

The LINCOLN ANTI-POVERTY STRATEGY
2014- 2016

March 2014 v1

Foreword

Nothing sparks a fiercer debate than the many differing views on the extent, causes and impacts of poverty. It often appears like the topic has become a national obsession with a number of television programmes appearing to highlight the plight of individuals in poverty. Unfortunately these shows do shape and influence common perceptions of poverty and often reinforce views that living in poverty remains a lifestyle choice for many. These shows, edited for entertainment but masquerading as documentaries are extremely damaging and form part of what can be described as a wider media assault on people in poverty.

The reality is very different, both nationally and in the city. The City Council's Community Leadership Scrutiny Committee (whose remit is to actively promote and strengthen the council's community leadership role by speaking up for the people of Lincoln on any matters which affect their well being) has undertaken extensive work to develop this strategy and as part of this uncovered, challenged and discarded a whole range of myths about poverty. It's not just about being out of work and having to survive on benefits payments. Many households in poverty today are actually working households where people are struggling to survive in jobs paying minimum wage, or are in part-time work that simply does not provide sufficient hours to survive or are facing severe financial hardship caused by the insecurity of zero hour contract working. We are now facing for the first time more working people on low income living in poverty than non working people living in poverty. Poverty can affect anyone - young or old, in a family or alone and the consequences in terms of mental and physical health can be devastating.

We know what poverty means in the city from the case studies undertaken and the extensive statistical evidence base reviewed by the committee. It means:

- Not having sufficient income to make ends meet, causing severe hardship, stress, anxiety and depression
- Not having access to jobs that will help raise income
- Having to make difficult decisions between eating, heating the home, clothing the children, paying the bills or paying debts
- Not having any savings at all so when the washing machine breaks down or the vacuum cleaner stops working the only option is to borrow on expensive credit terms to get a replacement - compounding the financial struggle
- Living in poor housing conditions, which impact on the health of the whole family and lead to even higher fuel bills - if you choose to heat the house at all
- Children feeling isolated, bullied and vulnerable because they can't enjoy the same activities and their friends at school

I would urge you to read the extensive evidence base supporting this strategy, which provides an extensive picture of poverty in the city. 11,000 people live in some of the most deprived communities in the country. One in five people earn less than £10,016 per annum, one in four children (4,500 children) live in poverty and 6,500 households are at risk of fuel poverty. In 2013, one food bank alone issued over 30,000 meals in the city. These are headline figures and there are many heartbreaking individual stories behind the statistics. It is a 'wake up call' for us all.

It's vital we create a vibrant growing city - moving into good quality employment is still one the most effective way for working aged people to move out of poverty. The Council is working with its partners on a linked Growth Strategy covering the longer term aspirations to grow the city and create decent employment for all, and this Anti-Poverty strategy sits alongside this work by focussing on what we can all do now to help people in need. What you will find in the following pages is an intention to make a difference in the short term - to help people now in their daily struggle to 'make ends meet'.

The creation of this strategy has been both an amazing, but at the same time sad, journey of discovery over the last nine months and I must thank all of the partners who have taken the time to become involved in this vital work. Committee has engaged with all relevant stakeholders including public, private and third sector organisations and through this work sought to further promote effective partnerships to meet the needs of the city. Without the help and support and on-going commitment from this wide range of organisations we could not have produced this strategy. The challenge has only just begun - there is a huge amount of work ahead - but together as a range of different partners we will make a difference to the daily lives of some of our most vulnerable residents in the city.

If you have not got involved already I would urge you to do so, and if you are living in poverty I would urge to contact the advice services offered by any one of the partners - we can help.

Cllr Karen Lee
Chair of Community Leadership Scrutiny Committee

Executive Summary

The strategy below has been developed following an extensive piece of detailed scrutiny by the City Council's Community Leadership Scrutiny Committee over a nine month period. The review included a study many academic texts, interviews with key partners and case studies from families living in poverty.

The outcome set from the start was to produce a strategy that made a difference in their daily lives for local people who are financially vulnerable. It is nested very clearly in what all partners can do here and now today to help people. As such the strategy has clear links to its 'sister strategy' - the emerging Growth strategy, which itself seeks to tackle the longer term infrastructure issues within the city that ultimately will create the job opportunities to lift people out of poverty.

The strategy forms a suite of documents that together provide a comprehensive picture of poverty in the city and how partners can come together to tackle the issues and have some impact on the daily financial struggle for residents. The documents are:

- Statistical evidence base
- A journal examining the review process itself
- This Strategy setting the general direction over the next 2 years
- An annual action plan detailing the action that will be taken by all partners

The ambition for the strategy is grounded in reality. It's not an inspiring visionary statement that in reality is unachievable and destined to always remain aspirational. Put simply it is:

“Working with partners, to tackle the effects of poverty, and so have a positive noticeable impact on people's daily lives”

This is supported by a series of Objectives, each with a range of programmes for further action. These are summarised as:

- **Objective One: Helping people maximise their income**
 - Increasing income
 - Increasing money management skills and confidence
 - More help when the household budget runs out
 - Limiting the impact of expensive credit

- **Objective Two: Making the move into work easier**
 - Raising awareness of the support available
 - Moving people into training
 - Helping people apply for jobs

- **Objective Three: Helping with the cost of raising a child**
 - Supporting families to feed and clothe their children
 - Supporting children to get involved in school life

- **Objective Four: Breaking the link between poor health and poverty**
 - Helping to stop poverty making people ill
 - Helping those facing poverty due to illness

- **Objective Five: Making sure older people get the services they need**
 - Advice designed around the individual

- **Objective six: Improving the condition of people's homes**
 - Reducing the cost of running a home
 - Improving poor quality housing that makes people ill
 - Helping people find a home that meets their needs

- **Objective seven: Working in a joined up way**
 - Keeping agencies in touch
 - Supporting partners to make a difference
 - Communicating the work of this group

Not all of the objectives will be progressed at the same speed or even at the same time. They provide a holistic overview of where effort needs to be placed over time.

The Purpose of this Strategy

Poverty - a definition

Throughout the period of development for this strategy the definition produced by Townsend, P. (1979) cited by PSE UK (2013) *Deprivation and Poverty* has been used:

“Individuals, families and groups in the population can be said to be in poverty when they lack the resources to obtain the types of diet, participate in the activities, and have the living conditions and amenities which are customary, or at least widely encouraged or approved, in the societies to which they belong. Their resources are so seriously below those commanded by the average individual or family that they are, in effect, excluded from ordinary patterns, customs and activities.”

There is an alternative definition of poverty based on household income below 60% of the median income, and whilst this can form the basis for measurement, in a period of intense recession (such as the one experienced in the UK since 2008) where income levels at best stagnate or at worst are falling, this can result in the median income level dropping and hence in statistical terms more people falling outside the definition of poverty. This cannot be right as these people remain in poverty facing all the challenges associated with low income.

Outcomes expected from this work

Key outcomes will be:

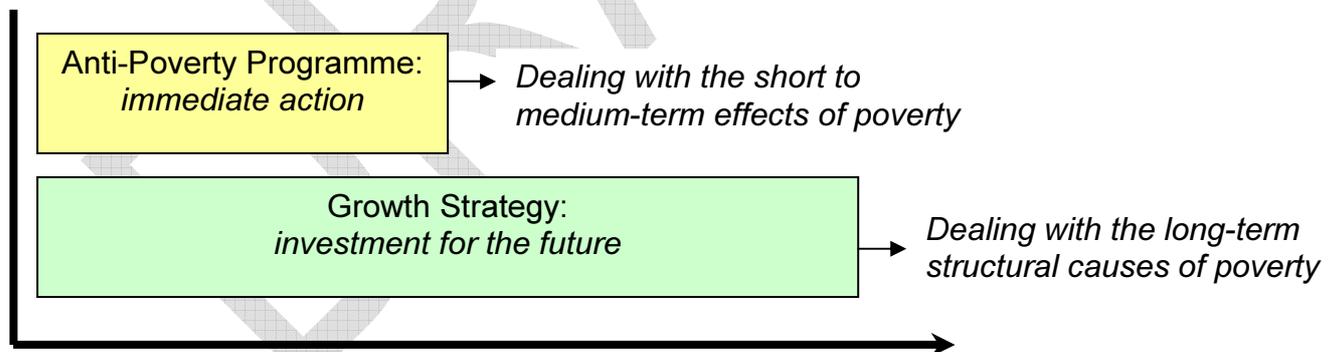
- Those residents in most need “see and feel” the outcome of the strategy
- Raising public awareness of the scale of the problem of poverty in Lincoln and where people can go to get the help they need
- Raising awareness of the extensive support already available across the city, offered by a range of partners and removing any stigma attached with accessing such help
- Across all partners, removing areas of duplication of effort to make our collective resources go further
- Identifying and closing the gaps in service provision so people are able to access the support they need locally

However, the strategy remains realistic. It will not in itself eradicate the causes of poverty, but it will help people on low income to be better able to meet their daily financial struggle and equip them over time with the skills, confidence and support to make life that bit better.

The long-term structural work to tackle poverty is also happening. Access to sufficient and decently paid work is still the best route for people out of poverty and the Lincoln Growth Strategy contains a range of initiatives and investment to:

- Grow Lincoln's economy to provide that spread of jobs,
- Create a better transport infrastructure both within the city and out to other cities to make Lincoln truly competitive and attract new industries,
- Build up the vocational training offer and so drive up the skills base of local people, placing them in the best position to take the new jobs and
- Develop more affordable housing that people can afford to buy/ rent and maintain.

Although separate, the Anti-Poverty Strategy is very much nestled within the longer-term Growth Strategy and the opportunity to link into, and inform, the Growth Strategy is evident:



BACKGROUND

The Journey so far

Since July 2013, the City Council's Community Leadership Scrutiny Committee has worked with partners in the city to review the issue of poverty in Lincoln. This has involved a substantial amount of work including:

- Seven scrutiny committee workshops with a wide range partners exploring individual aspects of poverty
- Large body of statistics and case studies helping to 'paint a picture' of poverty in Lincoln
- Extensive period of research -over 50 academic journals reviewed covering those experts at the forefront of the topic
- Lots of survey work and 'one to one' interviews with partners and stakeholders
- Case studies with individual families willing to share their experience
- A high profile conference on 26th February 2014, attracting over 100 delegates from in excess of 50 public private and voluntary sector organisations all keen to be involved in developing new ways to help tackle poverty in the city

The full extent of the work undertaken to develop this strategy is documented in the 'Poverty in Lincoln' report, and the underpinning statistical analysis of poverty in Lincoln is included in the 'Evidence Base'. Both documents are available on the City of Lincoln Council website.

The review has taken place during a time of austerity, both at a national and local level. Public spending cuts and welfare reforms have exacerbated the issue of poverty for many. Subsequently, the landscape affecting the City Council's strategic priority of 'Protecting the Poorest People in Lincoln' has changed dramatically. The council believes it has a fundamental responsibility to respond to this changing landscape, and through partnership working, challenge poverty in all its forms.

The extent of poverty in the city:

Whilst the extensive evidence base sits as a separate document, key headline figures are included here by way of a snapshot of the issues facing people on low income in Lincoln:

- Seven areas in the city are considered within the most 10% deprived within the country. This covers 11,000 Lincoln residents
- 4,500 children in the city live in low income families. This accounts for 23.8% of children compared to 20.1% across England. Two thirds of children in poverty are aged 10 or younger and rates differ across the city with some wards having as many as 33% of children in relative poverty
- 6,500 Lincoln households are experiencing fuel poverty - 16.3% of all households compared to 11% across England.
- There are 7,700 non decent owner occupied homes and 3,700 non decent privately rented dwellings in the City. There are 1,000 households (2.5%) with no central heating
- In 2013, one food bank alone issued over 30,500 emergency meals. LCAS approved 1,130 in the first six months - the highest for any district
- 8,530 residents experiencing worklessness in the city. This accounts for 13.1% of the working age population, compared to 10.9% across England. Of these 2,655 people are claiming unemployment benefit.
- 20% of employed lowest earners in the city are estimated to earn below £12,000pa
- There are 17,000 residents whose day to day activities are limited due to long term health or disability issues

OUR AMBITION

The ambition set for this strategy is grounded in reality. It's not an inspiring visionary statement that in reality is unachievable and destined to always remain aspirational.

Instead, more simply, its about helping people in poverty 'get through' the financial struggle of their daily lives in way that makes things easier for them. The true test of this ambition will be if people on low income see and feel a noticeable/ tangible difference. It's about helping financially vulnerable people in Lincoln today - not tomorrow or the day after- its now our residents need our help as they continue to live through the biggest recession for 100 years at the same time as the largest changes to the benefits system in 60 years.

The ambition is:

“Working with partners, to tackle the effects of poverty, and so have a positive noticeable impact on people’s daily lives”

Supporting this Ambition statement are a range of Objectives and supporting programmes for activity. This helps provide focus and structure to the strategy and enables all the partners involved to co-ordinate and join up to collectively tackle the issues together.

OUR OBJECTIVES

Helping people maximise their income

Poverty does not affect only those who are on fixed incomes such as people out of work or the elderly and retired. Evidence both nationally and in the city reveals that low pay is increasingly an issue for families in particular. With one in five people earning less than £12,000 per annum in Lincoln, the concept of the 'working poor' is emerging. The factors behind this are many and varied, ranging from the prevalence of minimum wage jobs, the sustainability of work as people fall into a cycle of in and out of worklessness, or the increase in under employment where people can only find part time work that is insufficient to meet their needs.

Since the recession commenced in 2008 many people have less money each month. Savings have depleted or are non existent and its clear from the evidence collected that people are suffering from multiple debt issues - be it store cards, credit cards or other unsecured debt.

Whether people are trying to survive financially on low wages or benefits payments that have seen the biggest shake up for over 60 years, there is a responsibility on all partners to ensure people are made aware of (and claim) all the income they are entitled to and are equipped with the skills to manage that income as carefully as possible.

Programme 1: Increasing income

Activity within this programme will focus on ensuring people do claim the income they are entitled to. Many older people and working families in particular remain unaware of, or are too proud, to claim the benefits available to support low income and hence provide an acceptable standard of living.

All agencies working with vulnerable families will make sure they are aware of what they are entitled to.

The programme will also feature campaigning and action to encourage the reduction of zero hour contracts of employment and the adoption by local employers of the Living Wage for all their staff.

Programme 2: Increasing money management skills and confidence

It was clear from the research collected that many people have a range of debt issues that have built up over time. Confusing financial terminology, lack of appreciation of the interest rates applied to the various credit facilities available and a basic lack of skills to budget do impact severely on how people make the most of the limited income they do have. Many people are worried about the concept of Universal Credit, often because of the prospect of managing their finances on a monthly cycle rather than fortnightly cycle.

There is already a lot of 'one off' support and advice available and this programme will seek to build on this by examining ways to provide further on-going support and mentoring to people - not only when they are already in financial crisis, but also before they start on a downward spiral of increasing debt.

Programme 3: More help when the household budget runs out

The national media has covered, in a variety of ways, the advent of food banks across the country and the escalating demand for the support they can offer. At the time of developing this strategy DEFRA released a piece of national research into food security for people in hardship and noted the intense controversy surrounding the growing use of food banks in the UK.

Within the city, food bank use has increased significantly with one food bank (Lincoln Community Larder) issuing in excess of 30,000 meals in 2013.

Whilst lack of food is one direct consequence of the household budget running out, other consequences are also evident including living in cold unheated homes and increasing use of payday loans.

This strategy seeks to co-ordinate the emergency support that is on offer be it food, crises loans or other support

Programme 4: Limiting the impact of expensive credit

The prevalence of easy to obtain, but high cost, credit is significantly impacting on the issue of poverty. When people are forced to a range of high cost lenders then it compounds their financial problems leaving them deeper in debt and even more of their income lost on repayments.

The range of providers is huge from High Street pay day lenders and pawnbrokers to doorstep lenders and ultimately unregulated loan sharks. Nationally the Office of Fair Trading estimates that the value of the payday lending market has increased by 60% between 2008 and 2012, from £900 million to an estimated £2.2 billion.

This programme will seek ways to encourage low cost alternatives and so divert people away from the legalised High Street lenders, as well as encouraging partners to take a stand against them.

The programme will also seek to further campaign against loan sharks and seek enforcement activity where they are known to exist.

Making the move into work easier

Despite the prevalence of low pay in the city, all the evidence continues to support the fact that moving into work is the most effective route out of poverty. If the job offers sufficient hours and is of a decent level of pay (Living Wage or above) it gives people back their earning potential and a route back to financial independence.

This will be a challenge as unemployment remains high in the city with 2,500 people on Job Seeker Allowance and approximately 8,500 working age people overall experiencing worklessness.

Programme 1: Raising awareness of the support available

With the move by many organisations to on-line access and telephone contact centre support, this programme will look at how people on low income can access the support they need. The review heard of many cases where people could not afford internet access and any credit they could afford to place on their mobile phone was easily eaten into on lengthy telephone calls to organisations.

Face to face contact remains important to our many vulnerable communities and so ensuring access to help and support within the communities where people live (and hence avoid expensive transport costs) will be a particular feature of this programme.

Programme 2: Moving people into training

The emergence since the recession of the cycle of needing experience to get a job, but needing a job to get experience needs to be broken. Evidence collected as part of the review indicated that as many as 20% of young people were not prepared for the work environment - typically not ready for a 37 hour week, having few customer care skills, possessing a lack of knowledge or a lack of interest.

With competition for jobs even more intense, this programme will look at how people can be placed in work experience positions to give them the work experience they need.

The programme will also explore the range of training opportunities, which will give people the basic IT, literacy and other work related base qualifications.

Programme 3: Helping people apply for jobs

More needs to be done to help people apply for jobs. Whilst the review found lots of examples of organisations helping people to seek out and apply for work, this programme will focus on how partners can manage job seeker expectations and match their skills to the emerging local market sectors such as food manufacturing, engineering, the visitor economy and hospitality.

The programme will also seek to tackle some of the barriers to taking paid employment including the cost of travel (particularly in that crucial first month of employment before a first wage payment) and the provision of affordable child care.

Helping with the cost of raising a child

It remains a startling fact that one in four children (4,500 children) live in families on such low income that it places them at risk of relative poverty. However, in some of our most deprived areas of the city (the city has over 11,000 residents living in some of the most deprived communities in the country) the rate of child poverty rises to 33% of all children in those areas. Whilst this is not untypical of many urban cities across the country (in context 3.5m children nationwide live in relative poverty), it does provide a 'wake up' call for the city as the financial climate continues to add pressures onto households. Recent studies suggest that the overall average cost of raising a child from birth to 21 years of age is now £222,458 - 58% higher than in 2003.

Child poverty can lead to many issues as families in poverty can suffer a myriad of problems including physical health issues arising from poor diet and housing conditions, psychological impact arising from potential domestic stress, a feeling of isolation and a more general risk of bullying inside and outside the home environment, and low educational attainment rates. All of these factors are known to limit life chances

Programme 1: Supporting families to feed and clothe their children

This programme covers activity that will support families with two of the most expensive aspects of raising a child - food and clothing (in particular school uniforms).

Whilst the majority of low income families are eligible for free school meals for their children, take-up in Lincolnshire is amongst the lowest nationally, despite extensive work in recent years to increase it. A variety of factors influence this aspect, including the risk of stigmatising, the application process and a lack of awareness of how to access it. Yet it can significantly help with

the household budget if the children can have a healthy hot meal at school. In addition, each child who receives a free school meal, the school itself benefits from a pupil premium for that child for £1,300 per annum. This continues throughout their school life to the end of Key Stage 4 and must be used to help support that child.

The programme will therefore focus on driving up the rate of free school meal take up and other initiatives such as breakfast clubs.

It will also look at ways to mitigate the cost of a school uniform. The Independent newspaper (August 2013) estimated that the average cost for kitting out a primary school pupil was £156 and for a secondary school pupil it was £285. Parents in poverty spend two-fifths of their income in August each year on back-to-school costs. Often this can result in parents taking out loans to pay the cost. This programme will seek to encourage cheaper school uniform options such as second hand exchanges and encouraging schools to move away from branded clothing, and so opening up purchasing uniforms from a wider and cheaper retail outlets such as supermarkets.

Programme 2: Supporting children to get involved in school life

Children who live in poverty can feel different, vulnerable and as they often don't participate in the activities their peers do they can become socially isolated. This leads to a lack of confidence and low aspirations. This programme will therefore explore ways to involve children in school life so they do get the opportunities to go on school trips, to experience new learning opportunities, and do gain access to the support they need to study and succeed.

Breaking the link between poor health and poverty

The review found a clear link between health and poverty. Our most deprived communities suffer significant health inequalities (both physical and mental). A number of cases studies from around the city articulated the daily financial struggle and the constant decisions being made by individuals on either paying fuel bills, or paying for other essentials such as food, rent, clothing or servicing debts. All of these pressures can cause and exacerbate physical and mental health problems.

This issue extends beyond those suffering illness themselves. The review discovered that there are a significant number of carers living in the city who survive on very low carers benefits payments. Over 75% of carers are worse off after assuming a caring role than before that role commenced.

Programme 1: Helping to stop poverty making people ill

Whilst local GP practices are often at the front line of dealing with the health effects of poverty, this programme not only seeks to maximise them as an

access point for referring to wider support, but it also seeks to explore the use of wider community hubs and the role of visiting officers as a wider network to identify and signpost people to further support.

Programme 2: Helping those facing poverty due to illness

This programme will look at how partners can take early action and help people facing ill health, or caring for someone suffering ill health, so they do not start on a downward spiral towards a financial crisis. The review received a number of submissions about people who only sought help and support when in crisis - this is too late. At a time when illness strikes, the added stress and strain of financial pressure does not aid the situation so this programme will look at ways of further proactive support for people facing longer term illness.

Making sure older people get the services they need

Whilst the many benefits system changes, which came into effect during 2013, have not impacted to the same extent on older people there remains the fact that upto 1 in 3 older people are struggling financially to meet all their outgoings. Older people who rely entirely on their pension to 'make ends meet' are often more at risk as they have a fixed income and little opportunity to supplement that income from other sources. The review heard examples of older people also making choices between eating properly, heating their homes to a safe level or using their income to pay for the personal care they may need to remain living independently.

Programme 1: Advice designed around the individual

Partners have seen an increasing demand from older people seeking financial advice, but there remain many older people who do not access the support they are entitled to. There can be a variety of reasons for this including pride, and the effort/stress of going through any application process for instance to access the benefits they are entitled to.

This programme seeks to further raise awareness of the support available to older people - financial and beyond- using a variety of sources and locations, and crucially engaging the full range of officers and workers who come into contact with older people, particularly in people's own homes.

Improving the conditions of people's homes

Poor housing has a direct impact on people's health. Those people who live in cold, damp homes because they can't afford to heat them properly and where condensation becomes an issue will suffer health problems. People who live in poor quality homes, often towards the bottom of the rental market where rents are cheaper, can suffer a range of issues if minimum standards for the property are not maintained.

The fact remains that the standard of housing can be one of the biggest impacts on a person's life, be it the standard of the property, the security of the tenure, or the physical environment within which the home is located. These are all factors, and within the city, those people who can afford only the bottom end of the market (typically private rented) are in some of our most deprived wards close to the city centre.

Programme 1: Reducing the cost of running a home

People are struggling to pay their rent in both the public and private rental sectors. Whilst the Benefits changes affecting 'under-occupancy' have impacted on social housing, with tenant arrears now increasing, the struggle to meet rental commitments in the private sector will become more prevalent as benefits gradually move to monthly direct payment to the benefits claimants rather than landlord.

Added to this is the significant increase in the number of families at risk of fuel poverty. Almost 6,500 properties are at risk of fuel poverty in the city (where over 10% of income is spent on fuel costs). This is caused primarily by the combined effects of energy inefficient housing, low income and high costs for domestic fuel. With average debts for electricity now at £354 and £377 for gas and the fuel prices increasing by 150% in the last 10 years, there is a need to examine ways to help.

Many people have heard of the poverty premium and evidence suggests that not having access to a bank account (and hence losing out on discounts for paying by direct debit), having a pre-payment electricity meter, not having access to affordable credit and not having access more generally to on-line discounts can lead to people on low income paying £1,280 more per year for goods and services.

All of these issues need a partnership approach to alleviate to make the costs more manageable

Programme 2: Improving poor quality housing that makes People ill

There remains concern about living conditions, particularly at the cheapest end of the property rental market which financially vulnerable people find themselves occupying. Whilst there are minimum standards for landlords to achieve, tenants sometime will not report issues for fear of repercussions from the landlord and this perpetuates poor living conditions.

This programme therefore seeks to explore ways we can raise the standards of properties so they meet the minimum standards of decency. Be it through better insulation, the installation of central heating (there are still estimated to be around 1,000 properties in the city without central heating) or improving the fabric of the building, work needs to focus on both enforcement and the provision of grants.

Programme 3: Helping people find a home that meets their Needs

Finding an affordable home is vital for people on low income. The Benefits system changes associated with 'under occupancy' have brought into sharp focus for tenants in social housing the costs associated with renting a property. However, there remains a lack of affordable properties for people to downsize into.

The Growth Strategy, which sits alongside the Anti poverty strategy, seeks to address the provision of new affordable housing, but there remains a role for all partners now as part of this strategy to signpost people to help, advice and support on finding a suitable home for their needs

Working in joined up way

The Lincoln Poverty conference (26th February 2014) marked the transition point for the Anti Poverty Review, when activity moved from understanding the issues to developing solutions. The feeling from the conference across the 100 plus delegates representing over 50 organisations was that there needed to be an annual event, supported by a range of opportunities to keep agencies in touch with each other.

Programme 1: Keeping agencies in touch

The programme will focus on maintaining the network of contacts created at the conference and building on it as new organisations join the work within this strategy. It will also focus on creating a joint website where practitioners can exchange information.

Programme 2: Supporting partners to make a difference

There is a commitment across all partners to support each other and so tackle the issues together. This programme will seek to facilitate topic specific activity throughout the period of the strategy where partners can come together

Programme 3: Communicating the work of this group

And finally, this programme will make sure the high profile obtained for the topic is maintained as the supporting action plan is delivered. This is a topic

that is high in the public consciousness and work will continue under this programme to make sure it remains so.

Turning the Strategy into action - 'Making it Happen'

Not all of the objectives will be progressed at the same speed or even at the same time. They provide a holistic overview of where effort needs to be placed over time. However, this strategy recognises that even across a wide partnership of agencies, to tackle all of the issue across the full range will result in far less impact due to the resources available. Therefore the strategy is supported by an annual action plan detailing where effort will be focussed in the year ahead. This will be reviewed and updated annually at a conference of all interested partners.

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