<u>**Anti-Poverty Strategy Recommendations**</u>

1. **"Raising incomes" – supporting residents to maximise income and access all benefits they are entitled to**

- Influence employers in the borough to become Living Wage employers, and provide support for them to do so through improved productivity and skills development through delivery of the Inclusive Growth Strategy.

- Further promote the effective use of the Tameside Money Advice Referral Tool in all appropriate settings and commit to updating as required. Promote a culture of effective referrals over signposting.

- Strengthen our preventive approach to tackling poverty by facilitating easier access to advice at an earlier stage. This includes exploring opportunities to deliver increased outreach welfare rights and debt advice and making sure everyone knows their role in tackling poverty and supporting residents.

> **Case Study**
>
> <u>Royal Borough of Greenwich</u>
>
> Royal Borough of Greenwich has funded the rollout of three advice hubs offering a range of services, including free face-to-face benefits, debt, immigration and housing advice in partnership with Citizens Advice, Greenwich Housing Rights and Plumstead Community Law Centre at weekly drop in sessions. Roaming advice hubs have also been introduced at five further locations across the borough to maximise the delivery of face to face support across the borough.

- Introduce and adequately resource a permanent Local Welfare Provision scheme, providing help to those in crisis.

> **Case Study**
>
> <u>Salford Assist</u>
>
> Salford Assist offers help for residents facing financial hardship to meet their immediate needs by providing support with food, baby milk, nappies, fuel, essential furniture items or white goods, bedding, cooking equipment, costs associated with moving, copies of birth certificates for homeless people. The service also links in with advice and referrals to other services, agencies or funds. Assistance may also include things such as seeking debt advice, referral routes to affordable loans and recycled furniture schemes. They also give advice on how to access more affordable fuel tariffs and benefits.
>
> The scheme is linked to other support services including homelessness prevention, debt advice, welfare rights, money management skills, affordable loans and council tax.

- Proactively identify and support households on legacy benefits ahead of the 2024 managed migration to Universal Credit to ensure they are receiving everything they are entitled to.

- Ensure everyone who needs Welfare Rights advice can access support by securing capacity within the Welfare Rights Advice Team to carry out targeted work with groups known to be under-claiming benefits, such as older residents missing out on pension credit.

- Work with water and energy utility providers to identify opportunities for low-income customers to move to reduced or social tariffs.

> **Case Study**
>
> Maidstone Borough Council
>
> Maidstone has launched a data sharing partnership with South East Water UK to identify low-income customers and transfer them to a social water tariff. The Council have utilised the powers set out in the Digital Economy Act to achieve this - a legislation aimed at improving public services through the better use of data. It is expected that a total of 7,000 residents will benefit from the scheme, equating to around 10 per cent of the total properties in the borough.

- Improve the ability of households to pay their energy bills by raising awareness of discounts and how to apply e.g. Winter Fuel Payment, Warm Home Discount, Cold Weather Payments, energy provider discretionary funds.

2. **"Making Tameside Work for Everyone" – securing high-quality and high-wage employment for all residents**

- Expand the capacity of the Routes to Work programme to meet demand.

- Reform Social Value approach to increase the weighting applied to "real living wage" providers in tendering applications, ensuring that contract values enable this.

- Use links with businesses to identify skills gaps in the local economy and drive education and training opportunities to match.

- Further develop the Tameside-in-work progression programme to enhance progression opportunities for those in work.

- Promote awareness of skillsets that disabled and neuro-diverse people can offer to drive employment and support employers to reduce the barriers those groups face in the workplace.

- Improve access to employment opportunities and address in-work poverty for people in housing need or those at risk of becoming homeless, to help them sustain long-term housing.

3. **"Poverty is Everybody's Business" – supporting residents, communities and partners to spot the signs of poverty and signpost to support**

- Build on the 'Helping Hand' campaign to deliver an anti-poverty communications plan to raise awareness of the support on offer both nationally and locally, highlighting priorities at opportune times such as The International Day for the Eradication of Poverty.

- All discretionary support to be easily accessible on one webpage, linked to 'Helping hand', with online and offline application processes.

- Promote and expand "Helping Hands Tameside" campaign to publicise and raise awareness of messages and programmes to support residents experiencing hardship.

- Promote a 'no wrong door approach' by offering training to staff and volunteers to identify vulnerable residents, and refer them to appropriate support with sensitivity and compassion.

> **Case Study**
>
> Examples of similar things happening:
> - Stockport library workers, Manchester library workers and adult education workers, and Oldham Positive Steps workers are all trained in basic advice provision and signposting – Oldham's training was delivered by CAB.
> - Oldham cost of living training offer for all frontline workers on the Money Advice Referral Tool and "Effective, Empathetic Conversations".
> - Rochdale "Good Help" public service reform and integration project, which emphasizes changing the way people are supported to "feel hopeful, identify their own purpose and confidently take action".

> **Case Study**
>
> Recognising the need for partners to work together to support residents affected by poverty to carry out earlier interventions and prevent crisis, Newcastle City Council created the Active Inclusion Newcastle Unit (AIN). AIN supports services in the community who are not specialists in housing, welfare rights, debt, employment advice or homelessness prevention to make poverty 'everybody's business', by creating a spectrum of advice.
>
> The spectrum identifies three levels of advice within benefits advice, delivered by different services ranging from partners in the community e.g. receptionists, customer services, community champions at level one, through to generalist benefits advice and specialist benefits advice at levels two and three. The spectrum clearly identifies what is expected at each level of advice, including what the training requirements are and what support is to be provided by the AIN. For instance, at level one, it is expected that staff would be aware that certain changes would affect benefits and be able to signpost or refer to an appropriate second or third tier organisation. Spectrum of advice (newcastle.gov.uk)

- Partners across Tameside to explore how to increase capacity across VCSE sector, acknowledging the increased demand upon services as a result of the Cost of Living Crisis.

- Strengthen coordination with local Registered Providers, to share good practice and resources to best support their tenants and also the wider community, including incorporating lived experience into decision-making.

> **Case Study**
>
> Onward Homes and Tameside Council – Helping Hand Winter Warmer Event
>
> Local housing association Onward Homes partnered with Tameside Council to host a Cost of Living Support event, Helping Hand's Winter Warmer on Wednesday 26 October, from 3pm to 6:30pm.
>
> The event linked Tameside residents who were struggling with the cost of living to a wealth of support services and organisations, who provided help with finances, debt, housing, food, employment and mental health and wellbeing. Onward's tenancy support team was also on hand to provide details on local work and skills coordination, income management and social investment.

4. **"Climbing out of the debt trap" – Tameside residents have relatively high levels of debt, high insolvencies and poor access to good credit as a result.**

- Formulate a task and finish group under the Health and Wellbeing Board to look in detail at the issue of why Tameside residents hold relatively high levels of debt, have high rates of insolvency and low credit scores to identify some preventative solutions.

> **Case Study**
>
> Using a "Low Income Family Tracker" dashboard for Housing and Council Tax debt Haringey Council are able to identify household poverty trends to proactively target debt advice and inform their Debt Strategy.

- Improve access to, and promote the use of Cash Box Credit Union services, including savings accounts and sustainable and ethical credit.

- Implement and promote the use of the national breathing space debt respite scheme to provide residents in debt with enhanced opportunities to access advice and support.

- Explore the possibility of increasing the capacity of co-located advisors specialising in debt and housing advice for tenants living in the private rented sector.

5. **"Breaking the cycle" – specific focus on providing the best start in childhood and education**

- Work with schools and colleges in the borough to agree a good practice model for financial education for pupils across all age groups.

> **Case Study**
>
> A 'financial champion' award-winning school in Yorkshire undertook an audit of its subjects, identifying opportunities to strengthen the delivery of financial education and make links across the curriculum. It also undertook student voice activities to hear directly from the young people about the financial topics they were keen to learn about. The school now has a planned approach to the delivery of financial education. Financial education is overseen by a senior member of staff who also ensures the delivery is quality assured. An element of financial education is included in PSHE education for years 7 to 13, and students can access level 2 and 3 finance qualifications. The school has also worked with local feeder primary schools.

- Establish a working group with school leaders to develop a mechanism to enable schools to better identify and overcome the barriers to learning that children and young people from families with less financial resources face.

> **Case study**
>
> *Poverty Proofing© the School Day* is a tool developed by Children North-East for identifying the barriers children living in poverty face to engaging fully with school life and its opportunities. Focused on listening to the voices and experiences of young people and their families, it offers a pathway for schools to address often unseen inequalities within their activities, helping them reduce stigma, break the link between educational attainment and financial background, and supports schools to explore the most effective way to spend Pupil Premium.
> [Poverty Proofing© the School Day - Children North East (children-ne.org.uk)](http://children-ne.org.uk)

- Relevant council teams to link in with Tameside Hospital, GPs and other health community settings to encourage awareness and take up of Healthy Start vouchers.

- Increase the uptake of Healthy Start vouchers, using public campaigns and assets (such as Community Champions) to ensure that all eligible families are aware of and can access the scheme.

- Investigate options of working with DWP to auto enrol or send personalised invitation letters to families eligible for Healthy Start vouchers through flagging of Universal Credit account.

> **Case Study**
>
> [Feeding Britain: A Policy for Improving Child Nutrition – Securing Full Take-Up of Healthy Start Vouchers and Free School Meals in England](#)
>
> Research from charity Feeding Britain has shown that, despite investment in time, effort, and resources, 44% of potentially eligible families are not registered for Healthy Start and, as a result, £1 million worth of vouchers go unclaimed each week. Of particular concern is the finding that some families are having to rely on food banks because they are not registered for their Healthy Start entitlement.
>
> It was suggested that, in order to address this, the basis for Healthy Start and free school meal registration should shift from 'opt in' to 'opt out', through an automated process. While the primary drive for this could only come from national government, it has been identified that local authorities could facilitate this in their own area by amending the Council Tax Support application form, and other forms where appropriate, so that applicants are given the option of ticking a box to consent to their data being used automatically to register eligible children in their household for free school meals and/or Healthy Start vouchers.

- Explore opportunities to enable auto-enrolment for free school meals for eligible families. Improve systems and processes around monitoring of Free School Meals to encourage uptake among eligible families through awareness-raising and improving school catering offer.

> **Case Study**
>
> Sheffield City Council Auto-Enrolment
>
> Sheffield City Council has analysed Housing Benefit and Council Tax support information they already hold, and have found that a significant number of households may meet the criteria for Free School Meals but have not yet made an application.
>
> In an effort to make sure that all school pupils receive the support they are entitled to, as well as to increasing the Pupil Premium funding for all academies and locally maintained schools in Sheffield, the Council used Housing Benefit data to automatically award Free School Meals during the months of August-September 2022.
>
> Those families who appear to qualify for Free School Meals, but haven't applied yet were contacted by letter to explain how the automatic award works.
>
> An information sheet gives more background to the scheme is attached here: [AUTOMATIC AWARD FOR FREE SCHOOL MEALS INFORMATION SHEET – AUGUST/SEPTEMBER 2022](#)

- Encourage employers to signpost eligible women about to go on maternity leave to the availability of Healthy Start vouchers and other benefits.

- Explore the option of working with schools to coordinate school uniform collections and distribution to assist families on low incomes.

- Continue to drive supply of Further Education opportunities in the borough and increase demand through improved communication and celebrating success.

- Work with local schools to create a "Cost of the School Day" calendar, as per the Child Poverty Action Group, to identify and quantify costs within a school year and local opportunities to manage these.

> **Case Study**
>
> [Cost of the School Day Calendar](#)
>
> The "Cost of the School Day" calendar breaks down on a month-by-month basis common barriers to education for disadvantaged children and offers alternatives and other suggestions. This includes highlighting common annual celebration days in schools and how we can avoid making these inaccessible for disadvantaged children.
>
> There is also general advice about issues such as uniforms, trips, school lunches, gym kits, pencils and pens, dress down days and other school costs that can be difficult to afford for low-income families.
>
> Throughout the calendar, there are ideas and good practice examples from schools across England, Scotland and Wales who have taken part in the Cost of the School Day project.

6. **"Laying the foundations" – ensuring residents have access to what they need in order to live in comfort and dignity, including food, housing, warmth etc.**

- Encourage people to seek Housing Advice through campaigns and other communications to raise awareness and prevent homelessness.

- Increase the volume of nominations to the Housing Waiting List from Registered Social Landlords in Tameside, for example through development of Choice-Based Lettings and/or a Common Housing Register.

- Cultivate relationships with Private Rented Sector landlords to increase housing options for homeless households, recognise signs of poverty and motivate their tenants to seek support early to avoid eviction.

> **Case Study**
>
> Salford City Council and Irwell Valley Homes have teamed up to launch the first training course in the country for private landlords whose tenants may be experiencing or causing problems. The aim is to sustain tenancies by helping landlords to draw up a clear action plan.

- Develop a Social Lettings Agency model to increase housing options in the Private Rented Sector.

- Encourage the take up of free fire safety home assessments to support vulnerable residents to stay safe and access appropriate support.

- Gain a better understanding of food poverty in Tameside through surveying, data collection and other engagement and consultation.

> **Case Study**
>
> Food Insecurity in the Lancaster District: Beyond Imagination Life Survey (https://www.research.lancs.ac.uk/portal/files/359926833/Case_Study_Food_Insecurity_in_the_Lancaster_District.pdf)
>
> Commissioned by Lancaster University and undertaken by BMG Research, this research survey collected 3,000 resident's views and combined it with a number of bespoke and national-level datasets to gather a representative picture of views, attitudes and experiences of Food Insecurity in the Lancaster District.
>
> The conclusions from the survey, which were released in June 2022, will be used inform strategy, activities and further research opportunities for Imagination Lancaster - Lancaster University's cross-disciplinary design research lab, relevant local authorities and other partners.

- Work with food banks/pantries and partner organisations in Tameside to identify supply and capacity pressures and unlock funding and support to alleviate such issues.

> **Case Study**
>
> London Borough of Lewisham: Working with partners to address food poverty
>
> The London Borough of Lewisham is making tackling food poverty a priority in the recovery from the pandemic. The Council is already working with local groups to create social supermarkets, which differ from food banks in that residents pay for products albeit at a significant reduced price, from the networks that sprang up during the pandemic.
>
> It is now focussing on building on this work. A food poverty summit was held in early 2022, there is a dedicated working group on food poverty and a new service to promote awareness, support food chains and the local food economy is set to be launched.

- Support the expansion of food pantries and community gardens (including opportunities for new and existing allotments) to increase access to healthy food for residents who are experiencing, or at risk of, food insecurity.

- Map and publicise all community cooking sessions taking place in Tameside, whether they are held by the council (markets etc) or other public, private or community organisations.

- Work with residents and partners to investigate and implement effective ways of reducing food waste

> **Case Study**
>
> Oldham Community Fridges (1) (2)
>
> The Community Fridge Network, which is run by environmental charity Hubbub, collects and shares food from businesses and individuals, which would have otherwise been thrown away.

> Community fridges are open to everyone – with fresh food donated by businesses and residents themselves. As well as improving access to food, the fridges go beyond this by "empowering communities to connect with each other" and learn new skills through activities such as cookery sessions and workshops on how to grow your own fruit and veg.
>
> Community Fridges accept donations of unopened, packaged foods within their use-by date and raw fruit or vegetables, which will then be available to anyone in the community.
>
> To date a number of Community Fridges, operated by various charitable organisations and supported by the Co-Operative Group, have been opened in Manchester and Oldham.
>
> Research from US community network ChangeX has shown that, over 3 months, it is estimated that one Community Fridge can:
> - Redistribute 12 tons of food waste,
> - Save households and community groups over $10,000 worth of food
> - Provide local employment opportunities.

- Work collectively to draft an action plan and framework for delivery to ensure that the number of people living in homes below energy rating C decreases.

- Enhance approaches to address fuel poverty including ongoing work with the Local Energy Advice Partnership (LEAP) and work with GMCA around a statement of intent for energy company obligation funded measures to be installed

- Support Registered Provider partners to deliver new homes, affordable housing and specialist accommodation.

- Explore the feasibility of expanding subsidised access to Active Tameside facilities, ensuring that residents experiencing poverty are not disadvantaged or excluded from activities that may be beneficial to their physical and mental health.

> **Case Study**
>
> Birmingham City Council "Gym for Free Scheme" (1) (2)
>
> Local professionals in Birmingham City Council working in public health believed that cost could be a barrier to the uptake of leisure facilities. To test this perception, the Heart of Birmingham Primary Care Trust transferred £500,000 towards free access to leisure facilities for adults in one economically deprived constituency in the city for 6 months. Access remained free if adults used this service a minimum of four times per month.
>
> Following this 6 month period, surveys and focus groups were set up to gauge the success of the scheme. These found that it was successful in increasing the uptake of the exercise facilities among study participants from 25% to 64% either every day or most days, and a reduction among those who never used these facilities from 28% to 0%. This was particularly the case among women, ethnic minorities and the most economically disadvantaged.

7. **"Putting people first" – making sure that council working practices (both customer-facing and internal) are best placed to identify and support those in poverty**

11 recommendations
- Accept the recommendations of the Poverty Truth Commission and work with Partners to formulate a delivery response alongside this Strategy.

- Facilitate the collective and proactive identification and support of people vulnerable to socio-economic disadvantage by addressing data-sharing hurdles between services and creating a forum to facilitate this work.

- Develop a bespoke Poverty Monitor to gather and warehouse comprehensive, relevant and up-to-date data and information about poverty in Tameside.

Case Study

[Calderdale Data Works Poverty Index](#)

This is a collection of dashboards showing selected statistics on poverty in Calderdale which has been developed alongside the Calderdale Anti-poverty action plan. The plan has been produced in consultation with local partner agencies.

[Greater Manchester Poverty Monitor 2022](#)

The aim of the Monitor is to equip stakeholders with relevant knowledge to tackle socio-economic disadvantage in their own activities, from policy development to service design, advocacy and campaigning.

- Review council tax collection practices and Council Tax Support Policy to support those with vulnerabilities including people on low income. Explore adopting the Citizens Advice Council Tax Arrears Good Practice Protocol.

Case Study

London Borough of Tower Hamlets
https://democracy.towerhamlets.gov.uk/mgConvert2PDF.aspx?ID=191230#:~:text=This%20is%20the%20highest%20level,live%20in%20low-income%20households

"Tower Hamlets is one of 74 authorities in 2020/21 to have no minimum payment. This means that working age adults on the lowest incomes pay no council tax. Tower Hamlets has the second largest number of people receiving Council Tax Support in London in 2021. Since 2017, Tower Hamlets care leavers under 25 have been exempt from council tax. An additional fund provides further discretionary reductions in Council Tax for residents in exceptional hardship: this provided £45,000 to 109 households in 2018/19. As well as benefiting low-income residents, more generous council tax reduction schemes can also improve collection rates. Tower Hamlets' collection rates for 2020/21 were 97.5%, compared to an average collection rate of 96.8% across England and 95.6% for Inner London. Tower Hamlets council is one of eight London boroughs to have adopted the Citizens Advice/Local Government Council Tax Protocol."

- Provide enhanced support to residents seeking advice about council tax and housing benefit and explore the option of establishing drop-in sessions on a weekly basis.

Case Study

Greater London Authority and Policy in Practice "Council Tax Debt Collection and Low-Income Londoners" 2020

[Council-Tax-debt-collection-and-low-income-Londoners_GLA_pub.pdf (policyinpractice.co.uk)](#)

> The GLA commissioned Policy in Practice to undertake an evaluation of flexible, customer-centric debt collection practices for low-income Londoners. The project focused on deepening the GLA's understanding of the business case for council tax collection practices that more effectively support low-income households.
>
> The research concluded that no clear relationship was found between stricter council tax collection policies and higher council tax collection rates, and that higher council tax collection rates were associated with the generosity of a borough's Council Tax Reduction Scheme and lower collection with the level of poverty in the borough.
>
> Other recommendations included overcoming the relative rigidity of the regulations and limitations to IT systems, enabling councils to pause recovery action for Council Tax Reduction recipients before the summons stage, and more data-sharing to help move towards a more rounded, single view of household debt as well as identifying the households who need most help, both now and in the future.

- Where possible, facilitate the principle of a Single Point of Contact for customer-facing services to address the issue of vulnerable people re-telling their stories.

- Improve the process for applying for s13.A Discretionary Council Tax Reduction, by creating an online application form, based around the discretionary housing payment portal.

- Ensure appropriate resources are being allocated to S.13A Discretionary Council Tax reduction to enable residents to receive financial assistance towards their council tax liability when they need it.

- Roll out automatic claims for council tax support upon a claim being submitted for Universal Credit.

- Continue to expand of the range of face-to-face services available from Tameside One, and clearly communicate the offer.

- When establishing contracts, partners to review procurement processes to embed and expand social value and community wealth building.

> **Case Study**
>
> Birmingham City Council – Match my Project
>
> Many grassroots organisations fail to access funding and resources from mainstream funders – including the council itself.
>
> To tackle this problem, Birmingham City Council developed MatchMyProject – an online platform that matches community organisations in need of resources for the delivery of their projects and businesses working directly for Birmingham City Council or in the area.
>
> Using this tool, community organisations can post requests for support on specific projects, with businesses able to browse a curated directory of projects and make offers of support directly.

- Implement the socioeconomic duty in Tameside to ensure that socioeconomic disadvantage is considered, and relevant organisations and people with lived experiences of poverty consulted in the development of all relevant council policies.

- Review resourcing within Tameside Housing Options to maximise its potential for homeless prevention, including exploring opportunities to expand capacity within the service to meet increasing demand

- Establishing channels for continuing engagement with people with lived experience of poverty, to enable enhanced collaboration and co-design of council processes, strategies and action plans. Coordinating a public directory of these opportunities through Action Together.

8. "No one left behind digitally" – specific focus on digital inclusion

- Register for the "Good Things Foundation National Data Bank Centre", enabling us to "gift" data and free SIMS to eligible residents. Explore delivery through libraries and warm spaces.

- Investigate possibility of recruiting Digital Assistants (either through a paid role or volunteers) to provide capacity in Library Services to deliver digital and IT support to residents.

- Promote and raise awareness of council programmes to improve digital literacy among residents, including TechKnow Buddies, Learn My Way, Online Job Search and Idea.

- Unlock funding and support to allow people in poverty to access technology and the internet using programmes such as the Device Gifting Scheme.

> **Case Study**
>
> [Hubbub/O2 – Community Calling](#)
>
> London-based environmental charity Hubbub and O2 have partnered to create and deliver the Community Calling programme - a scheme that re-homes old smartphones.
>
> Community Calling receives donations of used smartphones (as long as they hold a charge and the screen isn't cracked) from members of the public, as well as corporate and public sector organisations. They've partnered with Reconome, a device upcycling expert, to clean, data wipe, and refurbish the donated smartphones, before packaging them up and redistributing the devices to someone in need. Each recipient also receives 12-months' free data provided by O2 and access to free digital skills training.
>
> Community Calling adopts a hyperlocal approach by partnering with small, community based grassroots organisations in order to reach digitally excluded people, which have been identified by the community partners. So far, they've re-homed over 5,000 smartphones, but have a target of reaching 10,000 digitally excluded people across the UK.

- Liaise with local VCSE organisations such as Age UK to proactively reach out to groups identified as being particularly vulnerable to digital inclusion (low income, older people etc) to encourage them to develop digital skills.

- Review current public Wi Fi provision with the aim of delivering the service in a way that is more appropriate to resident's needs.

- Investigate the possibility of working with broadband providers and housing providers – including social housing and new developments - to deliver internet access to residents at a reduced cost.

- Review processes for accessing support to ensure there is always an online and offline method available.

9. **"One size doesn't fit all" – additional support for residents identified as being at particular risk of poverty (disabled, carers, ethnic minorities, mental health etc)**

- Increase targeted employability support for groups that have been identified as under-served in regards to mental health provision and/or vulnerable to falling into poor-quality employment, particularly ethnic minorities, young people and residents over 50+.

- Acknowledging that certain groups are more likely to be in poverty, commit to ensuring all residents can access the support they need and that all services can access relevant communication and interpretation services.

- With Domestic Abuse more prevalent in 'poorer' households we might see an increase, which will require increased promotion/availablity of services for victims and targeted perpetrator programmes to break the cycle of abuse.

- Explore the possibility of developing Mental Health Awareness Training for staff and volunteers, working with residents experiencing poverty to help address the known impacts of poverty on mental health and signpost them to further support (income maximisation, welfare rights, food security etc).

- Encourage uptake of community-centred approaches to people in poverty suffering with mental health issues, such as peer support groups to challenge isolation and provide lasting support beyond the scope of commissioned services.

Case Studies:

Shropshire: Training hairdressers, personal trainers and hospitality staff to become champions

Shropshire Council has been working in partnership with the Samaritans to train local business staff to support their customers with their mental health.

North East Derbyshire and Chesterfield: Connecting communities and nurturing neighbourliness

A project to connect local communities has been launched in North East Derbyshire and Chesterfield to provide funding and support aimed at tackling social isolation.

- Develop measures in cooperation with partner organisations and communities to ensure that carers, particularly from seldom heard groups, are identified as early as possible and are assessed, informed, empowered and supported as needed.

- Expand income maximisation and money advice services to carers (both working and non-working) to ensure that they are receiving all appropriate guidance around carer's allowances and other benefits.

- Facilitate focus groups with carers to improve and build on our offer for working carers, recognising and respecting their views and opinions as expert partners.

- Promote and encourage support for working carers in Tameside from employers in the borough, linking in with the GM Carer's Charter/Employer's Forum and covering issues such as flexible working policies, guaranteed assessment schemes and emergency time off.

- Provide comprehensive and wrap-around support to help carers get into employment if they want to, ensuring that they are informed and supporting of their rights, opportunities and responsibilities as both carers and employees.

> **Case Study**
>
> Tameside Council and Tameside & Glossop Integrated Care Foundation Trust (ICFT): Collaborative work undertaken in relation to supporting young carers into a career in health and social care in the future
>
> A group comprised of Human Resources professionals from Tameside Council and Tameside & Glossop ICFT, determined that they wanted to support young carers with an information session on how their transferable skills could make them suited to embark on a further education or employment in Health and Social Care.
>
> Colleagues from the Tameside Council Young Carer's Team, ICT, local education institutions and charities came together to create and deliver a 3 hour interactive session. This included a health and wellbeing talk, volunteering information, group discussions, talks from higher education providers and "A Day in the Life" examples of actual job roles.
>
> Participants were asked to complete an evaluation at the end of the session, and the feedback obtained showed that they felt the session was very informative and give them an increased awareness of the employment and education pathways open to them.

- Partners to review their buildings and websites to gauge accessibility for residents in poverty (particularly those with physical/learning disabilities or for whom English is not a first language) and take action to improve if necessary.

- Review existing offers for foster carers and care leavers to take into account new cost of living pressures.

- Work with Action Together to develop and improve links with community organisations supporting ethnic minority residents and those for whom English is not a first language to improve access to and understanding of information related to poverty.

> **Case Study**
>
> Bournemouth, Christchurch and Poole CP Council Equality Action Commission Group
>
> An example of a council-led cross party and joint community stakeholder group aimed at improving the way the council works with and supports ethnic minority individuals and communities in its area.
>
> In particular, the commission aims to:
>
> - Review BCP Council's current practices and what it could do to improve it's understanding of the needs and vulnerabilities of ethnic minority communities and individuals.
> - Review and understand the impact of the Council's public profile and how it can encourage ethnic minority communities and their representatives to engage with the Council.
> - Understand the experiences of ethnic minority communities to enable the Council to take appropriate actions, which increase participation, representation and reduce marginalisation.

- Carry out work to understand whether local support to residents with refugee status, seeking asylum, facing financial hardship and subject to No Recourse to Public Funds restrictions could be improved, and to understand how best to support EEA+ nationals with pre-settled status.

- Provide free period products within libraries and exploring opportunities to expand this to all publically accessible buildings.

10. "Advocating for change" – highlighting the need for action on poverty-related issues where responsibility lies with national government

1 recommendation
- Though there is much that can be achieved locally to address poverty, many of the drivers of poverty can only be addressed by national government. Recognising this, we commit to working with partners to campaign on the following issues, as identified in Needs Assessment, including:

Benefits
- Increase the levels of Universal Credit, increasing Discretionary Housing Payment allocations and Local Housing Allowance rates
- Abolish the bedroom tax, the two child limit and the benefit cap
- Abolish punitive benefits sanctions
- Abolish of the 'No recourse to public funds' condition for those who are habitually resident in the UK and to increase the payments under Asylum Support.

Local Government Funding
- Deliver a fairer local government settlement
- Deliver fairer funding to local social care services

National Policy
- Develop a national strategy for tackling poverty and inequality, particularly child poverty and guaranteeing the right to food.
- Support the Right to Food campaign, which aims to make access to sufficient and nutritious food for everyone a legal right, embedded within the National Food Strategy. Research by the Food Foundation found that in April 2022, 13.8% of all UK households were food insecure, with ethnic minorities, people with disabilities, families and older people amongst the worst affected.

Debt
- Campaign for improved debt collection practices in line with Citizen Advice's Fairness in Government Debt Management Report including the introduction of regulation of bailiffs and introduction of a shared approach to affordability assessments.
- Campaign for an end to no fault evictions and to reinstate the ban on evictions during the cost of living crisis.