

No Bury Child Should Go Hungry

This Council believes that the best way of stopping children going hungry is to lift them and their families out of poverty.

ADD:

AN IMPORTANT CONTRIBUTION TO ACHIEVE THIS IS TO ENCOURAGE THOSE FAMILIES WHO ARE ABLE AND WHO HAVE PARENTAL RESPONSIBILITY AND CURRENTLY ARE NOT EMPLOYED TO DO ALL THEY CAN TO FIND SUITABLE EMPLOYMENT WHICH CAN HELP MAXIMISE THEIR PERSONAL ASPIRATIONS TO GIVE THEIR CHILDREN THE BEST OPPORTUNITIES IN LIFE.

This Council notes that according to research from the Food Foundation thinktank:

- 1) The number of UK children in food poverty has nearly doubled in the last year to almost 4 million.
- 2) More than one in five (22%) of households reported skipping meals, going hungry or not eating for a whole day in January, up from 12% at the equivalent point in 2022.
- 3) Polling showed increased backing for expanding free school meals in England. Eight out of 10 people (80%) polled said they favoured extending free school meal eligibility to all children in households receiving universal credit, up from 72% in October.

It further notes that:

- 1) Bury's current Healthy Start voucher uptake is only 64%, with only 1228 out of 1922 eligible beneficiaries currently accessing this scheme.
- 2) Between 1 April 2021 and 31 March 2022, food banks in the Trussell Trust's UK wide network distributed over 2.1 million emergency food parcels to people in crisis. This is an increase of 14% compared to the same period in 2019/20. 832,000 of these parcels went to children.
- 3) The Trussell Trust have stated that "hunger in the UK isn't about food, it's about a lack of income." They identified the main drivers of food bank use in their network as:
 - a) Problems with the benefits system (delays, inadequacy and reductions)
 - b) Challenging life experiences or ill-health
 - c) Lack of informal or formal support

4) THERE ARE A SIGNIFICANT NUMBER OF JOB VACANCIES FOR PEOPLE TO FILL AND NOTES THE SIGNIFICANT ASSISTANCE OFFERED BY THE CHANCELLOR OF THE EXCHEQUER IN HIS SPRING BUDGET TO ASSIST MORE HELP FOR PEOPLE TO GET INTO WORK AND THE BOOST TO INCREASE FREE CHILDCARE.

This Council resolves to:

- 1) Work with families and partners to alleviate children going hungry.
- 2) Endorse the Feeding Britain campaign to introduce automatic registration for the Healthy Start voucher scheme for all eligible families and do more to promote the scheme locally.
- 3) Continue to support maximising income for families through Money Advice Referral Tools (MARTs), widen awareness for those "just about managing" families of local initiatives and make all Bury residents aware of all support that they would be eligible for and benefit from.
- 4) Make sure children and young people's voices are heard more in the decision-making processes of the Council.

- 5) Encourage “grow your own” initiatives where community groups, schools and volunteers can help promote sustainable food production.
- 6) For all Elected Members to take on the responsibility of enabling all children to thrive in Bury and ensure no child goes hungry.

ADD

- 7) Write to the government to thank them for providing over £3 million for this year, as a continuation of the household support fund, that can be utilised for free school meals.
- 8) That the Council within its anti-poverty strategy encourage those who are eligible and not claiming benefits to do so.