

TURNING THE TIDE ON POVERTY

Overview and Scrutiny Board's Anti-Poverty Task and Finish Group Review Action Plan update

Background

The Task and Finish Group made recommendations to cabinet in August 2020 based on the 2010 Marmot Report 'Fair Society, Healthy Lives' six policy recommendations to address inequalities in health outcomes:

- Give every child the best start in life.
- Enable all children, young people and adults to maximise their capabilities and have control over their lives.
- Create fair employment and good work for all.
- Ensure a healthy standard of living for all.
- Create and develop healthy and sustainable places and communities.
- Strengthen the role and impact of ill health prevention.

A review published in February 2020, at the start of the Covid-19 pandemic in the UK found that since 2010 improvements in life expectancy in England had stalled. This was the first decade since 1900 when this was observed.

A further review was done after the first wave of Covid-19 – Build Back Fairer: The COVID-19 Marmot Review. The Pandemic, Socioeconomic and Health Inequalities in England. This reported that "COVID-19 has exposed and amplified the inequalities we observed in our 10 Years On report and the economic harm caused by containment measures – lockdowns, tier systems, social isolation measures – will further damage health and widen health inequalities."

Another wave of cases in late 2020 prompted a further national lockdown and restrictions have been in place for most of 2021. The roadmap for lifting of final restrictions on 21st June 2021 is currently under review.

As a result the Covid-19 recovery phase has been delayed as we entered another phase of response. This has affected the delivery of the initial action plan. Although many of the actions are now in place, a review of further impacts from the second lockdown is needed to inform this work. A rapid needs assessment highlighted some of the expected impacts and made recommendations for actions to address these (Appendix).

The officer steering group met on 24th March 2021 following the retirement of Dr Caroline Dimond who led this work. Significant progress was noted but it was recognised that the Turning the Tide work needed a sharper focus to ensure the desired outcomes were achieved.

Proposals

The Torbay Covid-19 Recovery Strategy sets out a number of recovery work streams:

- Council redesign
- Children services
- Adults
- Public Health
- Economy
- Place
- Community Welfare

These are underpinned by financial recovery and communications. The work is informed by impact assessments covering Economic, Humanitarian, Environmental/Infrastructure and Resilience.

There is a degree of overlap between the aims and aspirations of Turning the Tide on Poverty and the Recovery Strategy. Both seek to mitigate the impact on residents of deprivation compounded by the effects of Covid-19 over the past year. It is recognised that short, intermediate and long-term actions are needed.

The Recovery Strategy is led by a multi-agency co-ordinating board which ensures that actions are taken forward across the system and involved a broad range of partners in addition to Torbay Council. Given the synergy between the Recovery Strategy and Turning the Tide on Poverty areas of focus, it is opportune to explore alignment between these work streams in revising our approach to recovery planning. This also ensures that there is clear multi-agency leadership.

It is also proposed that a series of workshops are held to further refine the action plan for Turning the Tide on Poverty to ensure we are focused on the issues that emerge as restrictions are lifted in June 2021.

Recommendations

The Overview and Scrutiny Committee are asked to:

1. Support alignment of Turning the Tide on Poverty with the Torbay Recovery Strategy; and
2. Endorse further refining of the action plan following focused workshops on Marmot themes.