

CYNGOR SIR POWYS COUNTY COUNCIL

**County Council
30th April 2014**

REPORT AUTHOR: County Councillor Dai Davies, Anti-Poverty Champion

SUBJECT: Question from County Councillor Matthew Dorrance

Can the anti-poverty champion outline Powys County Council's strategy for tackling poverty? Our Strategic Approach

The Council (and its partners) strategically addresses its anti-poverty responsibilities through the Powys One Plan as opposed to having a distinct and separate Anti-Poverty Strategy. Both the 2011 – 2014 One Plan and the 2014 – 17 One Plan have poverty as a cross cutting issue for all partners in Powys. This allows for the impacts of poverty to be considered and addressed in a collaborative and strategic way rather than in isolation.

The Powys One Plan addresses poverty in its widest sense and does not focus solely on the more traditional view of financial poverty. For that reason, when preparing the One Powys Plan 2014 – 17 we have paid particular attention to the Welsh Government's forthcoming Future Generations (Wales) Bill which is designed to help tackle the generational challenges Wales faces in a joined up way - ensuring Welsh public services make key decisions with the long-term wellbeing of Wales in mind.

The five priorities listed in the One Plan each address various factors in relation to tackling poverty;

- Integrated health and adult social care
- Children and young people
- Transforming learning and skills
- Stronger, safer and economically viable communities
- Financially balanced and fit for purpose public services

As poverty is a growing concern for citizens and a high priority within the Welsh Government it is important that we continue to focus on our performance in this area. While we will address anti-poverty action in a cross cutting way through the One Plan we will ensure that we also produce an annual anti-poverty report which focuses in on our performance against key poverty indicators and outlines our action to tackle poverty. This will allow us to put a spotlight on tackling poverty as it is addressed through the wider strategic plans.

It is also important that we continue to use our collaborative planning and governance structures to ensure we maintain a strategic and joined up approach to tackling poverty. A key example of this is the need to work with our partners through the Local Service Board to maximise the opportunities for tackling rural poverty through the forthcoming Rural Development Plan (RDP) and the resources that come with it i.e. LEADER

Child Poverty

Interventions specifically aimed at reducing the impacts of child poverty are planned and delivered through the Children and Young Peoples Partnership.

The Families First Plan sets out our priorities for tackling disadvantage and poverty for children and their families until 2017. It includes a range of commissioned services/projects that provide support and early intervention for children, young people and families for whom poverty is likely to be a key factor affecting their lives.

These include services for Mental Health and Well-being, Family and Behaviour support and Disability. The plan also outlines the key infrastructure building blocks we are putting in place to ensure families' needs are identified and assessed as at early a stage as possible and that they get access to services at the right level, at the right time for them.

The Children & Young People's Partnership (CYPP) monitors its performance on a quarterly basis via its work plans and its Results Based Accountability (RBA) report card.



Overarching
Families First RBA Card

This report card contains key indicators in relation to poverty in Powys including;

- Proportion of children living in poverty
- Low Birth weights
- Numbers of Year 11 leavers Not in Education, Employment or Training (NEET)
- Key stage performance of Free School Meal (FSM) eligible pupils against their peers
- School Attendance of Free School Meal eligible pupils
- Numbers of 18-24 Year olds on Job seekers Allowance

The CYPP commissions a range of services and interventions to address the impacts of child poverty including;

- The Flying Start programme in Ystradgynlais, Brecon, Llandrindod, Newtown and Welshpool – our most deprived areas

- The NOVUS project (replacing Genesis 2) which provides support for individuals, particularly single parents and those Not in Education, Employment or Training to get closer to the labour market.
- The Youth Intervention Service supporting young people at risk of homelessness and with other disadvantages.
- The Childcare Strategy and action plan to ensure that we have sufficient high quality, affordable and accessible childcare available to support parents to work and train and provide high quality experiences for children.
- An assisted places scheme to provide financial assistance to support families in poverty with the high costs of childcare.
- The Joint Assessment Families Framework (JAFF) (including the Common Assessment Framework (CAF), Local Resource Solution Panel's (LRSP), Team around the Family) which provides early intervention and preventative solutions for disadvantaged children and their families. This also includes the step up and step down of families between the JAFF and Social Services to ensure they get support at the most appropriate level when they need it
- A Family Information service providing free information and advice to Young People and families.
- An integrated and holistic response to supporting families with a disabled child through the Integrated Disability Service (IDS). This Service provides improved co-ordination of support for children and young people with disabilities and their families who are more likely to experience poverty.
- The Referral Scheme to support access to childcare and leisure activities for Children and Young People with additional needs.
- Services to provide support, information and advice, respite and social opportunities for young carers who at a greater risk of experiencing poverty.
- Where obesity and dental carries can be indicators of deprivation, the Mind Exercise Nutrition Do it! (MEND) programme aims to try and improve the health and emotional well-being outcomes of children and families who are or at risk of being obese.

Council Delivery

The Council's uses its Strategic Equalities Plan and Equality Impact Assessments to ensure all our citizens are able to access the services they need and have positive outcomes.

'We deliver a range of services to a diverse community with different needs - some of which experience significant disadvantage - and all this is taking place over a wide geographic area;..... We will work to meet people's needs as best we can in the services and employment that we provide, and contribute to helping those who experience disadvantage in life'. 'Disadvantage also locks-up talent, so we hope that this plan will assist in the release of that untapped potential -contributing to the social, economical and emotional well-being of our workplace and local communities'.

(Powys Strategic Equality Plan 2012- 2016)

As a result of strategic planning the Council, and its partners deliver a range of services and interventions to help tackle poverty and address its impacts.

The Councils Leisure and Recreation services offer the following interventions;

- Free Swim initiatives for Children and Young People and Over 60's
- Access to Fitness Schemes for Individuals on low income
- Free swimming for carers when caring for individuals with a disability in the pool
- iCare Card scheme – free access to swim and Gym for carers for their own leisure
- Cardio Rehab and GP Referral Scheme – subsidised access for the first 16 weeks

The Schools Services Offer the following Interventions;

- Free school Meals to low income families
- The Pupil Deprivation Grant – 100% devolved to Schools to help improve the literacy, numeracy and attendance of Free School Meal eligible Pupils
- The School Uniform Grant (via Revs and Bens dept)
- The Educational Maintenance Allowance (EMA) for post 16 learners

The Council also has a range of services and projects under the Regeneration agenda to build employment and economic activity as well as community development and sustainability.