

Title of Report:	Anti-Child Poverty Strategy
Report to be considered by:	Executive
Date of Meeting:	31 March 2011
Forward Plan Ref:	EX2210

Purpose of Report: To deliver the Council's statutory duty to produce a Child Poverty Strategy by 31/3/11.

Recommended Action: To approve the Strategy.

Reason for decision to be taken: The Council has a statutory duty under the Child Poverty Act 2010.

Other options considered: None

Key background documentation: n/a

The proposals contained in this report will help to achieve the following Council Plan Themes:

- CPP1 – Support our communities through the economic downturn** – to alleviate the impact on different communities and individuals who find themselves out of work and/or disadvantaged
- CPP – Raise levels of educational achievement** – improving school performance levels

The proposals will also help achieve the following Council Plan Themes:

- CPT8 - A Healthier Life**
- CPT11 - Protecting Vulnerable People**

The proposals contained in this report will help to achieve the above Council Plan Priorities and Themes by:

identifying children and young people living in West Berkshire living in poverty and acting to improve their life chances.

Portfolio Member Details	
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Date Portfolio Member agreed report:	21 February 2011

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Implications

Policy: The Child Poverty Strategy will assist in targeting services at the most disadvantaged children and young people in West Berkshire

Financial: Identifying groups likely to be most at risk will enable the Council to focus on those most in need.

Personnel: None

Legal/Procurement: The strategy complies with our legal duties

Property: None

Risk Management: As set out in the report

Equalities Impact Assessment: EIA Stage 1 Completed

Is this item subject to call-in?	Yes: <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	No: <input type="checkbox"/>
If not subject to call-in please put a cross in the appropriate box:		
The item is due to be referred to Council for final approval	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Delays in implementation could have serious financial implications for the Council	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Delays in implementation could compromise the Council's position	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Considered or reviewed by Overview and Scrutiny Commission or associated	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Task Groups within preceding six months		
Item is Urgent Key Decision		<input type="checkbox"/>

Executive Summary

1. Introduction

- 1.1 The report provides an overview of the Child Poverty Act 2010, its requirements and local responses to meeting the duties outlined in the Act. It goes on to give an overview of risk factors related to child poverty. A snapshot of deprivation headlines locally is presented and an overview of the tools used to produce the needs assessment. The final section describes the needs assessment and strategy and the rationale for their style and content.

2. Proposals

- 2.1 To show the results of the work undertaken to produce the Needs Assessment and Strategy, support by the Prevention and Early Intervention Group of the Children and Young People's Trust.

3. Conclusion

- 3.1 Approval is sought for the Strategy, prior to consideration by the West Berkshire Partnership.

Executive Report

1. Introduction to the Child Poverty Act 2010

1.1 The Labour 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 and to maintaining provisions made within the Act. The Act sets out our statutory duties to:

- ❑ *Co-operate*: 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 our 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 partners 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:

- (a) any district council which is not a responsible local authority;
- (b) a police authority;
- (c) a chief officer of police;
- (d) an Integrated Transport Authority for an integrated transport area in England;
- (e) a Strategic Health Authority;
- (g) a Primary Care Trust;
- (h) 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, Statutory Guidance, 2010)

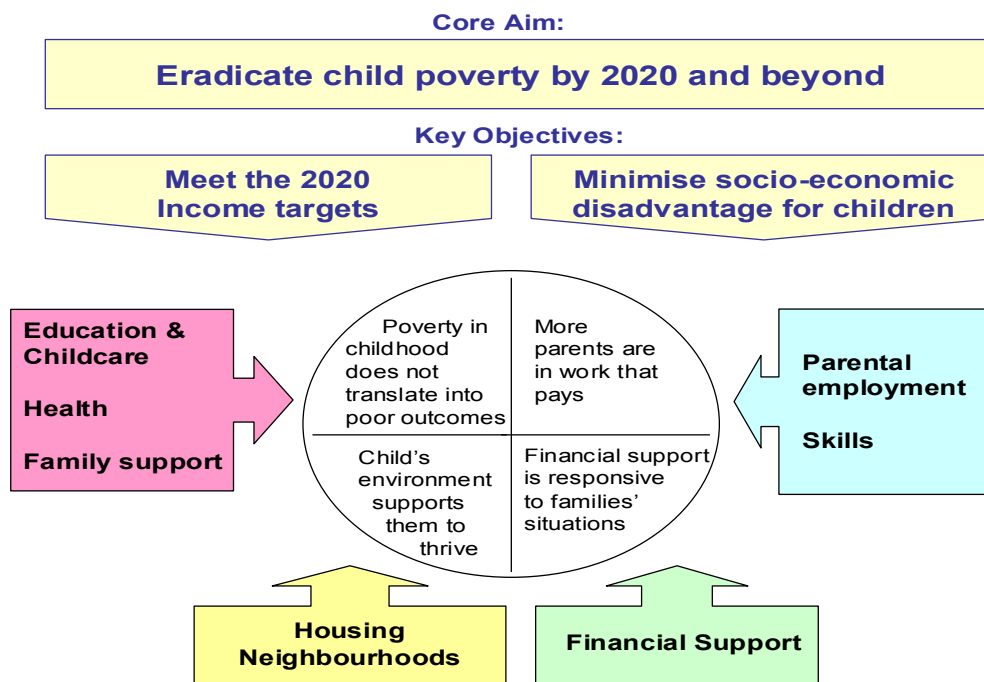
1.4 The Act promotes four foundation stones for action:

1. Place

2. Improving Life chances
3. Parental employment and skills
4. Financial support

These are expanded in the next diagram.

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



1.5 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

2.2 Growing up in poverty is associated with poor outcomes. 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

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 These may be compounded by multiple-risk factors being present, for example poverty, obesity and poor housing conditions.

3. West Berkshire deprivation snapshot

- ❑ 24th least deprived district in England
- ❑ Only domain of Indices of Multiple Deprivation which is relatively weak is 'barriers to housing and access to services'
- ❑ Space differences in deprivation 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 SOAs that are overall ranked below the 50th percentile nationally and WB as 34 out of 354 ranked authorities

Source West Berkshire District Profile, 'People and Place', WBC

- ❑ Income Deprivation affecting Children Index combined score (2007) WB 8.19, Reading 19.3, Hackney 46.10 WB ranked 4th out of 142 ranked authorities in England.

(Source C4EO online)

4. Tools that helped us 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 A needs assessment toolkit produced by the IDeA in late 2010 has been a useful resource.
- 4.3 Action with Communities in Rural England (ACRE) Evidencing Rural Need Tool – another tool developed with OCSI – promoted at a Community Council for Berkshire event in September 2010. Discussions were held with ACRE and CCB to view their data sources.
- 4.4 The Joint Strategic Needs Assessment provides insight into data on health inequalities. The draft has been used to inform the needs assessment
- 4.5 The Centre for Excellence and Outcomes (C4EO) has a range of research and data tools that have been accessed. We also applied for and were successful in getting support from a Sector Specialist from C4EO to support our child poverty needs assessment activity.

5. The needs assessment and strategy

- 5.1 The needs assessment is a detailed reference document whilst the strategy is intended to be a short high level document that has relevance for all area stakeholders. As such the aims and targets are also high level and the action plan directs responsibility for defining how the targets will be met by other plans and activities. Meeting these targets will be overseen by the Children and Young Person's Trust.

Appendices

Appendix A - Anti Child Poverty Strategy

Consultees

A rolling series of engagement activities has been undertaken

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.

Community case study work in Lambourn and Greenham

Public information on the internet and Twitter