



Minutes of the Torbay Child Poverty Commission

4 December 2012

-: Present :-

Michelle Kennedy (Chair),
Councillor Neil Bent, Councillor Jenny Faulkner, Councillor Alison Hernandez, Councillor
Chris Lewis and Councillor Julien Parrott

(Also in attendance: Richard Williams, Anna Kettley, Nikki Henderson, Julie Sharland,
Sue Moses (notes))

1. Apologies for Absence

All invited Members present

2. Minutes of last meeting

The Commission noted the accuracy of the minutes from the last meeting on 14th November. Amendments were requested on items 1 and 2.

3. Matters arising

2. *Terms of Reference:* testing/challenging recommendations to be processed through a task and finish group within Overview and Scrutiny – Councillor Neil Bent to explore and hold discussions on how to take this forward

4. *Child Poverty and the wider context:* The Chair updated the Commission regarding her exploration of data to identify young carers and single parents. The findings concluded that:

- no specific carer data was recorded by Local Authorities or the Government
- latest release single parent data collected through the National Indicator 116 (child poverty proxy)¹ showing that Torbay has 60% of children (3,495) in poverty in Torbay are in lone parent households on benefit (JSA/IS)

The Commission noted that Torbay's Young Carer's Strategy Plan does not make any reference to the Needs Assessment for child poverty and agreed that this should be feedback to the Young Carer's Strategy Group

2.4 *Terms of Reference: Membership:* Julie Sharland reported to the Commission that the TEDC Board had put forward Sheena Leaf, non-executive Director, to represent the business sector.

The Commission were reminded of the protocol that any recommendations concerning the Commission should be made through the Chair. The Chair asked members to consider the proposal.

The Commission agreed that they were happy to appoint Sheena Leaf to be a member of the Child Poverty Commission

Actions:

- i) Overview and Scrutiny Task and Finish Groups: Councillor Neil Bent to explore how to take this forward in the future**
- ii) Young Carer's Strategy: Inclusion of reference to Child Poverty to be added to Young Carer's Strategy report (Richard Williams)**
- iii) New membership of Commission to be updated to include Sheena Leaf (Susan Moses)**

4. Overview of Child Poverty Strategy

Julie Sharland, Strategic Housing Manager, gave an overview of the Child Poverty Strategy (Chapter 3) outlining the gaps in local action within the priority areas.

The Commission reflected on each theme giving special consideration to each strategic priority and key messages from the Needs Assessment and National Child Poverty Unit guidance.

Key discussion of strategic priorities centred around progress since the Child Poverty Strategy was finalised:

- Parental Employment and Adult Skills:
Strategic priority: Young People – tackling unemployment.
 - ⇒ Youth Offer: proposed new vision for Youth Offer in Torbay being presented to the Children's Policy Development Group (PDG).
 - ⇒ Overview and Scrutiny: Youth Unemployment findings and recommendations report due to be discussed jointly with PDG, Overview and Scrutiny and Child Poverty Commission
 - ⇒ Schools: Ofsted Annual Report recognises Torbay Early Years to be the best in the Country with Secondary schools also at the top of the league tables
 - ⇒ Development of 6th Form colleagues in schools for the most vulnerable young people (Combe Pafford)

The Commission recognised the wider implications for child poverty within the Neighbourhood plans and agreed that this should be endorsed with a child poverty proofing statement

- Financial Support: ensuring that financial support is responsive to families' situations

Strategic priority:

- ⇒ Poverty Premium – additional cost of borrowing data available
- ⇒ Strategic Welfare Reform Group headed by Directors and Jobcentre Plus in early stages of development
- ⇒ Job Clubs: currently funded by Jobcentre Plus across Torbay

- Housing and Neighbourhoods: ensuring that children's environments support them to thrive.

Strategic priority:

- ⇒ Allocation Policy currently meeting the vulnerable families need. Due for review next year
- ⇒ Landlords to be encouraged to improve property conditions
- ⇒ Fuel Poverty

Early Years & Education, Health and Family Support:

Strategic priority:

- ⇒ Children given the best start in life
- ⇒ Parents supported through Parenting Programmes in schools
- ⇒ Role of governors
- ⇒ Narrowing the gap in achievement for those on FSM

Health and Family support: Children born into poverty are more likely to have a disadvantage from the start by being born small, early or both, be bottle fed or dies in the first year of life.

Strategic priority:

- ⇒ In Torbay's most deprived wards 20% of mothers smoke during their pregnancy
- ⇒ Teenage conceptions are reducing but still higher than the national average

Actions

- i) Examples of Child poverty impact assessments for development and use Neighbourhood plans to be circulated to Members (Chair)**
- ii) Consideration of evidence around the impact of welfare reforms to be explored (Chair)**
- iii) Future agenda item: Hele's Angels initiatives report to be presented to Commission by Chris Forrester (Chair)**

5. Work Plan

The Commission brainstormed what they wanted as products/outcomes and processes. A timetable of actions and priorities was agreed based on the Strategic priorities within the Child Poverty Strategy.

WORKPLAN

Child Poverty Commission reports

Interim report May 2013 followed by hard hitting **Annual Report** on what we have done in **Sept 2013**

Full Commission meetings planned bi-monthly

Evidence feedback at:

Feb 2013	Paignton Library Schools and Community
April 2013	Financial Inclusion and housing
June 2013	Business/employment
Aug 2013	

Councillors agreed to gather evidence outside of the full Commission meetings based on the key Child Poverty Strategy priorities and bring a short report of their findings back to a full Commission meeting. Officer support will be identified to assist with this process.

Allocation was agreed as:-

Business/employment	Cllr Chris Lewis
Schools	Cllr Jenny Falkner
Community	Cllr Neil Bent
Financial Inclusion	Cllr Alison Hernandez
Housing	Cllr Julien Parrot

The Commission agreed that the first Public meeting in February should be for 3 hrs at Paignton Library, the first hour would be a 'meet the Commission' session in the foyer followed by the normal full Commission meeting (the Public will be welcome as observers). Further planning/focus of the meeting will be by email exchange.

Actions

- i) Scoping document to be outlined by December 2012 to include key lines of enquiry, identified Officer support for each priority, child poverty grant elements and shadowing, (Richard Williams/Chair)**
- ii) National prospective of key priorities to be explored by Save the Children (Anna Kettle)**
- iii) Planning meeting to be set up attended by Richard Williams, Julie Sharland, Nikki Henderson and Ward Councillors in December (Susan Moses)**

6. Communications

The Chair asked the Commission to consider the need for a communication strategy and to think about resources, audiences and protocols including press releases.

The Commission discussed the possibilities of having a web page, linking with others through a press column written by the Chair and press statement enquiries.

The Chair tabled a draft press statement for approval by the Commission. Amendments were made.

Actions

- i) Communication Team to be contacted about the web page and press statements (Richard Williams)**
- ii) Press statement to be amended and re-circulated to Commission (Chair)**
- iii) Herald Express newspaper contact details to be sent to Chair (Richard Williams)**