



Minutes of the Torbay Child Poverty Commissioning Board

14 November 2012

-: Present :-

Councillor Neil Bent, Councillor Jenny Faulkner, Councillor Alison Hernandez, Councillor Chris Lewis and Councillor Julien Parrott, Michelle Kennedy (Chair),
Torbay Council: Richard Williams, Director of Children's Services, Julie Sharland, Strategic Housing Manager, Save the Children: Anna Kettley, Head of Programmes, South of England, Nikki Henderson, Community & Voluntary sector representative

1. Apologies for Absence

Councillor Chris Lewis, Executive Lead for Children, Schools and Families, welcomed everyone to the first meeting of the Child Poverty Commissioning Board. The new Chair, Michelle Kennedy, and guest speaker Anna Kettley, Save the Children, were thanked for bringing their own knowledge and expertise to support the meeting.

All invited Members were present.

2. Terms of Reference

The Board considered the Child Poverty Commissioning Boards' Terms of Reference.

The Board discussed, questioned and agreed that the :-

- Aim of group – is to oversee and requires all those involved to be accountable and to demonstrate what difference has been made in tackling child poverty and the impact within communities.
- Principles – that the group will work to include families and communities in the whole process; stakeholders/experts will be invited to present evidence/be cross-examined partnership approach to engaging the specific hot spots identified in the needs assessment and promote a change in the thinking and behaviour to improve the future aspirations of our families by 2010
- Accountability – group will not be accountable to any one board and needs to establish its independence and will make its recommendations to the Council
- Membership – core membership will include representatives from
 - Members x 5 (3 conservatives, 1 lib-dems- and 1 non-col- as advised by democratic services)
 - Independent Chair – appointed by Council (Michelle Kennedy)
 - Local Businesses

- Voluntary sector stakeholder organisations, families and young people from the most deprived communities (max 5)
- Roles and responsibilities: to be determined by the Board
- Technical/clinical expertise will be provided as required and agreed by Chair from a range of resources in Children's Services, Health, Police, Schools and Job Centre Plus
- Frequency of meetings – to be determined by the Board at a future meeting
- Conflict of interest: adopt Torbay Council's code of conduct and procedure for registering outside interests.
- Freedom of Information – agreed
- The Press: queries from the Press should be passed to the press office of Torbay Council

The Board noted the importance of ensuring that the Terms of Reference reflected what the Group wished to achieve in the long term and that the Board would be doing things differently.

The Board discussed the way forward and agreed:-

- the importance of a good PR/marketing strategy to get across the key messages
- Council resources should not be used
- testing/challenging recommendations to be processed through a task and finish group within Overview and Scrutiny in the future
- Quorum – to be decided and not to include Member substitutes
- joining up different initiatives/projects both inside the Council and outside agencies

Actions

- Chair to prepare a draft Press statement recognising child poverty in Torbay (Michelle Kennedy)**
- Quorum to be agreed at future meeting of Board**

3. Pen Portraits

Each Member gave a short, personal introduction about themselves including life experiences of living in poverty, expectations of the new Board and wanting to make a difference in tackling child poverty.

4. Guest Speaker Child Poverty and the wider context

Anna Kettley, Save the Children, introduced a presentation which showed what child poverty means in Torbay and where Torbay fits in.

The Board noted that there are currently 1 in 4 children in the UK living in poverty (annual income in family is less than £16,000 per annum) and 1 in 8 children who live in severe poverty (annual income in family less than £12,500 per annum). An example of how child poverty affects the expectations of young people was illustrated through the story of Becky who when asked what she would like to be when you grow up? Answered "I would like to be a vet, but I know I shouldn't bother – whoever heard of anyone becoming a vet from around here?!"

The Board considered the impact of child poverty on preventing children from reaching their full potential both in terms of poor educational attainment, limited prospects, unemployment, poor health and shorter life expectancy.

The Board recognised that Torbay has significant pockets of deprivation and has one of the highest levels of child poverty in the South West (Torbay 24%, Bristol 25% and Plymouth 20%)

The Board noted that Save the Children are currently launching a new campaign to highlight the extent and impact of child poverty across the UK together with breaking the cycle of child poverty through innovative projects supporting parents (Families and Schools Together), Eat, Sleep, Learn and Play (toddler under 26 months) and exploring future new campaigns early intervention, Making Work Pay and affordable child care.

The Director of Children's Services asked the Board to consider Save the Children sitting on the Child Poverty Commissioning Board. The Board agreed to this and Anna was happy to be a full member.

Action:

- i) Exploration of more localised data relating to young carers and single parents in Torbay to be identified and incorporated within the Strategy for Torbay (Michelle Kennedy/Lesley Gibbings)**

5. Community Representation

Nikki Henderson joined the Board meeting to outline and give information on the community representative options. Nikki is currently the main representative for the voluntary sector involved in the Children's Partnership Improvement Plan (CPIP).

The Board considered the options available and agreed that until Torbay's voluntary sector resolve their issues considering their future, that CVA appointment will be deferred and an interim representative for the voluntary sector on CPIP should be nominated to sit on the Board.

The Board supported the decision that Nikki Henderson should be a member of the Board.

6. Child Poverty Strategy Discussion

The Board agreed to defer this item for discussion at another meet in early December 2012 when a work programme will be planned, statement for Press confirmed and Needs Assessment published.

Future meeting: February to be based in community at Paignton Library

7. AOB: None