relative poverty measure of 60% of the median income is calculated using CACI Paycheck data from 2008 and equates to £18,836 per annum.**⁴ In comparison to this the national baseline stood at £15,257 according to the 2009 Annual Survey of Hours and Earnings.

1.3.2 The borough is extremely polarised with some families living in small areas that fall within the 1% most deprived in England.⁵ Therefore our Child Poverty Strategy must consider both the median and the extreme levels of poverty within the borough and work to improve the life chances and experience of all of our children.

⁴ The median household income for the borough (2008) was £31,393, 60% of this equals £18,836. It is important to note that the income and employment baseline does fluctuate significantly, often out of tune with the national economic climate.

⁵ Stockport Strategy 2020, p.9

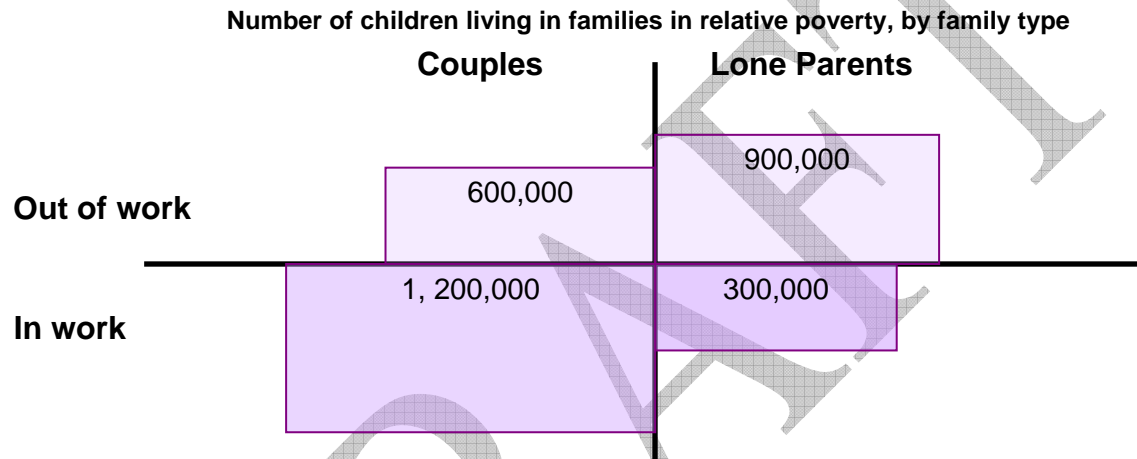
1.4 National Research

.4.1 National research has shown that there are a number of risk factors that increase the chances of a child living in poverty. Exposure to several of these factors increases the likelihood that a child will experience poverty. Save the Children have compiled the following list that outlines the cohorts that are most at risk of living in poverty, and also severe poverty.⁶

- children in workless households
- those whose mothers (or fathers in the case of single fathers) have low educational attainment
- children in single-parent households
- those living in socially rented accommodation (that is rented housing owned and managed by local authorities or registered social landlords)
- children in families with disabled adult(s)
- children from minority ethnic groups
- children in large families of four or more children
- those with young parents (under 25)
- children whose parents have no savings/assets
- younger children (under 5)

⁶ 'Measuring severe child poverty in the UK', a Save the Children Policy Brief, January 2010.
http://www.savethechildren.org.uk/en/docs/Measuring_child_poverty_in_the_UK.pdf

1.4.2 National analysis shows that work *is* still the best route out of poverty. Poverty rates for those who move into work are half as much as for people out of work but, as the diagram below shows, over half children in poverty now live in *working* rather than workless households. This means that it is not enough to simply try to move more people into work; ways of reducing *in-work* poverty also need to be addressed.⁷



* Note that there are 2.9 million children in relative poverty. The numbers do not add to 2.9 million due to rounding

1.4.3 The highest risk group are those children in **couple families** where **only one parent is working** on a part time basis, often where the presence of **disability**, young children and large families may distance these families from participating more fully in the labour market. Children in **workless lone parent households** are also at a high risk of being in poverty.

⁷ HBAI 2007/08

1.4.4 According to the HM Treasury Review of Child Poverty in 2004 efforts to eradicate child poverty should be focused on the following areas

- increase employment opportunities, raising incomes for those who can work
- increase support for those who cannot work
- improve the effectiveness of public services that tackle material deprivation, for instance housing
- improve those public services – education, for example – that can contribute most to increasing the future life chances of children in households with low income and ensure public services and the welfare system work well together when families face crisis points in their lives
- improve services for children and their families living in deprived areas

1.5 The Child Poverty Strategy Group

The Child Poverty Strategy Group has been specifically established to address the challenge of tackling child poverty and is driving this agenda forward. The membership of the strategy group reflects the complexity of the issue with senior representatives from key areas within the Council including inclusive communities, youth offending, revenue and benefits, neighbourhood renewal, economic development, human resources, advice and information service, data and performance, disability partnership, Stockport Homes, transport as well as delegates from our partners in children's health, social housing and the third sector. This is a strong and committed partnership working group who will steer the use of resources to meet out priorities and ensure that the spotlight remains focused upon tackling child poverty in Stockport.

2. The Importance of Tackling Child Poverty

2.1 Reducing inequalities is central to what we want to achieve.⁸ Stockport is the third most polarised borough in England and Wales, with extreme differences in wealth and deprivation. The fastest growing health inequalities in Greater Manchester along with significant gaps between the life expectancy of people living in the most deprived and most affluent parts of the borough present major challenges

- The Council's commitment and that of our partners, to tackling inequalities is captured and articulated in our current Local Area Agreement, Stockport Strategy 2020 and the Council Plan.
- Children and young people remain a key priority for the council in terms of improving life chances, particularly for those who are more vulnerable. We have a strong tradition of working in partnership to produce innovation and improvement in service delivery and recognise the importance of the need to reduce inequalities and ensure that every child gets the best start in life and is supported into adulthood.
- The Neighbourhood Renewal Strategy has prioritised those areas where there is a concentration of problems like high unemployment, ill health and poor levels of skills as the most deprived neighbourhoods in Stockport. These 'Priority 1' areas have been identified using findings from the Index of Multiple Deprivation 2007.⁹ The strategy has a strong emphasis on supporting people into work and ensuring those working have the right skills to progress.

2.2 Growing up in poverty can impact upon a child's life chances.¹⁰ According to the Child Poverty Bill and accompanying guidance:

- Growing up in poverty can damage a child's cognitive, social and emotional development, which are all determinants of future outcomes. While some children who grow up in low-income households will go on to achieve their full potential, many others will not.
- Tackling child poverty will improve the childhood experiences of many children, who will then experience greater opportunities and social inclusion. As a result, these children should have better outcomes, particularly health and educational attainment, in childhood and beyond.

⁸ The Stockport Council Priority of Reducing Inequalities is taken from the Stockport Strategy 2020, the Council Plan 09-12⁸ and the Neighbourhood Renewal Strategy, January 2010.

⁹ Stockport's Neighbourhood Renewal Strategy, January 2010

¹⁰ The Child Poverty Act, March 2010

- Experiencing poverty in childhood affects children's outcomes as adults, and these, in turn, affect their children, thus creating cycles of deprivation. Breaking this intergenerational cycle of poverty should therefore have huge benefits for future generations.

2.3 In April 2007 the Children and Young People's Scrutiny Committee prioritised child poverty for consideration by a Scrutiny Review.¹¹ The Scrutiny Review made the following recommendations

1. The Council adopts as a discipline the question 'How does this address child poverty?'
2. Children and Young People's Directorate consider making explicit the contribution of key priorities and issues within the Children and Young People's Strategic Plan to tackling child poverty in Stockport.
3. Service managers regularly review data to ensure that services are still being delivered to the right children
4. Council's Executive, and in turn the Stockport Partnership, consider making explicit the contribution of targets and indicators within the Local Area Agreement (LAA) to tackling child poverty in Stockport.
5. Information collected in the childcare sufficiency assessment, and the related work of the Disability Partnership, is used to focus services on deprived areas and vulnerable groups and be made available on Profiling Stockport.

2.4 We are passionate about delivering measurable improvements to children's lives. We are ambitious for all children and young people, and we are committed to reducing inequalities.¹²

2.5 'Releasing the potential of the region's people and tackling poverty' is named as a priority in the new Regional Strategy for the Northwest (RS2010).¹³ The draft highlights the following issues as important to Greater Manchester:

- Improve the early years experience for hard-to-reach groups, particularly in the most deprived areas
- Improve life changes in the most deprived areas by investing in lifelong skills development and other forms of support so that people can compete in the modern labour market, thereby linking opportunity and need
- Significantly improve transport connectivity into and within the city region
- Expand and diversify the city region's economic base through digital infrastructure

¹¹ The scrutiny review is available via the Stockport Council website at

<http://www.stockport.gov.uk/services/councildemocracy/democracy/decisionmakingscrutiny/scrutiny/workofscrutiny/scrutinyreviews/tacklingchildpoverty?view=Standard>

¹² The Stockport Children and Young People's Plan 2009-11

¹³ The new Regional Strategy for the Northwest can be viewed online at <http://www.nwregionalstrategy.com/files/RS2010%20A5%20Summary.pdf>

3. Local Context

The Stockport Child Poverty Strategy has been developed in the context of both local, regional and national research and guidance. This has helped to shape the vision and key priorities of the Stockport strategy.

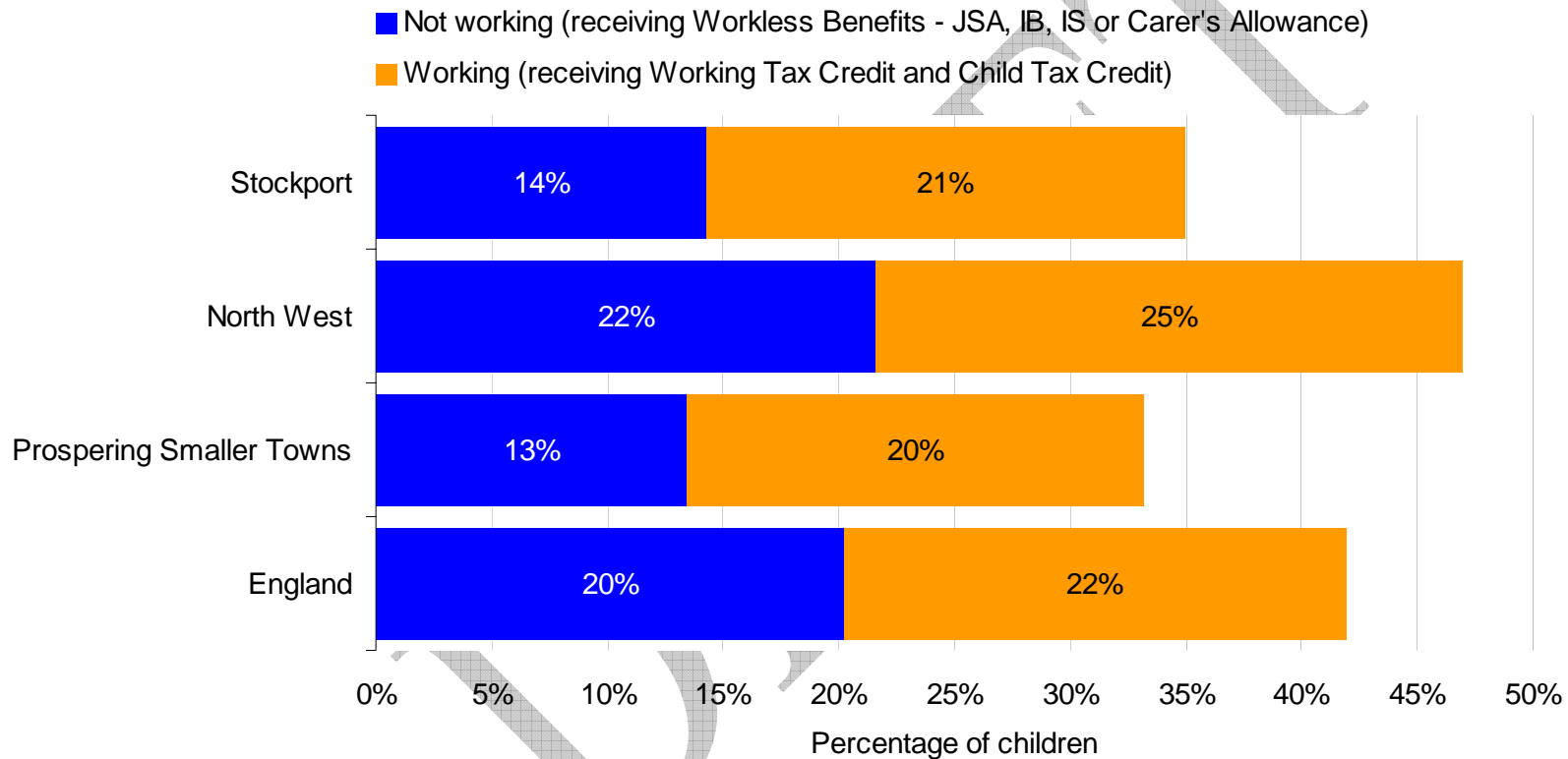
3.1 The Stockport Story of place¹⁴-

- Whilst Stockport's unemployment rate remains below the regional and national levels evidence suggests that it is increasing at a faster rate. In addition, the unemployment rate in the borough's more disadvantaged wards is increasing at a lower rate than the borough average, suggesting that this recession is impacting in a way not experienced in previous recessions.
- The number of Stockport residents claiming Job Seekers Allowance in December 2009 was lower than both Greater Manchester and the North West region averages although there were disparities within the borough. Brinnington had significantly higher numbers of claimants at three times the borough average, this was the second highest number in the whole of greater Manchester. Notably a substantial proportion of Stockport JSA claimants, 39.3%, are described as long term, i.e. have been claiming for in excess of 6 months.
- The average life expectancy in Stockport is higher than the national, North West and Greater Manchester averages. Levels of obesity, smoking, cancer mortality and circulatory disease mortality are all lower than the average Greater Manchester and North West levels. There are disparities between wards within the borough, Brinnington experiencing the lowest life expectancy with 12 years difference between the lowest and highest.
- Housing affordability is an increasing issue for younger people and families setting up home in Stockport. Indeed, a recent study demonstrates that Stockport is the second most expensive place in the North West in terms of affordability. There are significantly high levels of owner occupied housing and this coupled with high housing costs is reflected in a high and increasing demand for social rented housing. There is also evidence of increasing numbers of housing repossessions and housing benefit claimants. The proportion of poor quality housing is around the national average but below that of both Greater Manchester and the North West.

¹⁴ The Story of place is taken from the Stockport Council Plan 09-12, available at:
http://interactive.stockport.gov.uk/contents/policyregister/Redirect.aspx?DOCUMENT_NO=232

3.2 Relative Poverty in Stockport

Using the relative poverty measure there are 400,000 children are living in poverty across the North West region. According to Department of Work and Pensions latest figures in May 2008 Stockport had 8,550 children, aged 0-18, living in households claiming out of work benefits, that is approximately 14% of all children and young people in the borough.



3.3 A Summary of the Every Child Matters Profiles

Our strategic focus in Stockport will be informed by the priorities identified in the Children and young People's Plan and outlined below under the Every Child Matters Categories:

Be Healthy

- Breastfeeding initiation rates in the priority areas are well below the Stockport average. The Brinnington and Reddish Cluster has the poorest rates over time, with further low levels recorded in the Stockport Central and Marple and Werneth Clusters.

Stay Safe

- Hospital admission figures, categorised by injury type (including both unintentional and deliberate injury to children and young people), indicate higher levels in both Brinnington and Reddish and Stockport Central Clusters than the rest of the borough. Nearly half of all referrals to Social Care teams come from the Priority areas with almost 60% residents of the Brinnington and Reddish and Stockport Central Clusters.

Enjoy and Achieve

- The inequality gap between those claiming free school meals and the rest of their cohort is greater in Stockport than National and other Authorities. Key Stage 2 free school meal pupils do well and are significantly above other similar cohorts, however, at key stage 3 there is a significant gap in achievement between free school meal pupils and their peers.
- School absence rates are more prevalent for the free school meal cohort, especially in the secondary sector.

Positive Contribution

- In 2008/09 Stockport had 50 (about 15%) first time entrants into the Criminal justice system from Priority 1 areas. About half of all the priority 1 offenders were from Brinnington.
- Stockport's teen conception figures have been consistently below the national and North West figures since 1997. However, ward level data shows that there are significant differences in the numbers of teen pregnancies by area.

Economic Wellbeing

- The take up of formal childcare by low income families within Stockport is strong although the most recent data relate to 2006/07. Take up appears to be less in the Brinnington and Reddish Cluster with the Cheadle Cluster showing low take-up in the Heald Green Children's centre reach area.

4. Performance measures

4.1 The dedicated national indicator to measure children living in poverty is NI 116, the proportion of children living in families in receipt of out of work benefits or tax credits where their reported income is less than 60% median income. However, child poverty concerns more than just household income and so a basket of national indicators around the agenda has been developed to monitor a range of factors that relate to both the causes and consequences of child poverty.

4.1.2 There is a strong expectation that local authorities will be influenced by the nationally recommended performance indicators around this agenda and so this basket of National Indicators is drawn from national recommendations as well as local priorities.¹⁵ It is recognised that this basket of indicators does not entirely capture all activity which works to reduce child poverty and mitigate its effects but it will give some indication that progress is being made in the right areas.

4.2 The following indicators have been identified by the Stockport Child Poverty Strategy Group (those in bold are recommended as part of the National Indicator Basket)

NI 53 Proxy Improve breastfeeding rates with focus on areas of deprivation

NI 70 Hospital admissions - unintentional and deliberate injuries to C&YP

NI 81 Inequality gap in Level 3 qualification by the age of 19

NI 82 Inequality gap in Level 2 qualification by the age of 19

NI 87 Secondary school persistent absence rate

NI 102a Achievement gap between pupils eligible for FSM and their peers KS 2

NI 102b Achievement gap between pupils eligible for FSM and their peers KS 4

NI 106 Young people from low income backgrounds progressing to HE

NI 111 First time entrants to the Youth Justice System 10-17

NI 112 Under 18 conception rate

NI 116 Proportion of children in poverty

NI 117 Proxy Reduce NEET young people in P1 areas

¹⁵ The National Indicator Basket has been identified by the Child Poverty Unit to closely reflect the drivers of child poverty that can be influenced by the local authority and its partners.

NI 118 Take up of formal childcare by low-income working families

NI 151 Overall Employment Rate

NI 152 Work age people on out of work benefits

NI 153 Work age people on out of work benefits in the worst performing neighbourhoods

NI 161 Number of L1 qualifications in literacy

NI 162 Number of L1 qualifications in numeracy

NI 163 population qualified to L2+

NI 164 population qualified to L3+

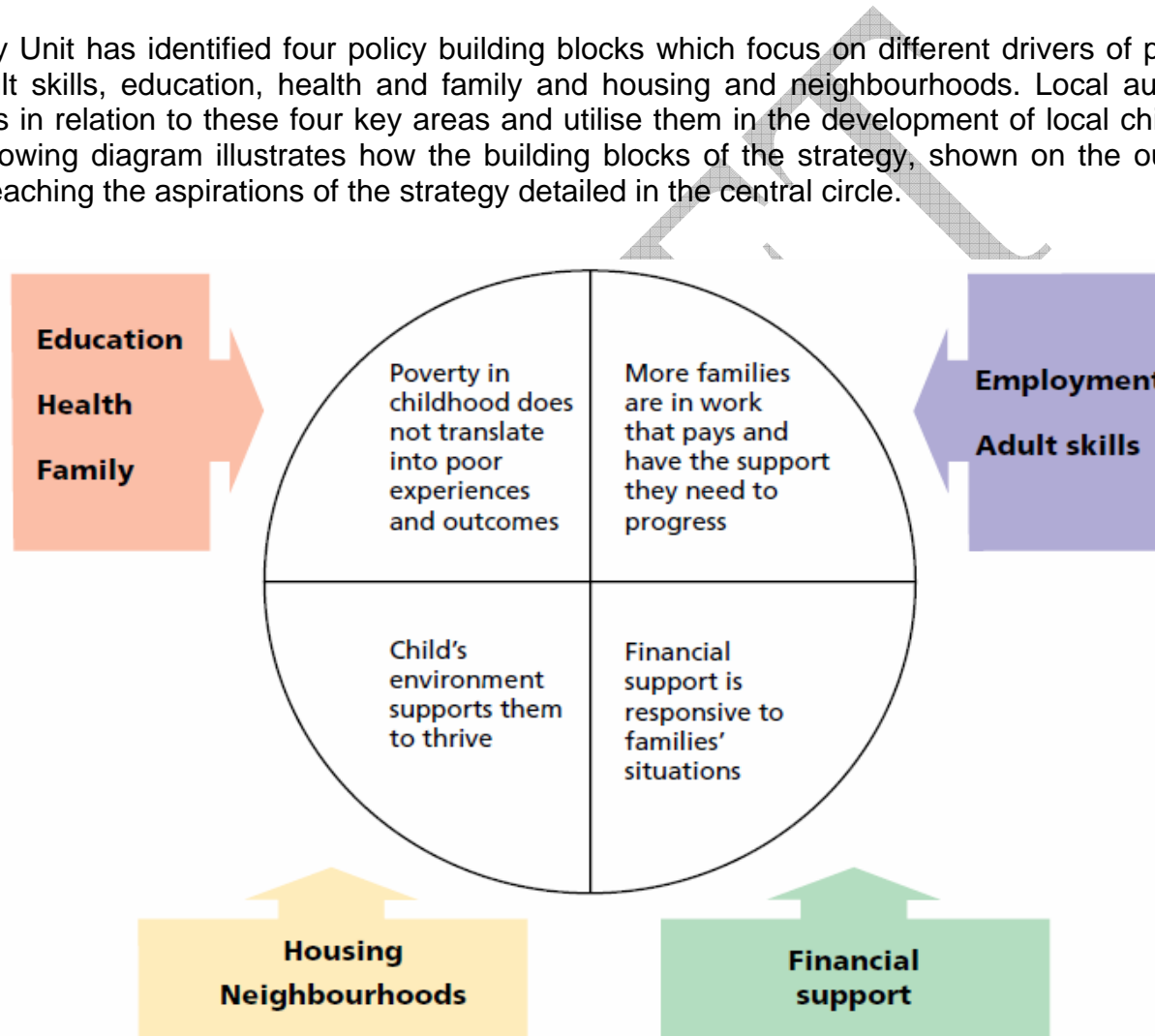
NI 166 Median earnings of employees in the area

4.3. Accountability and Governance

Progress on the Child Poverty Strategy will be reported to the **Inclusive Communities Partnership** which is one of a family of thematic partnerships reporting to the **Children's Trust Board**. The Children's Trust Board reports to the **Stockport Partnership** (the local strategic partnership) ensuring that the Child Poverty Strategy will have relevance to Stockport's Sustainable Communities Strategy and Local Area Agreement.

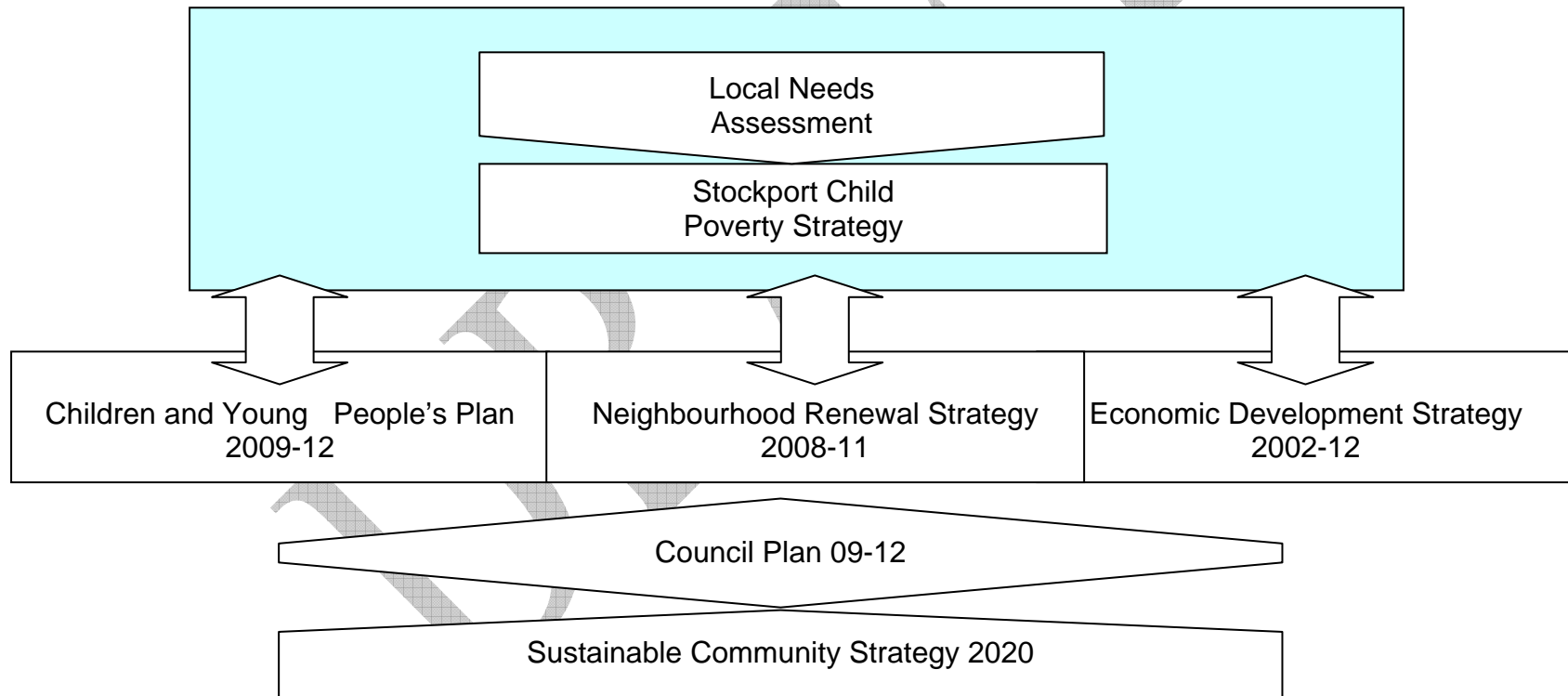
5. The Strategy Building Blocks

5.1 The Child Poverty Unit has identified four policy building blocks which focus on different drivers of poverty- financial support, employment and adult skills, education, health and family and housing and neighbourhoods. Local authorities are expected to develop their priorities in relation to these four key areas and utilise them in the development of local child poverty strategies and action plans. The following diagram illustrates how the building blocks of the strategy, shown on the outer edge of the diagram below, work toward reaching the aspirations of the strategy detailed in the central circle.



5.2 A service mapping exercise carried out in preparation for this strategy has demonstrated that there is a wealth of activity already happening within the borough to improve outcomes for residents within each of the policy building blocks set down by the Child Poverty Unit to advance the child poverty agenda. It is important then that this strategy does not duplicate or detract from these work streams and the progress that they are making. The Child Poverty Strategy will build upon and add to the work of other key strategies already in place within the Stockport Partnership, particularly the Children and Young People’s Plan, Neighbourhood Renewal Strategy and Economic Development Strategy.

The following diagram sets out the links between the key supporting strategies and local structures.



6. Aims and Objectives

6.1 The Stockport Child Poverty Strategy aims to set out our local vision for tackling the causes and consequences of child poverty within the borough and therefore improve outcomes for our children. This section first outlines our overarching approach to tackling child poverty and then our priorities under each of the policy building blocks identified by the Child Poverty Unit.

6.1.2 We know that in order to break the cycle of poverty our service delivery has to be responsive to the needs of the whole family and local community. Public services have an important role in supporting families and key factors here are ensuring they are welcoming and accessible to the whole family. The strategy will therefore prioritise reducing the poverty of opportunity and circumstances where families experience a poverty of offer and work to increase the opportunity for financial inclusion and capability and improved life chances.¹⁶

6.1.3 The Child Poverty Strategy seeks to impose a broad, overarching guiding principle across the partnership; to charge the Council and its partners with the duty of ensuring that all current and future practice has a family centric approach. The overriding value that this strategy seeks to add to is to impose the discipline of considering how each and every work stream considers the needs of Stockport families¹⁷ and the best practice to allow families easy and timely access to services and provide a sharper focus on eradicating child poverty. This approach to family centric service provision links strongly with the work of the Neighbourhood Management Board in the priority one areas.

As an authority we have been charged with the duty of working to eradicate¹⁸ child poverty and we direct this challenge to all our partners.

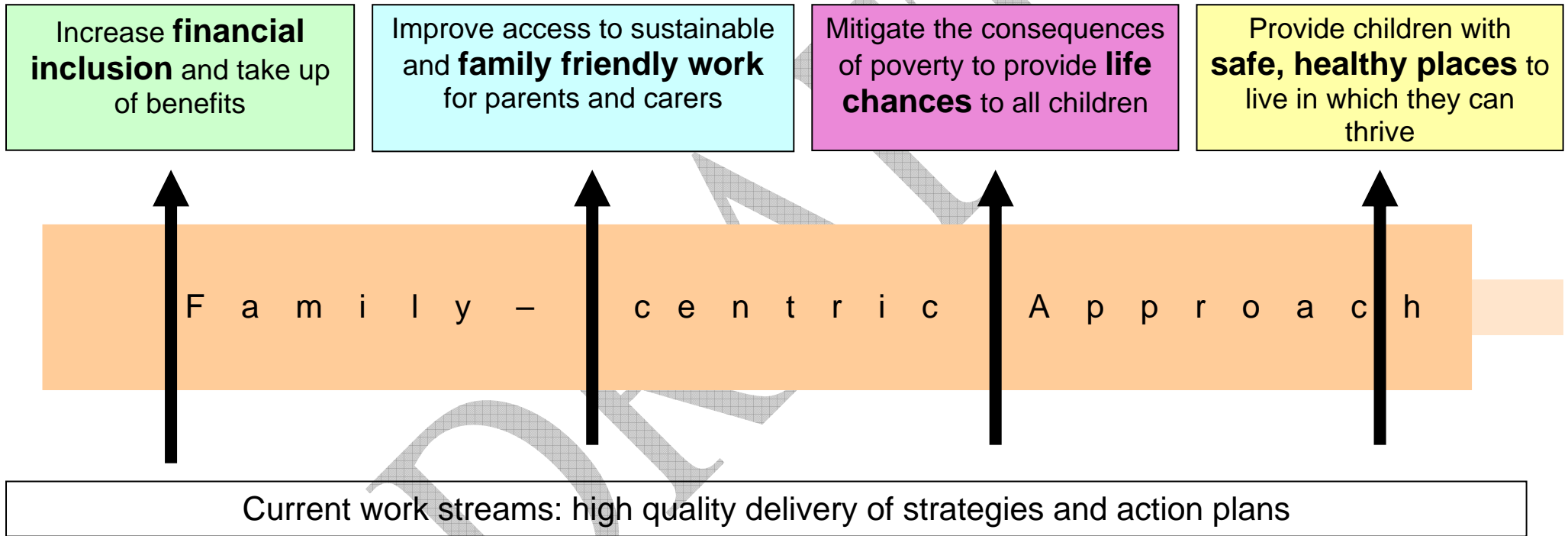
¹⁶ Support for All; the Families and Relationships Green Paper, a DCSF publication, January 2010

¹⁷ In keeping with the recommendations of the Child Poverty Scrutiny Review, April 2007

¹⁸ The Child Poverty Bill defines the eradication of poverty as less than 10%

6.2 An overview of the Stockport Child Poverty strategy

The current priorities and work streams of the Stockport Partnership are working to address many of the issues that impact upon the Child Poverty Agenda and to improve outcomes for Stockport residents.



6.2.1 Summary of Stockport Strategies that currently contribute to the policy building blocks

There is currently a wealth of work aiming to reduce the level of poverty within the borough and mitigate its effects across the Stockport Partnership. This work is enshrined in the following key strategies:

	FAMILY-FRIENDLY WORK	FINANCIAL SUPPORT	LIFE CHANCES	PLACE
The Stockport Strategy 2020				
The Council Plan 2009-12				
Neighbourhood Renewal Strategy				
Economic Development Strategy 2002-12				
Stockport Council Workforce Development Strategy				
Sustainable Travel Plan 2007-2010				
Adult Education, Employment and Skills Strategy				
Children and Young People’s Strategic Plan 2009-11				
Teenage Pregnancy Strategy				
Children’s Centre Strategy				
SEN and Inclusion Strategy				
Parenting Strategy				
NEET Strategy				
Affordable Warmth strategy				
Stockport Homes Financial Inclusion Strategy 2010/2011				
Family Info Link Strategy				
Childcare Sufficiency Assessment				
Youth Offending Strategy				

Play Strategy				
Benefit Take up Strategy				
Healthy Child Programme				

6.2.2 Links to the Neighbourhood Management Approach

The Stockport Child Poverty Strategy is strongly connected with the work and approach of the Neighbourhood Management Board in delivering the Neighbourhood Renewal Strategies in the priority areas. The Neighbourhood Management approach is locality based with each priority area’s Neighbourhood Renewal Strategy being delivered by a multi agency team. This approach is being piloted in Brinnington Estate as an integrated neighbourhood delivery pilot and will be rolled out across the other priority areas in due time. The Neighbourhood Management Board has recognised that there are many families in the Priority 1 areas who experience a range of issues and who have a number of services intervening on their behalf and thus has decided to take a family focussed approach to delivering the Neighbourhood Renewal Strategy and to explore a joined up approach of service delivery for the most vulnerable families who have a number of needs.

6.3 Key Areas of Work

6.3.1 Through joint working the Stockport Partnership will seek to tackle the causes and effects of child poverty. This document outlines the overall strategic direction and long term vision for tackling child poverty in Stockport and mitigating its effects, with a view to developing a dedicated action plan at a later date following full consultation to agree the vision and priorities.

6.3.2 The strategy focuses on the following key areas of work developed by the Child Poverty Strategy Group and informed by national drivers and research

- Increasing **financial inclusion** and take up of benefits- through services that are responsive to the needs of the family
- Improving access to sustainable and **family friendly work** for parents and carers- so that more parents can access paid work and have sufficient support to progress within it
- Mitigating the consequences of poverty to provide **life chances** to all children- to ensure that poverty in childhood does not translate to poor outcomes in adulthood
- Providing children with **safe and healthy places** to live in which they can thrive- helping communities to help themselves

6.4 Local Case Studies

The following case studies demonstrate the work currently contributing to each of the policy building blocks.

6.4.1 Increasing financial inclusion and take up of benefits amongst families

At present families do not always take up the benefits to which they are entitled, either due to a lack of information or unwillingness to engage with the benefits system.¹⁹ The Child Poverty Unit has estimated that if all families in the UK were claiming their correct benefits then 400,000 children would be lifted out of poverty immediately. Where the parents are not able to work sustainable, affordable financial support which is responsive to families' needs and changing circumstances is vital to lift children out of poverty. Tackling debt and financial exclusion is also fundamental as debt and lack of savings can exacerbate the experiences of low-income families and makes families more vulnerable to sudden income shocks, such as losing a job, and more likely to experience low standards of living.

Nationally:

In the last ten years, financial exclusion has emerged as a policy concern in the context of a wider agenda around social exclusion. The Government has set out its strategy to tackle financial exclusion in *Financial Inclusion: An Action Plan for 2008–11* (HM Treasury, 2007) which outlined the Government's plans to encourage savings through the Child Trust Fund as well as promoting access to bank accounts for the households of children living in poverty. A new Government produced guide to benefits and tax credits will help local practitioners who work directly with families to advise parents of what support is on offer, who is eligible for it and how they go about claiming.²⁰

Locally:

Stockport has a variety of advice services including Citizens Advice Bureaus, Stockport Direct Advice Centres, Debt Advice Services, Welfare Rights Services and Stockport Homes Financial Inclusion Advice, all of which aim to aid people to claim their full entitlements and provide impartial financial advice. The Stockport Take Up Partnership works to raise awareness of entitlement to benefits amongst vulnerable groups of people in Stockport, and help them to claim those benefits. The group runs targeted take-up campaigns and produces user friendly leaflets for families and staff that work on the front line. The partnership has strong links with Stockport Community Advice and Information Network (SCAIN), a network of providers of advice, advocacy and information on

¹⁹ Ending Child Poverty, mapping the route to 2020, p, 25

²⁰ Ending Child Poverty, mapping the route to 2020, p, 26

social welfare matters and family law, in the provision of quality assured services, which are accessible to local communities in Stockport. There is also an active Credit Union encouraging families to save and preventing the use of illegal money lenders.

Case Study 1- Stockport Direct Local Centre

Mr X called into the Stockport *Direct* Local Centre at Cheadle Hulme seeking advice about a housing problem. He and his pregnant wife and young child were living in private accommodation but their flat was damp and their landlord was refusing to act on the problem. The Direct Centre Advisor began by advising him of his options around applying for re-housing through Stockport Homes or another housing association and also told him about the Council's Housing Standards' team, who might be able to help get the landlord to fix the damp.

Through the rest of their discussion a number of other problems emerged. Mr X was self employed and having a particularly difficult time in the recession and were struggling to live off his wife's Maternity Allowance of £123 per week plus child benefit. The family had no money to credit the fuel payment meters and had arrears of Council Tax. The adviser carried out an in depth assessment of the family circumstances and ascertained that they were eligible for considerable extra weekly income. The family's circumstance had changed radically since their last assessment for benefits meaning they were now entitled to an extra **£251 per week**. In addition to this the adviser also informed Mr X that his wife would be eligible for a Sure Start Maternity Grant and Pregnancy Grant & Healthy Start vouchers. Mr X returned to the Centre with his wife and this claim resulted in an additional £620!

Case Study 2- Tackling Illegal Money lending

Many bad debtors who urgently need money will borrow money from illegal money lenders. A £500 illegal 'loan' can soon become an unlawful debt of over £5000 with no end in sight for the debtor. The threat of violence should the payments not be met compounds the aura of fear that keeps people paying and prevents them from going to the authorities. This constant worry around making payment causes huge stress on family life and has been known to split apart families.

From September 2009 to March 2010 the Stockport East Neighbourhood Police, working in conjunction with local trading standards officers and the National Illegal Money Lending Team, has executed fourteen search warrants in connection with illegal money lending. Alongside the enforcement activity the police, trading standards and community organisations have been promoting the use of credit unions as an alternative to going to the loan sharks. Inspector O'Brien, with the Stockport East Neighbourhood Police team feels that "Enforcement on it's own will only achieve so much, the culture in some areas has to change so that communities feel supported and have access to the advice and services they need which will prevent them going to the sharks in the first place. While our investigations into the loan sharks are still in their early stages, it's this that will ultimately stop this kind of offence."

6.4.2 Improving access to sustainable and family friendly work for parents and carers

Paid employment is the single most important factor in reducing the risk of poverty. Work is associated with better family and childhood outcomes more broadly. Employment is associated with better physical and mental health and improved well-being for parents. It can foster a sense of self-confidence and self esteem. On average, children in workless families experience poorer health and do worse at school than those in working families.²¹

Nationally

Parliament has recently enacted the Welfare Reform Act that became law on 12 November 2009. This contains reforms to the welfare and benefit system intended to improve support and incentives for people to move from benefits into work. In terms of helping people into work, The Act:

- reforms the benefits system by abolishing Income Support and moving all claimants on to either Jobseeker's Allowance if they are well or Employment and Support Allowance if they are sick
- aligns the contribution conditions between Employment and Support Allowance and Jobseeker's Allowance
- introduces a regime of benefit sanctions for non-attendance at Jobcentres
- requires job search by partners of benefit claimants
- introduces work-focused interviews for over-60s
- requires work-related activity in return for receipt of Employment and Support Allowance

The overall impact, irrespective of benefits received, is of greater support for all to return to work, where possible, with the emphasis on "*what people can do, not what they can't*". In return there is a greater conditionality in terms of undertaking activity to move towards employment in return for receiving benefits.

Locally, and sub-regionally

Stockport is increasingly becoming involved in strategies and initiatives to tackle worklessness and skills development, both in terms of nationally procured programmes, as well as locally funded activity, including the development of a Stockport Adult Education, Skills and Employment Strategy. Access to affordable childcare is of course a key requirement, supported by the development of Stockport's Children Centres, and support organisations such as Family Info Link. Greater Manchester also has greater devolved powers from Government (within City Region pilot) in order to set its own Employment & Skills Strategy and deliver initiatives to meet needs.

²¹ Ending Child Matters 2020, March 2010, p.17

Case Study 3 - Jobcentre Plus Lone Parents Outreach Service

Jobcentre Plus has a clear role to play in supporting parents into employment and the weekly outreach service which is delivered in the Brinnington Ward is an example of what is happening in priority neighbourhoods. A Jobcentre Plus Adviser is based at First House, Brinnington every Wednesday and undertakes prearranged Work Focused Interviews for Lone Parent customers. She is also able to see drop in customers and offers advice across the range of Jobcentre plus services. The Adviser can undertake a detailed search of local job vacancies and provide parents with help in getting back to work, including advice on their childcare options and the assistance available with this cost.

Information on the other financial support that is available once they have secured employment, along with personalised 'better off in work' calculations is also on offer. This outreach facility was established several years ago and has always been extremely well supported by parents in the Brinnington area, who would otherwise struggle to get to their local Jobcentre Plus office with young children.

Case Study 4 – Access to affordable childcare

The brokerage service enables Family Info Link, Stockport Family Information Service, to be proactive in helping parents where lack of access to childcare or early years provision can be a barrier to returning to education or employment. The service is available to any individual who needs it and is also targeted at more vulnerable families through partnership work with a range of other agencies Family info Link contact the family to discuss options and the type of childcare that best meets their needs and connects them to providers. If families request it Family info Link will visit them at home and accompany them when visiting providers, or arrange for their support worker to do so. This level of support builds the confidence of families who, in many cases, have not used formal childcare before and sets a foundation for their continued use of childcare, enabling them to take advantage of personal, social and educational support available to them

One example of the service in use is to help secure childcare for families referred by Stockport Homes who needed to attend a jobseekers course on the following day.

6.4.3 Improving life chances today in order to prevent poverty tomorrow

Over the long term, preventing early disadvantage and giving all children the chance to fulfil their potential will be key to a sustainable eradication of child poverty. Inequalities begin at the earliest stages of life and accumulate at each subsequent phase of the life course and whilst interventions later in life are still critical they are far less effective without early underpinnings. Tackling poverty and economic inequality will bring rewards for reducing other life inequalities too such as poor health and low life expectancy as well as helping to achieve the wider Every Child Matters outcomes. It will also work to break the cycles of poverty as young people are most likely to move on to positive labour market outcomes if they have done well in education or training.²²

Nationally:

The government agenda around improving life chances was encapsulated in the Childcare Act 2006, the focus of which was firmly around early intervention and prevention services based upon the evidence that the biggest gains are in interventions for young children, particularly around health, educational and social development. The Act introduced the Early Years Foundation Stage as a priority focus for service providers and local partnerships and much of the national investment in this area has been channelled into the Sure Start Programme. There has also been a move towards service provision ‘thinking family’, to ensure that all services are joined up around the needs of the whole family and take into account family circumstance.

Locally

There are now 19 Sure Start Children's Centres across Stockport, covering every area of the borough. These are at different stages of development but all are operational at some level, with the majority offering an increasing range of services to families. These Children's Centres provide easy access to a range of community health services, parenting and family support, integrated early education and childcare, and links to training and employment opportunities for families with children under the age of five, or who are expecting a child. Children's Centres are a key mechanism for improving outcomes for young children, while reducing inequalities between the poorest children and their peers, as well as helping bring an end to child poverty.

²² 2020, p.31

Case Study 5- Yellow School Buses

Yellow School Buses help to make sure that pupils are on time for school and that they're well behaved on the journey. They also mean that parents don't need to do the school run which in turn helps to reduce congestion and is better for the environment. Routes are designed to serve pupils with pick-up and drop-off points near their homes and each route has the same CRB-checked and specially-trained driver every day.

As of November 2009, a yellow bus operates to take pupils to Reddish Vale Technology College service from the Brinnington Estate. This area has a high Indices of Multiple Deprivation score; this would normally mean a lower than average levels of attendance at school however Reddish Vale currently has an attendance level of 92% from the Brinnington area. Therefore introduction of the Yellow School Bus service has the potential to increase this attendance level even higher especially where walking routes or current bus services are unattractive.

There are also Yellow School Bus services in operation in Stockport which take children from to Harrytown High School from Heavily and Brinnington, to Werneth School from Brinnington, and to St. Anne's RC High School from Reddish.

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6.4.4 Providing children with safe and healthy places to live in which they can thrive

The area in which children grow up affects their life chances and their parents' prospects for gaining secure sustained employment. Those living in the most deprived areas tend to have significantly poorer levels of educational achievement as well as employment levels and general wealth. In addition to this those families living within more deprived areas can face additional barriers to accessing services and job opportunities, such as poor transport connections and more limited networks.

Nationally:

In 2001 the Government set out a national strategy which outlined a commitment to improving the unacceptably bad conditions in some of the poorest neighbourhoods in the country. *A New Commitment to Neighbourhood Renewal* set out the principle that no one should be subject to disadvantage because of where they live. The strategy focused on area based partnership working to tackle the root causes of deprivation with particular emphasis on employment and community cohesion. The Neighbourhood Renewal Agenda set out two long term goals which local partnerships are now working towards, namely to reduce worklessness and crime in all the poorest neighbourhoods and to narrow the gap on these measures between the most deprived neighbourhoods and the rest of the country

Locally

As part of Stockport Council, the Neighbourhood Renewal team works closely with communities to bring about improvements to local services and the environment and support for residents who get involved in the renewal. Currently work is focused in the priority areas Adswold, Bridgehall, Brinnington, Heaton Norris, Lancashire Hill and the Town Centre. There are firm plans to establish Neighbourhood Management Boards in each priority area to create a neighbourhood based multi agency team to effectively deliver each areas local area action plan underpinning the Neighbourhood Renewal strategy. The Neighbourhood management approach has a distinct focus on considering the needs of families in delivering services and aims to effectively join up services wherever possible.

Case Study 6- the Brinnington Masterplan

A key element of Stockport's Neighbourhood Renewal Strategy is that of the production of physical regeneration master plans for the borough's Priority 1 Areas which will identify those aspects of the Priority 1 Areas' physical environment that are in need of regeneration. The master plans will include a vision for what these areas will look like in the future, a visual interpretation of that vision and a strategy for how the regeneration will be undertaken. Although they will be led by physical schemes aimed at improving the built environment and public realm, the master plans will be holistic strategies that will also aim to have a positive influence on the social and economic issues that affect these areas.

The master plans will also provide a framework through which future improvements can be implemented and help identify where there are opportunities for funding. It is envisaged that the master plans, being long term and holistic strategies, will mean that the Council and its partners will be better placed to bid for future social, economic and physical regeneration funding streams.

Brinnington Estate has been identified as the first of the Priority 1 Areas to be considered under for this initiative. Brinnington experiences high levels of deprivation and is ranked in the top 2% most deprived areas for England and Wales. It has not qualified for Neighbourhood Renewal Funding because of the overall affluence of Stockport at a borough-wide level. The recent regeneration of a local shopping area with community facilities and a shared ownership housing scheme, combined with other regeneration work currently being undertaken as part of Stockport Homes Decent Homes programme, has increased optimism in Brinnington. There is now a pressing need to capitalise on this and to continue to regenerate the area via a comprehensive strategy that will continue bring about benefits for the whole community.

Brinnington Master Plan is now in the latter stages of its development having been through a public and stakeholder consultation process last year and its principle aims are to:

- Develop a clear vision for the physical regeneration of Brinnington, including opportunities, for new development which has the support of the local community and key stakeholders;
- Provide a clear way forward to facilitate the sustainable and high quality regeneration of Brinnington.
- Prepare a robust delivery strategy with projects that can be phased and realised within the overall vision.

7. Our Priorities

The priorities for the Stockport Child Poverty Strategy have been developed based upon identified gaps and the child poverty needs assessment.

1. We will adopt a family centric focus in all that we do

Proposed Actions

- Ask the question ‘how does this incorporate the needs of the family?’ of all we do
- Seek customer participation in evaluating and the commissioning of services

2. We will increase financial inclusion and take up of benefits amongst families

Proposed Actions

- Ensure that all residents can access help and impartial advice to help themselves out of debt
- Increase the take up of benefits amongst families
- Make financial capability learning opportunities readily available to educate families and children in the practicalities of budget management
- Maximise the take up of Care to Learn amongst young parents

3. We will improve access to sustainable and family friendly work for parents and carers

Proposed Actions

- Champion flexible working arrangements and act as a beacon for family friendly work to other employers within the borough
- Support parents and carers in the return to work
- Ensure that there is sufficient childcare for low income families

4. We will improve life chances today in order to prevent poverty tomorrow

Proposed Actions

- improve the provision of services for 10-14 year olds who have been identified as a high risk group for becoming disengaged, to ensure that they remain engaged in education or training to support future employment and avoid common risks
- Narrow the attainment gap for children in poverty
- Work towards strong service integration and early intervention

5. We will provide children with safe and healthy places to live in which they can thrive

Proposed Actions

- Improve the condition of social housing
- Tackle fuel poverty to ensure our children have warm homes
- Narrow the income gap between those families living in social housing and those in private accommodation
- Provide safe play facilities for our children
- Focus resources on our priority 1 areas

8. Action Plan

The intention is to ensure sufficient consultation to have our vision and priorities agreed with a view to the action plan being developed after consultation.

9. Arrangements for review and monitoring of the strategy

This strategy will take Stockport to the national 2020 deadline to eradicate child poverty. The Children's trust will be ultimately responsible for the monitoring of the strategy through the governance structures outlined in section 4.3. More detailed arrangements for the monitoring and review of the strategy will be put in place alongside the action plan following the consultation on the aims.

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