

CHILD POVERTY STRATEGY: EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Strategy

The government has set itself a target to end child poverty by 2020 and is strongly encouraging local services to take an ever more active role in reducing poverty.

The fundamental aim of Haringey's strategy and action plan is to ensure that all council services and local partners are working together in a joined up way to reduce child poverty in the borough and ensure that today's children do not become the parents of poor children tomorrow.

The Child Poverty strategy identifies 4 objectives that the council needs to meet in order to achieve a substantial reduction in child poverty. These are adapted from already existing service priorities, although they also reflect objectives identified and recommendations made in the London Child Poverty Commission report.

Objective 1: Increasing parental employment in sustainable jobs

Worklessness is a major cause of poverty. However, it is increasingly being recognised that in-work poverty is a major problem too. There is a need to improve people's skills which will enable them to secure better paid jobs as well as helping them to sustain jobs and progress at work.

Key priorities include:

- To deliver and promote the Haringey Guarantee
- To launch and deliver "Families Into Work" in Northumberland Park
- To use the childcare sufficiency audit to identify any gaps in provision and to ensure that childcare places are available within the areas of most needs.

Objective 2: Maximising incomes through improving the delivery of benefits and tax credits

Many poor families are not aware of all the benefits and tax credits to which they might be entitled. Benefit and tax credit take-up campaigns have proven to be effective in increasing household income for significant numbers of low income families.

Key priorities include:

- To increase financial capability amongst the most disadvantaged communities, including support in accessing benefits such as work and family tax credits, subsidised childcare places, educational maintenance allowance and community based credit unions.
- To visit primary schools and offer parents benefits and tax credit advice.

- To build on current work to effectively drive up take-up of Working Tax and Child Tax Credits.

Objective 3: Reducing educational attainment gaps for children

Education provides one of the principle routes for escaping intergenerational poverty. It provides a child with the skills and confidence to navigate through life, offers greater chances for sustainable employment opportunities and helps give children a more equal start in life.

Key priorities include:

- To further reduce the number of young people not in education, employment or training (NEET).
- To extend at Foundation Stage the Targeted Pupil Initiative to better identify the most vulnerable learners at the earliest stage of their education and involve their families in wider family learning initiatives.
- To review the take-up of free school meals by Haringey families

Objective 4: Ensuring all Haringey children have decent and secure homes.

Housing issues including poor property condition, overcrowding, living in temporary accommodation and housing related debt can all act as contributing factors to high levels of child poverty.

Key priorities include:

- To address overcrowding across tenure.
- To deliver on the decent homes programme.
- To deliver initiatives to tackle fuel poverty.

Strategic Implications

The Child Poverty strategy has been designed to deliver elements of the Sustainable Community Strategy as well as meet the new LAA target on tackling child poverty, as well as current LAA targets around worklessness and improving educational attainment.

Consultation

The strategy and action plan will be sent out for consultation to the Haringey Strategic Partnership, its theme boards and the Youth Council. Consultation will begin on 25th September 2008 and finish on 5th November 2008.

Please forward all comments by 5th November to:

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The complete strategy and action plan can be viewed on the council website at:

www.haringey.gov.uk/childpovertyconsultation

