

<b>Subject:</b>	<b>Food poverty action plan progress update Report</b>		
<b>Date of Meeting:</b>	<b>13 March 2017</b>		
<b>Report of:</b>	<b>Executive Director for Health and Adult Social Care</b>		
<b>Contact Officer:</b>	<b>Name:</b>	<b>Becky Woodiwiss</b>	<b>Tel: 01273 29296575</b>
	<b>Email:</b>	<b>Becky.woodiwiss@brighton-hove.gov.uk</b>	
<b>Ward(s) affected:</b>	<b>All</b>		

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**1. PURPOSE OF REPORT AND POLICY CONTEXT**

- 1.1 The report is for note as an update on the progress of implementation of the citywide Food Poverty Action Plan (FPAP) which was adopted by this Committee in 23rd November 2015 with a recommendation for an update near the half way stage and a final report after three years.
- 1.2 A full copy of the FPAP is attached in Appendix 1

**2. RECOMMENDATIONS:**

- 2.1 The Committee welcomes this report and notes the progress of all partners involved in delivering the Food Poverty Action Plan.
- 2.2 The Committee instructs officers to bring back a report at the end of the action plan period highlighting successes and learning.

**3. CONTEXT/ BACKGROUND INFORMATION**

- 3.1 The principles underpinning the Food Poverty Action Plan (FPAP) are to:
  - 3.1.1 focus the city's limited resources most effectively,
  - 3.1.2 reduce the impact of food poverty on the health and wellbeing of local people,
  - 3.1.3 mitigate against the likely impact of future health and social care budgets if food poverty is not addressed.
- 3.2 The FPAP is for the city as a whole and is both pragmatic and aspirational. It contains 80 actions, over half of which relate to Brighton and Hove City Council services or functions. Delivery of these is achievable within current resources, but with an emphasis on begin prepared to change working practices in order to achieve more with less. There are also other proposals where the work is being led by partners who seek external funding for the more aspirational actions. This report will include the range of actions undertaken by both the Council and partners with a focus on council owned actions.
- 3.3 The aims of the Food Poverty Action Plan are;

- Aim1:** Tackle the underlying causes of food poverty in the city.
- Aim 2:** As a bare minimum, ensure that every child in the city can eat one nutritious meal a day. Ensure that every vulnerable adult can eat one nutritious meal a day.
- Aim 3:** Brighton & Hove becomes a city that cooks and eats together. This includes access to cooking equipment and healthy affordable food, developing cooking skills as well as promoting the importance of shared meals.
- Aim 4:** When prevention is not enough – ensure there is a crisis and emergency support so that people do not go hungry in the city.
- Aim 5:** Commit to measuring levels of food poverty so we know if we are being effective.

**Progress update against these aims.**

- 3.4 The FPAP has been acclaimed nationally as best practice, with Sustain (the national food policy organisation) using the Food Poverty Action Plan as a model that they are encouraging others nationally to adopt and the GLA offering funding to London Boroughs to do something similar.
- 3.5 Locally, the plan has been seen as an effective model of ‘doing more with less’ in challenging times and for effective partnership. The City Council departments involved collectively won the 2016 Community Works Sector Star award in the ‘Most Innovative Commission or Public Sector Service’ category.
- 3.6 BHFP is tasked with reporting on progress and their report, compiled following a ‘one year on event in November, is attached in Appendix 2. This report covers the work of all of the partners involved and identifies progress, challenges and next steps for each of the aims within the plan. It will not be considered final until the end of March 2017 to allow for further partner input. Some relevant headlines relating to Council delivery are included here.
- 3.7 For 2015/16 exclusive breastfeeding at 6-8 weeks is 57% – the highest rate in England. There are a range of initiatives are in place focusing on areas and groups with lower rate in the city.
- 3.8 1100 children attend a primary school breakfast club every school day in Brighton & Hove. 66% of the city’s primary school breakfast clubs have been supported to improve the nutritional content of their breakfast provision through the Healthy Choice Award. BHFP produced a [Primary School Breakfast Clubs in Brighton & Hove report](#), a good practice booklet and delivered a training session for staff involved in breakfast club provision.
- 3.9 The School Meals Service has been proactive in delivering work on the FPAP including continuing to deliver universal infant free school meals at silver ‘food for life’ standard, and has developed innovative new ways to improve uptake of free school meals. A successful pilot partnership (combining Chomp holiday hunger club with funding and staff from the School Meals Service) took place at West Blatchington Primary School, and is set to continue.
- 3.10 One of the high impact areas identified for the recommission of the Public Health Community Nursing service 2017-2020 is - Healthy Weight, Healthy Nutrition (

including physical activity) and the service will have a targeted element to areas/families with higher needs who are often more likely to experience food poverty

- 3.11 A joint campaign has been developed between Public Health, Children's Centres and BHFP to increase uptake of Healthy Start vouchers and vitamins, including local posters and work to improve knowledge amongst health professionals, with retailers and in community settings. Please support this campaign and help to spread the word – currently 3 in 10 eligible families in the city are missing out – worth up to £900 per child.
- 3.12 Thirty schools were involved with the Sugar Smart challenge which was jointly delivered by AITC coaches, the Oral Health Promotion Team and the PH Schools Programme Team and a partnership with Food Partnership and the Jamie Oliver Food Foundation. Seven schools received cookery lessons for families delivered by the Food Partnership and 26 schools signed up for food education support.
- 3.13 Public Health have gained LGA, funding to work with their Behavioural Insights Team, local partners and secondary schools to gain insights into the factors that influence pupils to buy and consume sugary drinks and subsequently develop appropriate interventions.
- 3.14 Public Health Schools Programme collates data from the Safe and Well at School Survey , IMD data on child poverty etc. to develop school profiles and with the schools (and other partners) develop priority initiatives such as healthy weight, fruit and vegetable consumption.
- 3.15 Workshop with Senior BHCC housing staff and BHT led to changes in BHCC working practices including inclusion of food poverty questions in STAR tenancy survey; and pilot pre-tenancy workshop with BHFP and BHT.
- 3.16 When the community meals contract ended, an independent review by ASC on year on checked whether individuals had a new meals provision in place or had made alternative arrangements. The majority of people were happy with the outcome and some had found inventive, alternative ways of getting access to meals.
- 3.17 Initiatives with vulnerable older people include routinely promoting information about lunch clubs and shared meals in the city throughout the services and as part of the ongoing support for people receiving ASC services.
- 3.18 Sheltered Housing refurbishments to include a fridge/freezer rather than a fridge with icebox as this helps cooking on a budget for one or two people. Also encouraging shared meals in sheltered housing premises and promoting casserole club.
- 3.19 BHCC worked with restaurants and caterers on healthier options, as part of the Sugar Smart Campaign (which also ran much wider) and produced a guide to Healthy Choice catering.

- 3.20 BHCC Communities Team has kept the issue of food poverty on their agenda for example informing the new prospectus funding arrangements.
- 3.21 BHCC Public Health have been very proactive, taking the report to Health & Wellbeing Board, taking a lead on Council reporting, and taking forward recommendations. BHFP presented to the Equalities and Inclusion Partnership.
- 3.22 BHFP good food grants & development support now support shared meals.
- 3.23 Food Banks have continued to expand provision and expand it to include access to advice services and a focus on prevention . Moneyworks partners have worked more closely with food banks, with more advisors attending food bank sessions. BHFP continue to support and seek to secure funding for the Food Banks and Emergency Food network, bringing food banks together with other services.
- 3.24 FareShare have increased their volunteer number and their food supply, as well as their reach. They have encouraged healthier food donations. Public health has committed funding for FareShare food redistribution until 2019.
- 3.25 The Local Transport Strategy (March 2015) stresses both connecting people with shopping areas, and the importance of local shopping centres in allowing access to food, as well as creating healthier environments that encourage walking and cycling to be used for food shopping journeys.

#### **4. ANALYSIS & CONSIDERATION OF ANY ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS**

- 4.1 With further welfare reforms, continuing increases to housing costs, post-Brexit food costs, issues of under-employment / low wage levels and changes to the way statutory services are funded and delivered, it is likely that there will be an increase in the numbers at risk of food poverty, both crisis or emergency food poverty and the long-term food poverty, also known as household food insecurity.

BHFP's annual survey of food bank use <sup>1</sup> continues to provide a useful insight. The 2016 survey found that despite the improvements in the national economy, food bank usage remains steady in the city, increasing slightly on 2015 figures. 15 food banks in Brighton and Hove gave out food parcels to an average of 298 households per week. The average value of a food parcel was £23. Nine of the fourteen food banks reported that there had been increase in demand over the last year .

BHCC's city tracker question continues to provide extremely useful picture of household food insecurity or 'long term' food poverty. In 2016, one in five (19%) don't think they will have enough money in the coming year (down from 23% in 2014 and 2015).

Those most likely to struggle with meeting basic living costs continue to be concentrated in particular groups:

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<sup>1</sup> <http://bhfood.org.uk/reports-publications/bhfp-reports/207-food-banks-and-emergency-food-network-report-2016-final-1/file>

- 4.1.1 Over a third living in social housing (38%) and 31% renting privately disagree that they will have the ability to meet basic living cost in the coming year compared to only 11% of those who own their home either outright or on a mortgage;
- 4.1.2 Over a quarter aged 18 to 34 (27%) compared to only 15% of those aged 35-64 and 11% of those aged 65 or over a third of those with a health problem or disability that affects their activity (35%) compared to only 17% without;
- 4.1.3 BHCC's STAR survey of tenants found that one in five respondents (21%) claimed that they, or someone within their household, had reduced portion sizes or even missed meals in the previous two months because they couldn't afford enough food. This was more prevalent for younger rather than older tenants with more than a third of under 35s saying they had experienced this (37%), whereas only 8% of the over 65s said the same.
- 4.1.4 If the FPAP is not further progressed there may be further risk for some of the city's most vulnerable people experiencing food poverty. This will directly impact on their health, wellbeing and ability to learn. There may be increased demand for crisis services such as food banks and the Local Discretionary Social Fund. As food banks are largely volunteer-led there is a risk that they are not able to cope with the additional demand.
- 4.2 If the FPAP is not progressed here may be also be an increase in demand on key services, by people experiencing long term food poverty, in Adult Social Care from older people and disabled people; on Children's Services from families experiencing food poverty; schools where children are struggling to learn due to hunger; advice services. In addition, the Local Discretionary Social Fund and Food Banks, services set up to respond to crisis or emergency food poverty in the short term, may struggle if they are asked to meet long term food poverty demands..

## **5. COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT & CONSULTATION**

- 5.1 There has been no community consultation for this specific report. However relevant organisations and staff groups were consulted extensively in developing the action plan and have reported on progress.
- 5.2 Individual projects and initiatives will involve the community as required.
- 5.3 CCG health engagement groups research topic for Jan – March 2017 is food and food access. Once focus groups have been completed consider actions will be considered.
- 5.4 Whilst there has been some progress, schools could engage much better with food poverty agenda.
- 5.5 Early years workshops are planned to look at what next for food and early years work building on the success of partnership work around Healthy Start voucher uptake, breastfeeding work and links between public health and children's centres.

## 6. CONCLUSION

- 6.1 The committee is asked to note the importance of the Food Poverty Action Plan and the success of its partnership approach and to continue to support and champion the plan.
- 6.2 The committee is asked to note the areas where BHFP consider progress is slower and how progress can be assisted.
- 6.3 The committee is asked to note the launch of the campaign to increase Healthy Start voucher uptake and consider how it can be assisted.
- 6.4 The Local Discretionary Social Fund (LDSF) provides payments for those on low income with an unforeseen emergency or financial crisis. In 2015-2016, food related LDSF grants totalled over £60,000. 886 LDSF applications were made for 'food expenses' of which 372 were funded. Additionally 994 applications made for cooking equipment (kitchen ware, cooking facilities, fridges) of which 483 were funded. The Committee is reminded of the importance of this fund and the important role it plays in the city.

## 7. FINANCIAL & OTHER IMPLICATIONS:

### Financial Implications:

- 7.1 There are no financial implications as a direct result of the recommendations of this report.

*Finance Officer Consulted: Name David Ellis*

*Date: 21/02/17*

### Legal Implications:

There are no legal implications arising out of this report which is for noting.

*Lawyer Consulted:*

*Name Judith Fisher*

*Date: 16.2.2017*

### Equalities Implications:

- 7.2 The Food Poverty Action Plan highlights population groups in the city's that are particularly vulnerable to food poverty. A full Equality Impact Assessment was completed December 2015. It is available on request.

### Sustainability Implications:

- 7.3 The Food Poverty Action Plan includes a number of broader aims relating to sustainability and preventing the 'risk' for food poverty for delivery outside of this Action Plan. These include; promoting the living wage and the implications of welfare reform; matters to do with food production and food waste; impact of the current food system on ecology and environmental impacts.

## SUPPORTING DOCUMENTATION

### Appendices:

1. Food Poverty Action Plan agreed in November 2015
2. Summary of progress against the action plan, February 2017
3. Equality Impact Assessment of the Food Poverty Action Plan Nov 2015

Appendix 1

#### Crime & Disorder Implications:

- 1.1 The 2008 Associate Parliamentary Food and Health Forum inquiry (an all-party independent forum for the exchange of views and information on food policy in the UK Parliament), concluded that poor nutrition is a significant contributor to the increasing rate of crime, aggression, depression and poor school performance. Food poverty is a direct contributor to poor nutrition. Raising awareness of the links between diet and behaviour and improving the access to decent nutrition for the most vulnerable of our residents is a key.

#### Risk and Opportunity Management Implications:

- 1.2 Risk – that current City Council funding for work that contributes or can contribute directly to address and mitigate on food poverty is further reduced to such an extent that it is not possible to deliver on these actions.

Risk – that work to address the current levels of food poverty is not undertaken and the city has to deal with the long term costs of poor mental and physical health to residents.

Opportunity – that Brighton & Hove continues to pioneer food work and other places continue to look to learn from the City's work.

Opportunity – through partnership working on food issues additional resources from outside the city continue to be brought into the city. For example; more than £700,000 has been brought into the city by the Food Partnership over the last three years.

#### Public Health Implications:

- 1.3 Access to basic nutrition is basic human need and food poverty is not acceptable in our city. The Food Poverty Action Plan is an essential aspect of protecting, improving and promoting the health and wellbeing of some of the most (potentially) vulnerable residents in our city. It also addresses each of the 6 policy objectives set out in the 2010 Marmot Report 'Fair Society, Healthy Lives',

Corporate / Citywide Implications:

- 1.4 Brighton & Hove Connected Sustainable Communities Strategy includes increasing equality as a key principle and improving health and wellbeing as a priority to which this contributes.
- 1.5 The FPAP continues to address the Food (and Fuel) Poverty element of the Council's Financial Inclusion Strategy.
- 1.6 The FPAP is closely allied to the Fairness Commission report and recommendations.