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| Title of Report: | Scrutiny of Deprivation and Family Poverty in West Berkshire |
| Report to be considered by: | Healthier Select Committee |
| Date of Meeting: | 12 October 2010 |
| Forward Plan Ref: | |

Purpose of Report: To receive a briefing from Julia Waldman (WBC Service Manager) on the Family Poverty Strategy for West Berkshire and to consider what scrutiny is required by this Committee.

Recommended Action: To consider the briefing and determine the scope of scrutiny of this issue.

Reason for decision to be taken: The issue of deprivation and family poverty is a priority for the Committee as listed within the Select Committee's agreed work programme.

Other options considered:

Key background documentation:

| Portfolio Member Details | |
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| Contact Officer Details | |
|-------------------------|---|
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Executive Summary

1. Introduction

- 1.1 The report provides an overview of the Child Poverty Act 2010, its requirements and the local response to meeting the duties outlined in the Act. This report gives an overview of risk factors related to child poverty and provides a local snapshot of deprivation that co-exists within an affluent District.

2. Proposals

- 2.1 This paper starts the discussion of the issue of deprivation and family poverty using data extrapolated from the tools available.
- 2.2 Child poverty needs assessment process will also be explained in order to allow Healthier Select Committee Members to understand how to engage with the process without duplicating the work which is underway.

3. Conclusions

- 3.1 Members are asked to give consideration to the facts presented in the briefing paper which will be supported by an officer presentation on the night. This will help determine what issues should be scrutinised by the Healthier Select Committee.

Executive Report

1. Introduction to the Child Poverty Act 2010

1.1 The government extended its commitment to ending child poverty through the provision of the Child Poverty Act 2010. The Coalition Government has confirmed its commitment to eradicating child poverty. The Act sets out our statutory duties to:

- *Cooperate*: to put in place arrangements to work with partner authorities named in the Act. These partner authorities are expected to cooperate with the local authority in these arrangements;
- *Conduct a local child poverty needs assessment*: to understand the characteristics of poor families in their area, and the key drivers of poverty that must be addressed; and
- *Develop and deliver a strategy*: to create a joint local strategy for reducing child poverty, which must set out the contribution that each partner authority will make and must address the issues raised in the needs assessment.

1.2 There is a need for the involvement of a wide range of partners and the Local Strategic Partnership. Named partners include:

- Any district council which is not a responsible local authority;
- A police authority;
- A chief officer of police;
- An Integrated Transport Authority for an integrated transport area in England;
- A Strategic Health Authority;
- A Primary Care Trust;
- A youth offending team established under section 39 of the Crime and Disorder Act 1998

1.3 The Act uses four measures of poverty to establish targets to be met by 2020:

- *Relative poverty* – to reduce the proportion of children who live in relative low income (in families with income below 60 per cent of the median) to less than ten per cent;
- *Combined low income and material deprivation* – to reduce the proportion of children who live in material deprivation and have a low income to less than 5 per cent;
- *Persistent Poverty* – to reduce the proportion of children that experience long periods of relative poverty, with the specific target to be set at a later date and;
- *Absolute poverty* – to reduce the proportion of children who live in absolute low income to less than 5 per cent

(DCSF, Draft Statutory Guidance, 2010)

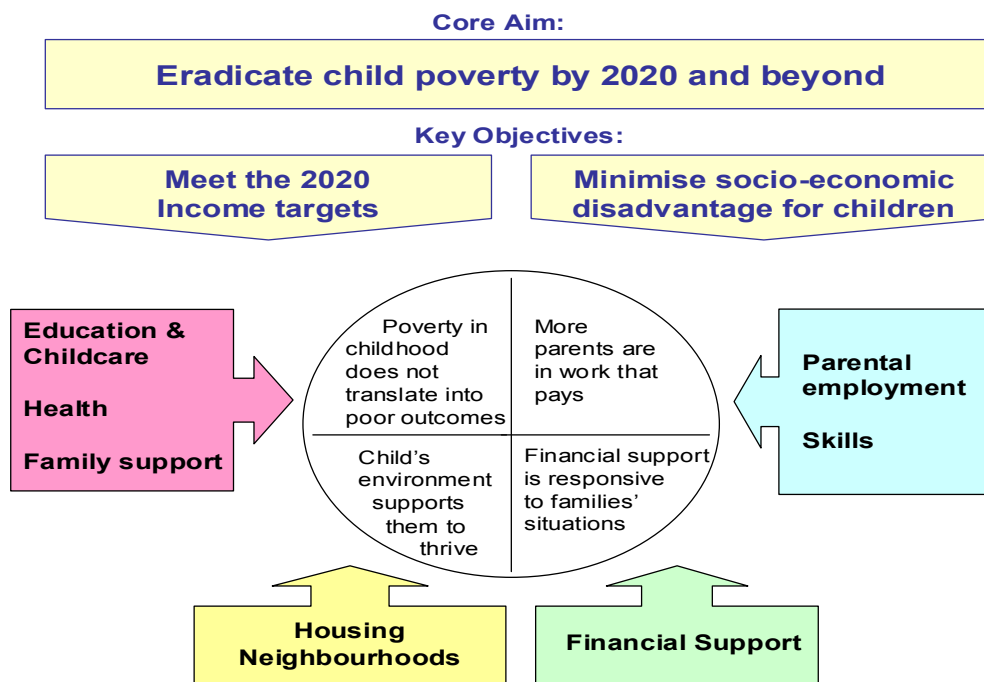
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1.4 The Act promotes four foundation stones for action:

- Place
- Improving Life chances
- Parental employment and skills
- Financial support

1.5 These are expanded in the next diagram (see Figure 1 below):

Figure 1: Key aspects of the work to do on meeting the requirements of the Act



1.6 Locally the child poverty strategy is being developed through the Prevention and Early Intervention Steering Group, a sub-group of the West Berkshire Children and Young People's Trust with time-limited co-opted membership to include a broader range of partners.

2. Our children at risk

2.1 The following children are at greatest risk of being poor:

- Children of lone-parent families
- Children in large families (more than three children)
- Children growing up in households where there is no-one in full-time employment
- Children from families of some minority ethnic groups
- Children in households with a disabled child or adult

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2.2 Growing up in poverty is associated with poor outcomes whereby poorer children are:

- More likely to be born early and have a lower birth weight
- Fifteen times more likely to die in a fire at home
- Five times more likely to die in an accident
- Three times more likely to be hit by a car
- Ten times more likely to become a teenage mother
- More likely to have higher levels of obesity
- Less likely to stay on at school
- More likely to have fewer qualifications especially children looked after by Local Authorities

(Tackling Child Poverty, End Child Poverty Network Cymru and Children in Wales, 2006:6)

2.3 These factors show a clear link between being poor in childhood and health risks in the short term. The evidence for predictive long term health implications is also strong, for example related to:

- Cardio-vascular disease
- Impaired Respiratory function
- Certain forms of cancer
- Presence of limiting lifelong illness
- Adult mental ill health

2.4 Ill health may be compounded by multiple-risk factors being present, for example poverty, obesity and poor housing conditions. (Source: Child Poverty and Adult Health, End Child Poverty, 2008).

3. West Berkshire deprivation snapshot

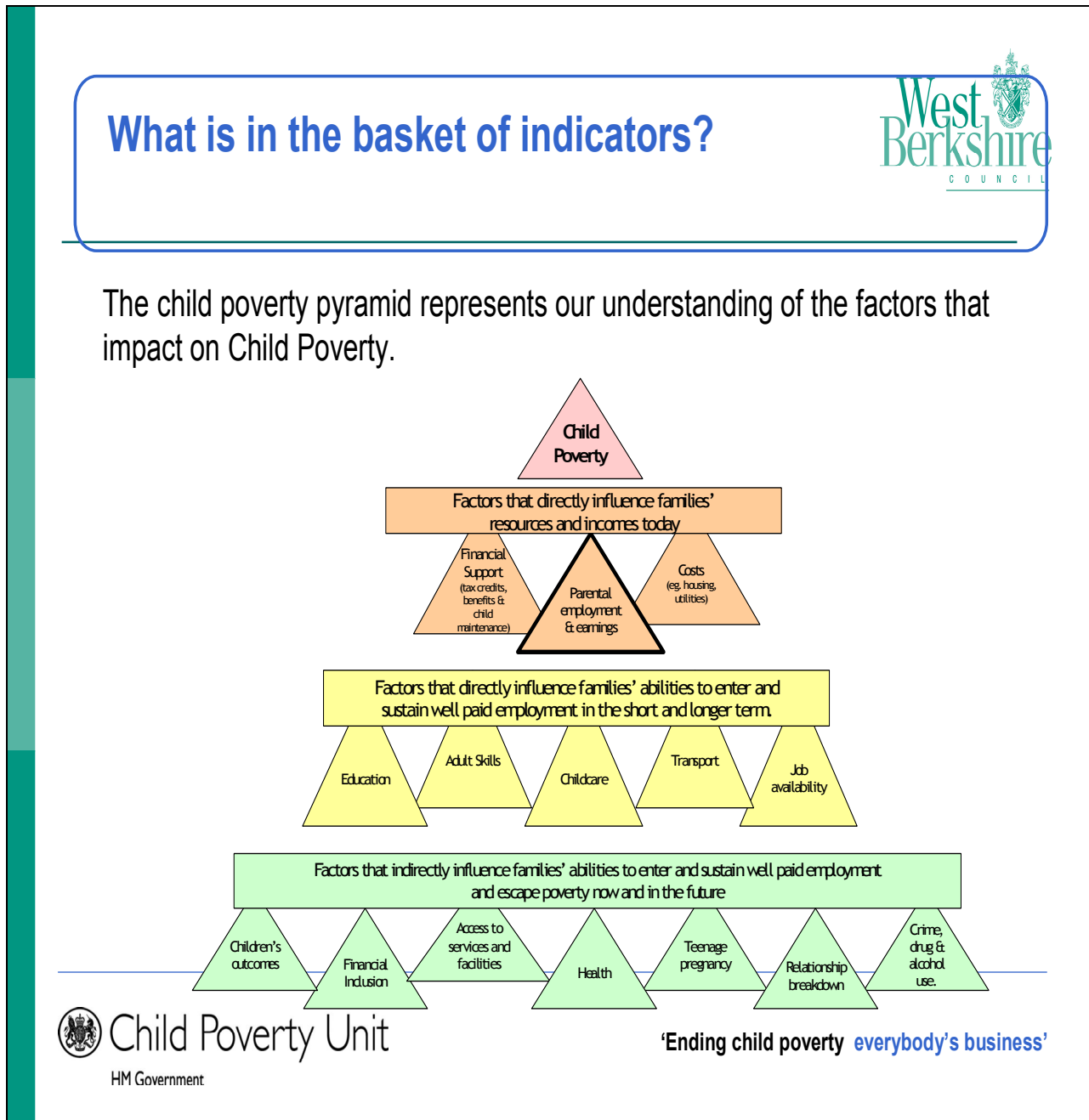
3.1 To give an indication of the levels of deprivation within West Berkshire evidence the District Profile 'People and Place' has shown that:

- West Berkshire is considered the 24th least deprived district in England.
- The only domain within the Indices of Multiple Deprivation which is relatively weak is 'barriers to housing and access to services'.
- Geographical differences in deprivation exist within and across wards - Areas ranked as being more deprived overall largely clustered around Newbury with other areas in Lambourn, Thatcham North and Calcot.
- The Nightingales estate in Greenham is ranked as the most deprived area in West Berkshire. In relation to the rest of England, this area is ranked 8,187 out of 32,482 areas across England.
- Child Well Being Index (2009) shows 10 Super Output Areas (SOAs) that are overall ranked below the 50th percentile nationally and West Berkshire as 34 out of 354 ranked authorities.

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- 3.2 Using the Income Deprivation Affecting Children Index Combined Score (2007) West Berkshire scored 8.19, compared to 19.3 for Reading and 46.1 for Hackney. West Berkshire District was ranked 4th out of 142 authorities in England on this measure according to Centre for Excellence and Outcomes (C4EO) figures.
- 4. Tools to develop a more detailed needs assessment related to deprivation, health inequalities and family and community poverty**
- 4.1 A number of methodologies, tools and activities have been developed to support a needs assessment that enables us to scrutinise our data more closely from both a *place-based* (at different levels from Authority to Lower Layer Super Output Area) and *people-based* perspective. Both are important to build a sufficient picture of the prevalence of deprivation and its causes as well as informing solutions, however processing of and understanding the data through a multi-layered approach can be complex.
- 4.2 The Government Office for the South East at its final meeting of the Regional Child Poverty Network on October 8th will be presenting the Child Poverty Unit's new Needs Assessment Tool. The Child Poverty Unit's basket of indicators for understanding the impact of child poverty provides useful ways of clustering data (see Figure 2 below).
- 4.3 Action with Communities in Rural England's (ACRE) "Evidencing Rural Need Tool" is another tool developed with the Oxford Consultants for Social Inclusion (OCSI) and which has recently been promoted by the Community Council for Berkshire.
- 4.4 The Joint Strategic Needs Assessment as the Committee has identified, provides insight into data on health inequalities.
- 4.5 The Centre for Excellence and Outcomes (C4EO) has an interactive data tool that provides maps and area profiles. We have accessed free support from a Sector Specialist from C4EO to support our child poverty needs assessment activity. The first draft is being presented at the next West Berkshire Steering Group meeting on 6th October.

Figure 2: Child Poverty Unit Basket of Indicators



5. Recommendations

- 5.1 It is RECOMMENDED that Members receive the briefing and consider the scope of future scrutiny activity on this topic.

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Appendices

None

Consultees

A rolling series of engagement activities is in progress.

Workshop at the annual Local Strategic Partnership conference

A Stakeholder Consultation event was held in July to which approx 30 people attended from a range of partner agencies

Parent consultation to inform a Parent Participation Framework has included a focus on deprivation, including through the approaches used (e.g. walkabouts with Community Wardens).

Consultation with West Berkshire's Youth Cabinet and joining up with Children and Young People Plan consultation activity.