

Title: Brighton & Hove Child Poverty Commissioning Strategy 2012-2015

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1. Introduction

This is the first Child Poverty Commissioning Strategy for Brighton & Hove. It is produced in response to the unacceptable level of child poverty in the city – 22% of all children and young people – and the detrimental effect that poverty can have over the full course of their life.

The strategy describes the outcomes we want to achieve through a collective effort between partnerships in the city; from alleviating the impact of poverty on day to day family life, particularly in the harsh current economic climate, to reducing levels of poverty overall and tackling the inequality that it creates.

In 2010-11 a Child Poverty Needs Assessment was undertaken for Brighton & Hove, overseen by the city's Public Service Board. This was a first effort to bring together a full range of evidence around such a broad and far reaching outcome, using the new citywide needs assessment process.

The needs assessment covered individual family circumstances as well as wider economic and social circumstances, and also the interaction of services that are provided to support and influence these. The findings and recommendations of the needs assessment have directly influenced this strategy.

This Child Poverty Commissioning Strategy with the needs assessment meets the statutory requirements placed on the local authority and its partners as laid out in the Child Poverty Act 2010. This initial strategy will form the basis for a final strategy which will go to Council Cabinet in February 2012 followed by the Public Service Board and final sign off with the Local Strategic Partnership in March 2012.

2. Key Findings of the Child Poverty Needs Assessment

Child poverty is defined as children and young people in families living on less than 60% of national median income. This equates to £344 pw for a two parent family with 2 children and £263 pw for a one parent

family with 2 children before housing costs (both figures before housing costs).

The Needs Assessment shows that over the three years from 2007 to 2009 the percentage of children and young people in families living in poverty in Brighton and Hove has remained around 22% of all children. This is in line with the national average but significantly above the regional South East average.

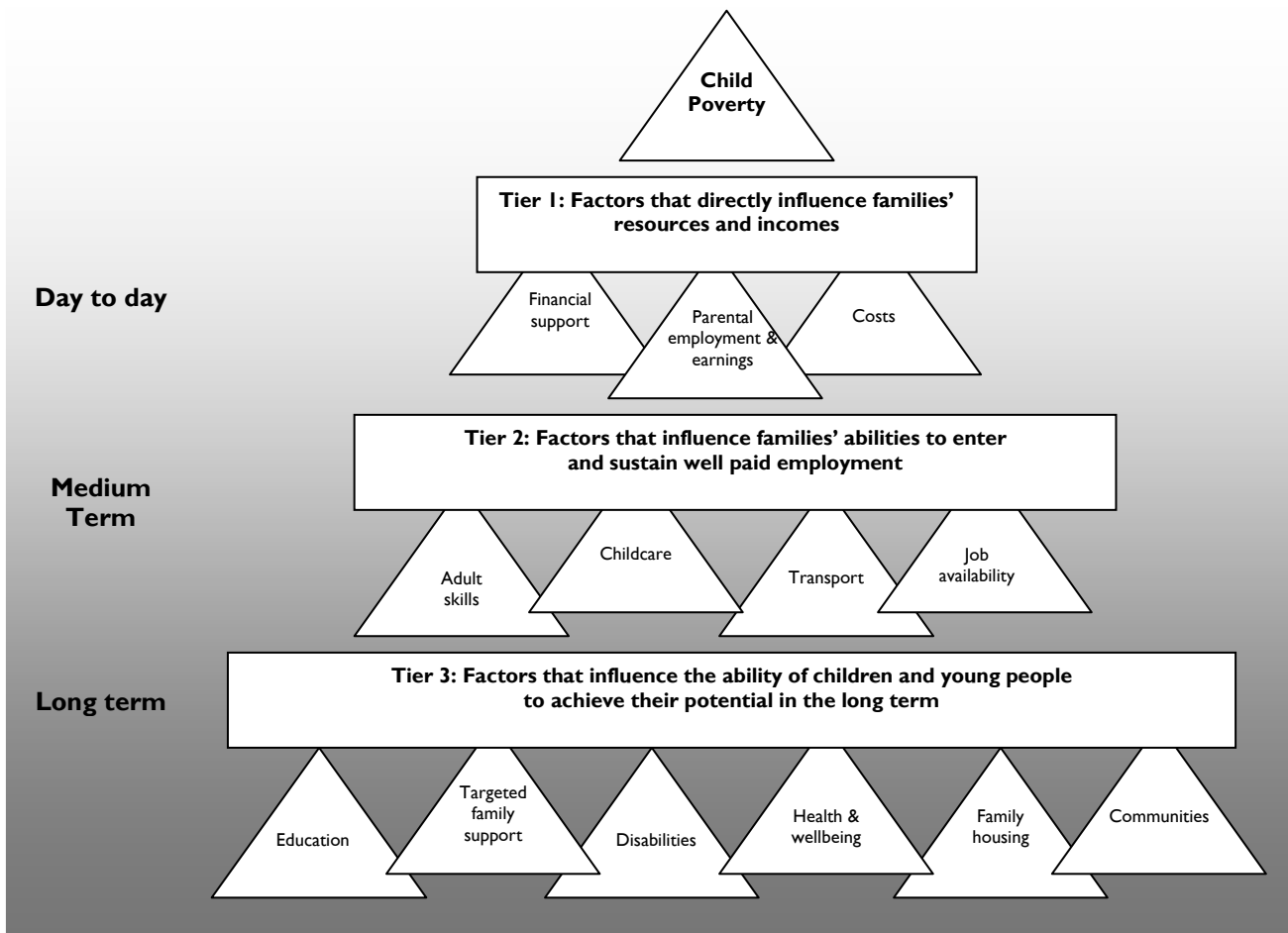
A high percentage of those children live in single parent families, predominantly headed by women, and the majority of all families living in poverty are not in work.

There are wide discrepancies between rates of child poverty across the communities that make up Brighton and Hove. Unsurprisingly some of the deepest pockets of child poverty are in the poorest communities, where just under 50% of all children live in poverty.

It is also clear that families with disabilities and Black and Minority Ethnic families are also more likely to live in the most disadvantaged communities. Single parent families living in poverty are, however, scattered across the City.

The full Brighton & Hove Child Poverty Needs Assessment can be read online at the Brighton & Hove Local Information Service [[link to BHLIS](#)].

The Pyramid below shows the factors that combine to reduce child poverty in three layers from day to day issues through to long term prevention. It is only by working on all layers through the key factors that we can impact upon child poverty over the long term.



3. Conclusions

The Child Poverty Needs Assessment and the Consultation that followed reached the following conclusions:

1. We need immediate measures to provide information, advice and support to families whose incomes are reducing as a result of reductions in a range of benefits
2. We must focus on:
 - Lone parents because this is the majority family type living in poverty
 - Children and families with disabilities because they have a high risk of living in poverty and a greater risk of reduced income as a result of recent benefit changes
 - Families with a complex range of problems because the impact on children's life chances is great as is the cost of intervening to support those families
 - The extent to which Black and Minority Ethnic families are living in disadvantage in Brighton and Hove

- Recognising the importance of and ensuring the capacity of community based organisations because they are:
 - effective and trusted
 - delivered with and for local residents; and
 - act as essential gateways to local and national initiatives and services

A note on families: Families is used here to describe a range of family circumstances including young adults such as care leavers and young carers and it also describes extended families.

4. A Child Poverty Commissioning Strategy for Brighton and Hove - Strategic Outcomes

The following Strategic Outcomes require a systemic approach that addresses the short, medium and long term causes of child poverty.

Timescales for change

The impacts of the objectives outlined here will be felt across a range of timescales from the immediate impact of gaining benefits or managing debts to the long term benefits of young children getting the best possible start in order to better their chances of becoming resilient adults.

Strategic Outcome 1

Four strategic child poverty outcomes provide an overarching theme for the Local Strategic Partnership and reducing child poverty is a Council standard priority for tackling inequality.

Objectives:

- 1.1 Four strategic outcomes for reducing child poverty to be agreed by:

Brighton and Hove City Council	February 2012
Public Service Board	February 2012
Local Strategic Partnership	February 2012

- 1.2 Formation of a Child Poverty Task Group lead by the Council with the responsibility for driving forward actions to mitigate the effects of and reduce child poverty over the short, medium and long term

- 1.3 The Task Group to deliver an annual monitoring report comprising a core set of reducing child poverty measures to the Local Strategic Partnership from April 2012
- 1.4 The Council to introduce a reducing child poverty priority to its Equalities Impact Assessments by April 2012
- 1.5 Ensuring reducing child poverty is a priority within the emerging Health and Well Being Board's strategic plans
- 1.6 Include the Child Poverty Commissioning Plan as a key city commission in the draft commissioning work plan.

Strategic Outcome 2

Families have the resources to enable them to meet their day to day needs and to make positive choices to ensure their family's wellbeing.

Objectives:

- 2.1 More families managing debt through:
 - Easy and timely access to high quality advice services
 - Increased Credit Union membership by families living in poverty
 - Increased number of families living in poverty have basic bank accounts
 - Reduced use by families living in poverty, of high cost credit options
- 2.2 More families taking up benefits through:
 - Targeted take up campaigns using frontline staff across services and organisations to raise awareness with an emphasis on:
 - Working poor families
 - Families eligible for disability benefits
 - Black and Minority Ethnic families living in poverty
- 2.3 Families with reduced income as a result of current welfare policy changes are supported to mitigate further poverty through:
 - Timely prioritised high quality advice and support
 - In this high cost city a specific lobby of Government by the Local Strategic Partnership on the effects of national welfare changes
- 2.4 More families having reduced costs of living through:
 - Increase in affordable family homes in the City
 - Increased internet access to counter the poverty premium
 - Increased access to affordable good quality food

- Decrease in the impact of fuel poverty on families
- Child poverty awareness campaign for schools to reduce school related costs for families
- A review of the relative cost of transport for families living in poverty in outlying disadvantaged communities

Strategic Outcome 3

More parents, carers and young adults living in poverty gain the skills, training and qualifications they need to get decently paid jobs and more families earn, as a minimum, a living wage for Brighton and Hove.

Objectives:

- 3.1 Increased number of parents, carers and young people paid a living wage for Brighton & Hove with the emphasis on:
 - Increased pay levels in job sectors with part time jobs traditionally occupied by women
 - Lone parents gaining employment
 - Parents and carers with disabilities gaining employment

- 3.2 More parents and carers and young adults gaining skills, training and qualifications that will increase their opportunities to get decently paid work with the emphasis on:
 - Improving literacy and numeracy for targeted families through an increased programme of family learning
 - Skills and qualifications for parents and carers tailored to local job sectors

- 3.3 More families living in poverty accessing affordable and accessible childcare through:
 - In this high cost city with higher than average childcare costs, a specific lobby of Government by the Local Strategic Partnership for a rise in the maximum childcare element of the working tax credit to 100% of costs
 - Targeting of current and additional 2 yr old early education places to the most disadvantaged families
 - The Council and East Sussex Credit Union to deliver a childcare deposit scheme
 - Continuation of the Council's At Home Childcare service offering flexible childcare in the home

Strategic Outcome 4

Children and young people grow to adulthood and achieve their potential in safe and nurturing families and communities

Objectives:

- 4.1 More children living in poverty and in areas and communities of disadvantage gain the City average early years foundation stage result
- 4.2 More young people in poverty and in areas and communities of disadvantage gain the City average GCSE's with the emphasis on:
 - Narrowing the gap in achievement of children at risk of or living in poverty
 - Improving the preparedness of the most vulnerable children to enter secondary school
- 4.3 Parents and carers at risk of or living in poverty are supported to improve their resilience and that of their children through:
 - Routine identification within adult services of families living in poverty and at risk of poverty and targeting of services to them with emphasis on:
 - Adult mental health
 - Drug and alcohol misuse
 - Intergenerational poor families
- 4.4 To support capacity building in the community and voluntary sector to provide advice, information and support to lone parents across the City
- 4.5 Expansion of proven project work which builds parent networks of support such as the Families and Schools Together (FAST) programme
- 4.6 Delivery of the Supporting Families in Multiple Disadvantage commission
- 4.7 Continued delivery of health promotion and sports promotion services for children, young people and their families
- 4.8 Children and young people are valued participants in their family, their school, their community, and their city through:
 - A comprehensive programme of youth participation in community and City wide decision making
 - Undertaking a review of the affordability of transport for children and young people in the City

- Investigating the feasibility of a youth participation card scheme to enable disadvantaged young people to access the cultural and social life of the City

Child Poverty Commissioning Plan 2012-2015

Outcome 1 - Four strategic child poverty outcomes provide an overarching theme for the Local Strategic Partnership and reducing child poverty is a Council standard priority for tackling inequality	Responsibility	Strategies/Plans	By When
Objectives			
1.1 Four strategic outcomes for reducing child poverty to be agreed by:	B&H Council Public Service Board Local strategic Partnership	Child Poverty Commissioning Strategy 2012-15	Feb 2012 Mar 2012 Apr 2012
1.2 Formation of a Child Poverty Task Group lead by the Council with the responsibility for driving forward actions to mitigate the effects of and reduce child poverty over the short, medium and long term	B&H Council – Strategic director for People	“	Apr 2012
1.3 The Task Group to deliver an annual monitoring report comprising a core set of reducing child poverty measures to the Local Strategic Partnership from April 2012	Child Poverty Task Group	“	Annually from May 2012
1.4 The Council to introduce a reducing child poverty priority to its Equalities Impact Assessments by April 2012	B&H Council	“	Apr 2012
1.5 Ensuring reducing child poverty is a priority within the emerging Health and Well Being Board's strategic plans	Health and Well Being Board/Task Group	Joint Health & Well Being Strategy	
1.6 Include the Child Poverty Commissioning Plan as a key city commission in the draft commissioning work plan.	B&H Strategic director for Place	Child Poverty Commissioning Strategy 2012-15	Feb 2012

Strategic Outcome 2 - Families have the resources to enable them to meet their day to day needs and to make positive choices to ensure their family's wellbeing	Responsibility	Strategies/Plans	By When
Objectives			
2.1 More families managing debt	B&H Advice Partnership B&H Council East Sussex Credit Union	B&H Council Corporate Plan 11-15 Chapter 8 Sustainable Communities Strategy 2009	Oct 2012 onwards
2.2 More families taking up benefits	B&H Council Children and Families Unit Advice Partnership	"	Oct 2012 onwards
2.3 Families with reduced income as a result of current welfare policy changes are supported to mitigate further poverty	Advice partnership B&H Council LSP - Lobbying	"	Oct 2012 onwards
2.4 More families having reduced costs of living	B&H Council B&H Housing Partnership Schools Brighton & Hove Food Partnership	Food Strategy Housing Strategy 2008-13 Transport Plan	April 2013

Strategic Outcome 3 - More parents, carers and young adults living in poverty gain the skills, training and qualifications they need to get decently paid jobs and more families earn, as a minimum, a living wage for Brighton and Hove	Responsibility	Strategies/Plans	By When
Objectives			
3.1 Increased number of parents, carers and young people paid a living wage for Brighton & Hove	B&H Council Living wage Commission	B& H Council Corporate Plan 11-15	
3.2 More parents and carers and young adults gaining skills, training and qualifications that will increase their opportunities to get decently paid work	B& H Council – Family Learning City Employment and Skills Group B&H Economic Partnership 14-19 Partnership City Sustainability Partnership	City Employment and Skills Plan (2011 refresh) Economic Strategy 2008-16	
3.3 More families living in poverty accessing affordable and accessible childcare	Brighton & Hove Council Lobby role Children and Families Unit East Sussex Credit Union	B&H Council Corporate Plan 11-15 Children and Young People's Plan	April 2013 Onward s (2 yr old places)

Strategic Outcome 4 - Children and young people grow to adulthood and achieve their potential in safe and nurturing families and communities	Responsibility	Strategies/Plans	By When
Objectives			
4.1 More children living in poverty and in areas and communities of disadvantage gain the City average early years foundation stage result	Brighton and Hove Council Early Education Providers	“	Nov 2012 Annual increase thereafter
4.2 More young people in poverty and in areas and communities of disadvantage gain the City average GCSE's	Brighton & Hove Council- Education Commission Schools	“	Nov 2012 Annual increase thereafter
4.3 Parents and carers at risk of or living in poverty are supported to improve their resilience and that of their children	B&H Council Health Promotion Health and Wellbeing Board	Health Inequalities Strategy Alcohol Harm Reduction Strategy Domestic Violence	
4.4 To support capacity building in the community and voluntary sector to provide advice, information and support to lone parents across the City	B&H Council Advice Partnership CVSF City Inclusion Partnership	Child Poverty Commissioning Strategy	April 2012 onwards
4.5 Expansion of proven project work which builds parent networks of support such as the Families and Schools Together (FAST) programme	B&H Council – Children and Families Schools	Community Safety Crime Reduction & Drugs Strategy 8-11 (await refresh)	
4.6 Reference to overarching objective of the Supporting Families in Multiple Disadvantage commission when the brief is clarified	B&H Council	Children and Young People's Plan	TBC
4.7 Ensuring continuity of targeted health promotion services for children,	B&H Council	Health	TBC

<p>young people and their families (further detail on sports promotion/ development and play for children and young people)</p>	<p>Healthy City Partnership Health Promotion Health & Wellbeing Board Schools City Sports Forum</p>	<p>Inequalities Strategy Active Living Strategy 2006-12 City Sports Strategy and Action Plan 2006 - 12</p>	
<p>4.8 Children and young people are valued participants in their family, their school, their community, and their city</p>	<p>B&H Council CVS Youth Services Stronger Communities Partnership Transport Partnership Arts Commission City Inclusion Partnership Crime and Disorder Reduction Partnership</p>	<p>Youth Services Review Local Transport Plan</p>	

Child Poverty Accountability Diagram

Dialogue with:

Young people and parent's consultative panel

Public Service Board

Strategic Leadership Board (Brighton & Hove City Council)

Child Poverty Task Group

Meets every 6 months

Role of Task Group:

- Establish baseline monitoring and 6 monthly reporting
- Read across commissioning activity (City Commission Plan) identify gaps and recommending additional commissioning
- Oversee degree to which thematic partnership are contributing to the reducing child poverty

Chair of Task Group: Terry Parkin

Membership:

- City Employment & Skills Steering Group
- Major Providers Group
- Lead Commissioner Housing
- Senior Commissioner for Health Prevention
- Lead Commissioner for Young People
- Advice Partnership
- Lead Commissioner Families in multiple disadvantage
- Head of Partnerships (local Strategic Partnership liaison)

Reports to:

Local Strategic Partnership

Relevant BHCC committees inc .Overview & Scrutiny Committee

Children & Young People's Trust Board/Health & Wellbeing Board

Child Poverty Strategic Outcome 1:

We will make reducing child poverty an overarching theme for the Local Strategic Partnership and a Council standard priority for tackling inequality

Child Poverty Strategic Outcome 2:

Families have enough money to enable them to meet their day to day needs and to make positive choices to ensure their family's wellbeing

Child Poverty Strategic Outcome 3:

More parents, carers and young adults living in poverty gain the skills, training and qualifications they need to get decently paid jobs and more families earn, as a minimum, a living wage for Brighton & Hove

Child Poverty Strategic Outcome 4:

Children and young people grow to adulthood and achieve their potential in safe and nurturing families and communities

Thematic Partnership work programmes