


<b>Report to:</b>	<b>HEALTH AND WELLBEING BOARD</b>
<b>Date:</b>	18 January 2024
<b>Reporting Officer:</b>	Councillor Eleanor Wills, Executive Member for Population Health and Wellbeing (with lead responsibility for poverty). Debbie Watson, Director of Public Health
<b>Subject:</b>	<b>BUILDING RESILIENCE: TACKLING POVERTY IN TAMESIDE - UPDATE ON STRATEGY ACTION PLAN</b>
<b>Report Summary:</b>	This report provides an update on the delivery of the anti-poverty strategy action plan to the Health and Wellbeing Board.
<b>Recommendations:</b>	Health and Wellbeing Board members are asked to note the update and progress against the action plan.
<b>Corporate Plan:</b>	The strategy cuts across all eight priorities of the Corporate Plan and underpins the life course model.
<b>Policy Implications:</b>	Development of this strategy is in line with and in response to emerging national and regional policy initiatives on reducing inequality and addressing poverty. The recommendations within will have policy implications for partners as they are implemented.
<b>Financial Implications: (Authorised by the statutory Section 151 Officer &amp; Chief Finance Officer)</b>	There are no direct financial implications arising from this update report on the development of the Anti-Poverty Strategy. However, there are numerous and complex financial implications for the Council that arise as a result of Poverty in the borough, and the implementation of the recommendations within the Anti-Poverty Strategy are likely to have some direct financial implications. The financial implications of the recommendations in the Anti-Poverty Strategy will need to be considered separately as recommendations are implemented, taking account both of the direct financial implications of recommendations and, where possible, considering the complex indirect financial implications of poverty (including areas such as demand for services and income collection).
<b>Legal Implications: (Authorised by the Borough Solicitor)</b>	As set out in the report, work is ongoing to develop the strategy. Consultation has been undertaken to assist the Council in forming this strategy. The feedback from the consultation has been carefully considered as part of the finalisation of the strategy.
<b>Risk Management:</b>	No additional risks identified as a result of this paper or strategy.
<b>Access to Information:</b>	The background papers relating to this report can be inspected by contacting Debbie Watson, Director of Public Health
<b>Background Information:</b>	 Telephone: 07970 456338  e-mail: <a href="mailto:debbie.watson@tameside.gov.uk">debbie.watson@tameside.gov.uk</a>

## 1. INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 In recent years the rise of poverty, exacerbated by the cost of living crisis and the Covid-19 pandemic has emerged as a major policy issue. The current cost of living crisis has been significantly worsened by a number of longer-term structural weaknesses in the UK, including low wages, low productivity and high inequality relative to other major economies.
- 1.2 All partners recognise the severity of the current crisis and are working hard to support residents and gain a deeper understanding of poverty through cooperation with groups such as the Greater Manchester Poverty Action and the recommendations of Tameside Poverty Truth Commission.
- 1.3 Following the development of a Poverty Needs Assessment, which sits as part of the Joint Strategic Needs Assessment, the Health and Wellbeing Board agreed to support the development of a system-wide strategy to address both the short-term and long-term issues that drive poverty in Tameside. The strategy – ‘Building Resilience: Tackling Poverty in Tameside’ – was adopted by the Health and Wellbeing Board at the meeting on 16 March 2023. The document is attached [HERE](#).
- 1.4 The ‘strengthen our communities’ key area of focus in the joint Health and Wellbeing Strategy/Locality Plan is about supporting people in Tameside to fulfil their potential. Living in relative poverty has drastic impacts on physical health and emotional wellbeing, and therefore fundamentally undermines residents’ ability and position to achieve their full potential.

## 2. TAMESIDE ANTI-POVERTY ACTION PLAN

- 2.1 An action plan to deliver the ambitions set out in the strategy has been developed, over which the Health and Wellbeing Board has oversight. Delivery of the action plan has been undertaken by a sub-group reporting into the Board.
- 2.2 The Council in adopting the strategy has also established an operational delivery group internally to ensure its contribution to delivery of the action plan is progressed quickly and effectively.
- 2.3 A number of groups across Tameside are delivering against the action plan, including Tameside Inequalities Reference Group (IRG), which aims to reduce inequalities in Tameside. While the group is not a decision-making body, it acts in an advisory role to the Health and Wellbeing Board, making recommendations to steer actions in addressing inequalities and providing constructive challenges.
- 2.4 To fulfil this role, the IRG has selected a number of areas of focus:
  - Debt journeys and service response
  - Access to and experiences of ethnic minorities in healthcare
  - Experiences of people with protected characteristics in the private rental sector
  - Educational inequalities
- 2.5 Work within each area of focus has consisted of involving the voices of people with lived experience of the issue, the use of data and evidence, and benchmarking against other areas. This work may take the form of assurance updates, rapid pieces of research, or in-depth reviews.

## 3. PROGRESS TO DATE AND CHALLENGES

- 3.1 An update on progress against the action plan is attached at **Appendix 1**.

- 3.2 Tameside Council is calling on the Government to mount a covid-style response to help the many people across the country struggling to pay bills, eat and stay warm in the face of the ongoing cost-of-living crisis.
- 3.3 In a letter to Michael Gove MP, the Secretary of State for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities, Executive Leader Cllr Gerald Cooney has expressed his grave concern about the increase in poverty and deprivation, and demanded it be countered by the sort of radical action that was seen during the pandemic.
- 3.4 Tameside Council's demands fall into four categories: Benefits, local government funding, national policy and debt.
- 3.5 It calls for measures such as an increase in universal credit, discretionary housing payment allocations and local allowance rates; the abolition of the bedroom tax, two-child limit and benefits cap; a fairer local government settlement and realistic funding for adult and children's social care services; the development of a national strategy for tackling poverty and inequality; embedding the "Right to Food"; improvement of debt collection, and the immediate implementation of the Renters Reform Bill with an end to no-fault evictions.

#### **4. CONCLUSION**

- 4.1 A collective effort across the system is needed to understand and counter both the causes and symptoms of relative poverty to ensure that children, young people, families, older people, and carers can access the same life chances as their peers in Tameside.
- 4.2 Through consultation and engagement, all partners will be encouraged to update, review, comment and contribute to the ongoing development and delivery of the action plan, as this will be fundamental to its successful delivery and achieving better outcomes for the residents of Tameside.
- 4.3 The anti-poverty sub group will continue to provide leadership and direction in delivering against the action plan and co-ordinating and joining up the response internally within the Council. Existing work streams will continue to work with services and partners to deliver some of the immediate actions where necessary, although it is expected a lot of the activity can be delivered through existing resources and organisations. Working with partners from across the public, private and third sector and with communities themselves, will continue to underpin our approach.

#### **5. RECOMMENDATIONS**

- 5.1 As set out at the front of the report.