

Poverty Strategy

2013 - 2016

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Welcome to the Team Bury Poverty Strategy

I am pleased to present the Poverty Strategy for Bury 2013-2016. At a national level, it is now a statutory requirement for all local authorities to tackle child poverty and in Bury we feel that to achieve this we must look at poverty across all our communities.

Bury is a rapidly growing and changing borough with pockets of severe poverty and deprivation. The continued demographic changes that the borough is projected to experience, combined with the impacts of the financial recession and Welfare Reform, makes addressing poverty more important than ever. The key to successfully reducing, and lessening the effects of, poverty in Bury will be a joined-up approach across Team Bury that maximises support to our residents. Team Bury includes, Bury College, Bury Council, Bury Third Sector Development Agency (B3SDA), Greater Manchester Fire and Rescue, Greater Manchester Police, Greater Manchester Probation Trust, Holy Cross College, Job Centre Plus - Greater Manchester District, NHS Bury, Pennine Care NHS Trust and Six Town Housing.

Taking into consideration the challenging economic climate and with fewer resources available, a partnership approach is more important than ever, and all partners have a contribution to make to tackling poverty, and better communication between organisations can deliver better outcomes for those affected by poverty. Information, best practice and resources can be shared across the partnership organisations resulting in better consistency and effectiveness in our approach to tackling poverty in Bury.

It is well recognised that poverty has a detrimental effect on future life chances and experiencing poverty in childhood can impact on a child's educational attainment, life chances, health, and safety. However, breaking the cycle of poverty is not only about improving future opportunities, but also addressing the impacts of poverty. We need to continue to support people to get back into work, and ensure that low-income earning residents have the resources they need to support their families.

Our Vision in Bury is to reduce poverty by 2020 through a multi-agency approach that tackles both the causes and consequences of poverty.



Cllr Mike Connolly
**Leader of
Bury Council**

Introduction

Team Bury defines poverty as when people's income does not meet the costs of the material, cultural and social resources that are regarded as necessary to provide a minimum acceptable quality of life in Bury.

When we talk about poverty, we often focus on those people in the world living in absolute poverty, without the resources needed to feed themselves or their family. It can be difficult to identify what we mean by poverty in our own communities, and, indeed, those people who we may identify as living in poverty would rarely consider themselves to be so.

In 2008/09 5.3 million people were suffering from multiple disadvantages in the UK, 1.9 million children lived in workless households, 2.8 million children were in relative income poverty (where incomes are 60% of the median household income), 2.2 million children were in both low income and material deprivation and 1.6 million children were in absolute poverty. There are now 1.8 million pensioners living in poverty which represents 16% of UK pensioners.

It is felt that changes in the benefits system, increases in the cost of living, rising unemployment and fewer job opportunities may have an impact on the levels of poverty. There is an increased necessity to do all we can to reduce poverty which will be challenging because of the reduction in funding for public services, and this will impact on what services and support will be available to our residents.

Some families and groups experience the 'cycle of poverty' which is repeated from generation to generation. Living in a poor family as a child and then as adults they are more likely to suffer from ill-health, be unemployed and homeless, become involved in offending, drug and alcohol abuse, and abusive relationships. However, there are some that may have experienced a change in lifestyle such as redundancy or experienced other life events that impact on their cost of living e.g. birth of a child, caring responsibilities.

Our strategic objectives are:

- **Managing the money** – Many residents find it difficult to manage their finances and in need of advice to deal with debt issues.
- **Claiming what is due** – Residents requiring advice to ensure they claim the benefits they are entitled to.
- **Work works** – Assisting those people who are able to work back into employment.
- **Breaking the cycle** – Preventing the intergenerational cycle of poverty that people are born into.
- **Strategic issues** – Ensuring that Team Bury implement, monitor and evaluate the action plan by keeping poverty high on the agenda.
- **Every contact counts** – Ensuring residents are able to access all Team Bury services and confidently sign post when required.

Background

Child Poverty Act 2010

The Child Poverty Act 2010 requires local authorities to produce child poverty strategies and work with local partners to reduce and prevent child poverty in their area. The scale of the task and the action needed is clearly greater for those areas with the highest rates of child poverty.

The Child Poverty Act 2010 established four separate targets to be met nationally by 2020/21:

- Relative poverty – to reduce the proportion of children who live in relative low income (in families with income below 60 per cent of the median) to less than 10 per cent
- Combined low income and material deprivation – to reduce the proportion of children who live in material deprivation and have a low income to less than 5 per cent
- Persistent poverty – to reduce the proportion of children that experience long periods of relative poverty, with the specific target to be set at a later date; and
- Absolute poverty – to reduce the proportion of children who live below an income threshold fixed in real terms to less than 5 per cent

Two independent reviews have been completed since the Act became law:

Frank Field's Independent Review of Poverty and Life Chances (December 2010)

The report recommended that the Government should give focus on the Foundation Years (0-5) and that a set of Life Chances Indicators (LCIs) should be established. The review also proposes that local authorities should create sets of LCIs to correspond with the national indicators.

Graham Allen's Independent Report: Early Intervention: The Next Steps (January 2011)

This report focussed on early intervention and the need for responsible parties to work together to prevent late intervention which is both expensive and ineffective.

National Child Poverty Strategy

The Government published the first National Child Poverty Strategy in April 2011 which aims to eradicate child poverty by 2020 by improving the life chances of children, protecting vulnerable families and reducing the nation's fiscal deficit.

Poverty in Bury

Bury has a population of 185,100 and in 2008/09, 18.2% of Bury's residents were in poverty according to the official definition of poverty. The Indices of Multiple Deprivation (IMD) ranked Bury as the 97th most deprived district area in 2004 and this has improved to 114th in 2010. Bury continues to be the 3rd least deprived authority in Greater Manchester (GM) behind Stockport and Trafford.

Older People in Poverty

According to Office for National Statistics (ONS) Bury currently has 34,340 individuals claiming a state pension, which accounts for 19% of the total population and is expected to rise to over 25% by 2050. The number of Bury residents claiming Pensions Credits has reduced by 5% between 2008 and 2011 however the benefits payment has increased by 15%. People living on pensions very often have a fixed income which can mean increases in the prices of essentials such as fuel and food significantly reduce their available income.

Education and Early Years

Child poverty is strongly linked to problems in later life including educational attainment. In Bury 13.7% of the total school population receive free school meals and are more likely to become Not in Education, Employment or Training (NEET) three years after completing compulsory education. In September 2011, 555 young people were NEET (between the ages of 16 and 18 years). This is also associated with negative outcomes such as having a criminal record, poor health, teenage parenthood and negative psychological outcomes.

Economy

In December 2012 there were 1,905 long-term unemployed (six months plus) Job Seekers Allowance (JSA) claimants in Bury which is above the national average. The average earnings of a full-time worker living in Bury are £26,111 per annum which is above the Greater Manchester average. However, the average earnings of a part-time worker are lower than the Greater Manchester average and the numbers of part-time workers has increased since 2005, meaning that more residents will be earning less.

Income

The average house price in Bury has risen by 112% between 1995 and 2012 whilst household incomes have reduced since 2008. There is now a greater risk of households falling into relative poverty which can potentially impact the physical and mental health of members of the household.

Health

Bury has comparatively low levels of Incapacity Benefit (IB)/Employment Support Allowance (ESA) claimants and is third lowest in Greater Manchester. Bury experiences problems with obesity and drug and alcohol misuse which affects individual life chances. In terms of fitness, we offer a means tested Active Lifestyle Discount Card which provides subsidised leisure. Bury has above the national average proportion of mothers smoking during pregnancy. In May 2011, 43% of IB/ESA claimants claim on mental health grounds.

Target Groups

To tackle poverty Team Bury partnership organisations needs to understand both its starting point and how it wants to improve. Measuring poverty is not easy: Many of the national measures are not available at a local level, or are not provided frequently enough to provide meaningful indicators of progress.

The over-arching target is “to reduce the number of Super Output Areas within Bury that rank within the most-deprived 25% of Super Output Areas in the country.”

Information on performance against this target would only be available every three to four years, as and when the national Index of Multiple Deprivation (IMD) is published by central government. However the IMD is the primary recognised measure of deprivation used in this country, it allows comparisons to be made over time and with other areas, and is available at a small geographical level, allowing pockets of deprivation to be identified. This is particularly important for Bury as we do have these small areas where people are living in deprivation scattered right across the borough.

The target groups are:

1. Households living on benefits – working age jobless/workless including those with dependent children.
2. People in low-paid and/or low-skilled employment – the working poor.
3. Vulnerable adults living on fixed/low incomes and/or benefits – This would include the retired poor.

This will capture all residents who are living in poverty. This is particularly important as Team Bury is keen to ensure that its strategic outcome focuses on all residents in poverty, and not solely on children living in poverty, currently the main focus of current central government policy and initiatives.

It is important to note that much of the research, and the focus groups undertaken highlighted that people do not readily identify themselves as being in poverty. This is an important message which needs to inform our work to support the target groups.

Consultation

Residents' focus group

A focus group was carried out during the Poverty HIGHLIGHT Review involving ten people with different circumstances. The majority of the group defined poverty as when "you can't afford to eat or clothe yourself." The group suggested that one location for benefits advice, less confusing paperwork, confidence building courses, training in a non-formal environment, flexible jobs that fitted around childcare and free childcare would help their current situation.

Partnership Workshop

A workshop was held in September 2011 involving staff from Team Bury organisations. As well as partnership organisations, children and young people, people during moments of need, lone parents, neighbouring authorities, children's centres, schools and colleges, service users and Revenues and Benefits should be involved in future consultation. A variety of methods were suggested.

The group also identified the need to link in with the Joint Strategic Needs Assessment, work with housing services, signposting to agencies, financial and budget training, a targeted response is required, engagement with families in crisis, 'self help', incentives to improve life, fuel poverty awareness and bringing work into bury employment sites.

Focus Groups

A number of focus groups were held in February 2012 with young people, people living on benefits and people with disabilities. All of the groups involved agreed that poverty is an issue in Bury and that they were personally aware of people in poverty. The groups gave very similar responses regarding what they felt poverty was and how it could be reduced.

The groups provided many views as to how the issue of poverty can be resolved including targeting children to break the cycle of poverty, financial support, counselling, more apprenticeships, and support with finding employment, charity fundraising opportunities and more assistance for people with disabilities to re-train for jobs. The majority of responses were centred on finance, employment and training, and the benefits system.

What have we done so far...

Highlight Review

Team Bury undertook an intensive six-week review of poverty within the borough in 2009-10. The aim of the review was to establish what current interventions were in place, how effective these interventions have been and what recommendations could be made to improve the services and sharing of information and best practice. It would release energy from communities, front line workers and partners could design new approaches. The group were able to identify barriers that required further improvement. The findings have been incorporated into this strategy. The review concluded that the areas that needed to be addressed were strategic issues, benefits claims, worklessness, and communication with communities, breaking the poverty cycle and managing financial awareness.

A focus group with residents was undertaken as part of the HIGHLIGHT review. The discussion points were around defining poverty and the barriers improving the situation. Consultation with Team Bury partnership organisations took place following the review to assess the direction of the needs assessment and strategy.

Needs Assessment

An in-depth poverty needs assessment has been completed and this accompanies the strategy. The assessment focussed on the following areas:

- Education
- Economy and Employment
- Income
- Lifestyle/General Health
- Mental Health

Further consultation has taken place and will continue to take place with partnership organisations, residents and stakeholders.

Issues Arising

Universal Credit

In November 2010 Government presented the Universal Credit: Welfare That Works White Paper that lays out plans for a fundamental welfare reform with the aim of reducing welfare dependency, to ensure that 'work pays and is always seen to pay'. Elements of the new Universal Credit system will be implemented from 2013 onwards and is envisaged to combat worklessness and poverty. It will replace the current working age means tested benefits and will support those that go back to work. It will also provide a basic allowance with additional elements for children, disability, housing and caring.

Fuel poverty

In 2010 approximately 12,810 of the national proportion of properties were experiencing fuel poverty in Bury. Fuel poverty is caused by a combination of low incomes, expensive energy and energy-inefficient homes. Bury's Affordable Warmth Strategy 2011 - 2016 has been produced in line with the national targets set in the National Fuel Poverty Strategy 2001 but we are unlikely to eradicate fuel poverty by 2016 due to rising fuel prices and the recession. However, we have had many successful projects over the years since our original Strategy was produced in 2005 e.g. insulation schemes such as the 'Toasty Bury' scheme, winter warmth campaigns such as the 'Kill the Chill' and Bury Healthy Homes projects which have contributed towards achieving affordable warmth for Bury residents.

Troubled Families

The Supporting Communities, Improving Lives Programme builds on existing work both within Bury and across Greater Manchester to improve and reform public services, with the twin aims of reducing dependency/cost of public services and improving outcomes for those families who may be defined as troubled, complex or experiencing multiple problems. Essentially the programme focuses on those families who are known to, and receiving interventions from, a range of services. It will critically evaluate current services and aim to develop improved solutions to both address the needs of families currently meeting the criteria, and prevent families becoming complex in the future.

The programme addresses Team Bury's priority of "Managing complex needs in communities and neighbourhoods and promoting personal responsibility" and incorporates the delivery of Bury's commitment to the national Troubled Families programme.

Poverty Commission Report 2013

The Greater Manchester Poverty Commission published its findings on 15 January 2013 and calls for special measures which will assist more than 600,000 Greater Manchester residents who are experiencing the effects of extreme poverty. In addition, it calls for action to prevent nearly 1.6 million people (nearly half the population of Greater Manchester) sliding in to deeper poverty. Local authorities and others are encouraged to set up their own energy provider companies, credit unions and bulk food purchase 'supermarkets/foodbanks'. This would see shareholder profit replaced with reduced prices, social responsibility and greater benefit to the local community.

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Our Strategic Objectives

Managing the Money

Living in poverty is stressful. There are competing demands on a limited income, and many residents find it difficult to manage their finances. The key areas of work include:

- Raising Financial Awareness – Giving people the skills to take responsibility for their own finances and understand the real cost of borrowing money, how to deal with creditors and planning for the future is invaluable in helping people to avoid and/or manage debt.
- Development of A Credit Union – Credit Unions offer an alternative and cheaper source of finance than private legal finance companies and illegal loan sharks, many of whom charge extremely high levels of interest.
- Reducing Demands – Partners in Team Bury need to develop an understanding of how their working practices can place demands on people living in poverty. Whether it is how we recover money we are owed, or how schools ask for money for school trips, we need to deliver a campaign and review of how we are placing residents under more stress.

Projects

Financial Inclusion and Worklessness Group – aims to improve the financial situation of tenants and residents of Bury via a range of approaches by establishing a commitment to address financial exclusion, creating pathways into work and training for the most isolated and vulnerable residents, connecting people to opportunities to gain the right skills to access good jobs, sharing best practice, combining resources to tackle common problems, developing new partnerships and embedding financial exclusion and worklessness into all aspects of the organisation.

Barclays Money Skills – Barclays Bank is working in partnership with charities to develop projects that build financial inclusion, financial capability and support enterprise. This initiative will provide opportunities for one million people build skills, increase knowledge and confidence to manage their money more effectively. The programme will equip teachers, youth workers and other charity practitioners, as well as Barclays' employees to deliver money management sessions as well as videos, games, a website and interactive digital content.

Bury Council/Six Town Housing Corporate Debt Policy – provides a clear, consistent and transparent approach to debt collection for the Council, Six Town Housing and its Third Sector partners. Our clear objective is to make sure that those have the means to pay do pay and those individuals / families in genuine crisis receive the targeted help and support they need to prevent increasing debts, promote personal capacity and create better life chances. High level case conferences will be introduced to a limited number of customers in

genuine need where there are multiple complex debts and multiple complex issues. The corporate debt policy will ensure a clear and consistent approach to corporate debt and make sure we are working together to support our most vulnerable.

Credit Union Project – We recognise how the welfare reform will have a negative impact on many of our most deprived families and individuals within the borough. Many of these facing the biggest impact are often excluded from affordable lending facilities and struggling to deal with debts. In order to prevent further deprivation it is essential that all people in the borough have access to affordable lending facilities and increase financial capacity. Bury council and Six Town housing have done a significant amount of joint work which has been fully supported by other partners. We have now successfully explored the potential and gained approval for a Credit Union to be established within the borough of Bury, in order to support our most vulnerable and help prevent further deprivation.

Affordable Warmth Strategy – working closely with other agencies, we published a strategy in 2011 which sets out how the affordable warmth partnership aims to tackle fuel poverty and assist Bury residents to achieve affordable warmth. The main focus is to improve the energy efficiency of homes, maximise householder income, reduce energy consumption and, where possible, help reduce the cost of energy to the consumer. These are key elements when it comes to reducing economic and health inequalities within the Borough.

Trading Standards – work in partnership with the Office of Fair Trading to ensure fit and proper persons are licensed and competent to offer finance, particularly in the home collected credit market. They also monitor finance providers to ensure advertisements, agreements and financial information is compliant and truthful. There is also additional enforcement support by agreement from the 'Illegal Money Lending Team'.

Claiming What is Due

Ensuring our residents claim what they are entitled to and that they are aware of changes to their benefits following the Welfare Reform will be key to improving the quality of life for those residents who are benefit-dependent. The key areas of work include:

- Positive Take Up Campaign – Stigma and pride are key barriers for some of our residents, who may see benefits as ‘taking charity’ or those they do not want to be seen as ‘scroungers.’ Whilst existing services, for example the Council’s Benefits Service, already undertake specific take-up campaigns, a joined-up approach across partners could widen the impact of this work.
- Make It Simple – the benefits system is notoriously confusing and will continue to create confusion with the impact of Welfare Reform. Whilst a one-stop shop may not be the answer, for everyone there is recognition that people should not have to find a way through a maze of agencies, forms and protocols. This could be done through a benefits practitioner forum to provide more simplified or joined-up approaches.

Projects

Customer Support and Collections – works with over 19,000 of the most vulnerable residents of the borough and is currently responsible for paying out more than £69 million per annum in Housing and Council Tax Support. Poverty has no place in thriving and sustainable communities, and so tackling benefit take-up through the promotion of benefits, and through providing assistance in claiming benefits where needed, are key objectives of the service. We endeavour to present a holistic customer focused approach to benefit take-up.

Local Housing Allowance Scheme – the aim is to help customers who have been disadvantaged by the changes in Local Housing Allowance since April 2011. The team spends time working through the different options: checking that all available benefit has been awarded through a detailed examination of the claimants past and current health needs, assisting in negotiations between tenants and landlords over levels of rent and providing advice and help on moving to alternative, affordable property.

Bury District Citizens Advice Bureau Social Policy – endeavours to tackle unfair policies and practices at source. The policy involves collecting evidence of issues, getting involved in campaign work via surveys, questionnaires and awareness-raising. This information may be used as evidence at Parliamentary briefings, be used in reports or be read by regulatory bodies such as Office of Communications (OFCOM) and the Office of Gas and Electricity Markets (OFGEM).

Bury Support Fund – localising support for resettlement and people facing crisis. Bury Council has a discretionary fund to help people in exceptional need and without the financial means to provide for themselves. This could be a short-term need because of a crisis or emergency that poses an immediate and substantial risk to their health and safety. Also the fund helps to support vulnerable people to stay in the community rather than entering care or those who need help to set up a permanent home when leaving temporary accommodation.

Under Occupancy and Benefit Cap – the Customer Support and Collections department helps people who find themselves worse off as a result of welfare reform changes. This work includes supporting customers through the changes, raising awareness and working in partnership to make sure customer's have access to relevant advice and support where needed. This can take the form of money management / debt advice, support into work, or in limited cases help from the Discretionary Housing Payment scheme. Key outcomes will increased personal capacity, reduced risk to people falling into debt and supporting people into work.

Working together to tackle Food Poverty - As the impacts of the welfare reform continue to impact across the borough we have identified an increased demand for food amongst our most vulnerable people. Through the Bury Support Fund it has been established that within Bury there are a number of vulnerable families and individuals suffering food poverty. We have found that working together with Porch Boxes and other services improves the overall package of help we can offer to the most vulnerable and those in need.

Food parcels are fast becoming part of structural support system to help assist longer term solutions and we are closely monitoring the take up and increased demand for food parcels with the onset of Universal Credit.

Work Works

For those people who are able, taking up work is widely recognised as both the quickest route out of poverty and an effective safeguard against entering poverty. The key areas of work include:

- Work Experience and Volunteering Opportunities – offering people the opportunity to build their confidence and skills by volunteering is a recognised route to further training and work. Work experience provides the opportunity to develop skills, build confidence and gain a foothold in the world of work. Libraries offer support through work clubs and surgeries for job seekers.
- Barriers to Training – we know that people face a range of barriers to taking up training opportunities. Negative experiences in education, childcare difficulties and lack of confidence have been identified. Training providers in Bury already offer a range of ‘first steps’ courses, many in outreach locations, but there is a need to ensure that all the barriers to training are addressed.
- Raising Skill Levels – skills and qualifications are a passport to employment and better job prospects. Where a young person or adult is untrained and unqualified they are locked in poverty. We know that if people have the skills needed in the current labour market they have greater earning potential. We need to narrow the gap for those who are disadvantaged in our communities and raise their skills levels at level 2 and above so that local people have the chance to increase their economic well-being.
- Increasing Wage Levels – work needs to be higher paid if it is to provide a sustainable route out of poverty. The development of better-quality jobs in the borough will be key to ensuring residents have the opportunity to escape poverty.

Projects

Health and Wellbeing Board – Representatives from across the Bury community have come together to form the Shadow Health and Wellbeing Board to support and encourage partnership arrangements for health and social care services. The board will set the direction for the future design and delivery of local health care, social care and public health. The agenda includes the health and wellbeing of adults, children and families, as well as wider areas that impact on health such as housing, education and the environment.

Bury Employment and Skills Plan – To reduce inequalities in Bury by improving employment rates and the quality of employment available. The priorities are to improve intelligence by sharing and co-ordinating a range of labour market information held by partners, making it possible for all residents living in target areas or facing specific disadvantages and barriers to find work and engaging with local employers to encourage and support workforce development, diversify their workforces and address skills shortages.

Economic Development Strategy – The strategy sets out to create long-term, sustainable and competitive economic growth in the borough. Key themes that are crucial in achieving this are encouraging skills development to address Bury’s and GM’s economic needs and attracting and retaining talent. Team Bury partners will do this by working together in ensuring residents have access to high quality careers advice and guidance, increasing the volume of work experience opportunities, effective partnership working and working with employers to increase the diversity of their workforce.

Bury Volunteer Centre – Bury Third Sector Agency (B3SDA) aims to promote volunteering in Bury by helping people to get involved in local opportunities and by supporting organisations from all sectors that involve volunteers. We are a member of Volunteering England and have achieved Volunteer England Quality Accreditation for the work we do. We promote the benefits of volunteering; promote volunteering opportunities, on behalf of local organisations provide information about and signpost potential volunteers to local opportunities and support organisations that involve volunteers by providing advice, information and training on good practice when working with volunteers.

Bury Adult Learning Service – offers a range of learning opportunities designed to assist people to develop the underpinning skills that support entry into further training and employment. Courses in literacy, numeracy, English for Speakers of Other Languages (ESOL) and IT qualifications are offered along with a range of courses offered aimed specifically at learners with additional needs to support employability e.g. Enterprise Skills, Communication for Life and Work.

Bury Community Learning Partnership – brings together key providers of adult learning to develop a collaborative approach to support the planning and delivery of informal adult learning. It promotes personal development, family learning and learning which helps to strengthen communities. The work focuses funding on people who are disadvantaged and least likely to participate in learning, improves confidence and well-being, and develops key skills to support employability and supporting progression into higher level learning.

Sport and Physical Activity Service Pool of Volunteers – help with holiday activities, events and activities for young people. Volunteers can earn credits to go towards payment for essential and desirable qualifications to become a sports coach or assistant. Volunteers also get involved in larger events such as the Ramsbottom Festival and Bury Light Night.

Breaking the Cycle

People who are born into poverty all too often live in poverty throughout their lives. Raising aspirations and expectations is really important in helping people get out of poverty. Schools and colleges also have a vital role in ensuring our children and young people develop aspirations and expectations to be all they can be. The key areas of work include:

- Positive Work Experience Opportunities – Work experience can provide young people with a real understanding of the world of work, the social benefits, and sense of achievement and satisfaction that arises from earning the money in your pocket. All too often the experience can be mundane, unfulfilling and uninspiring. Good work experience is a spring board to permanent employment and can provide the motivation for a young person to continue to learn or train. We need to re-engage with schools to promote work experience and ensure that there is that progression into apprenticeships which will provide the skills needed to increase a young person's earning potential in the labour market.
- Relevant Role Models – These were identified as a good way to challenge the norms that exist within communities. Using photos and case studies in schools, sports and community centres can help to raise both aspirations and expectations of young people. Identifying volunteers from a range of backgrounds and careers who would be willing to talk to children and young people about their jobs would also help to raise awareness of career opportunities.
- Sporting activities – Data from national surveys indicate that children and young people living in deprived areas are less likely to participate in sport. We need to work with partners to overcome barriers to participation.

Projects

Backing Young Bury - The scheme provides opportunities for young people including extended work experience, pre-employment training and employment skills workshops. Almost a third of all Job Seekers Allowance (JSA) claimants are aged between 16 and 24. Backing Young Bury aims to improve the learning and working opportunities for young people whilst simultaneously ensuring that the council has a skilled future workforce.

Backing Young Bury has also recently worked with O2, the mobile phone and broadband provider, to offer 16/17 year old NEETs the opportunity to gain work experience through a two week intensive programme to gain generic skills. Once completed, they were guaranteed an interview to join the training Backing Young Bury training scheme. The interview-guarantee offer was also made available to 18-24 year olds who were out-of-work.

GM Commitment to Youth Employment – It is an Association of Greater Manchester Authorities (AGMA) led and funded initiative to support the city region’s young people into employment. This campaign will encourage businesses to support young people and take up national incentives / offers promoting national and local products at the same time as promoting our young people.

Children and Young People’s Plan 2011-14 – focuses on a small number of priorities agreed by partners and are underpinned by a comprehensive assessment of the needs of children and young people in Bury. The ‘improving lives of families with multiple needs’ and ‘ensuring all young people make a successful transition to adulthood’ priorities are linked closely to this strategy.

Bury Circles of Influence – is an annual event involving young people from across Bury meeting with local decision-makers discussing issues such as bullying, prejudice and stigma; young people and the law; places to go; education; youth employment and work experience. Young people from the Bury Youth Cabinet organise the event and facilitate activities throughout the day.

Prestwich, Bury and Radcliffe Works – Bury Council along with partners such as Asian Development Association of Bury (ADAB) and Bury College provides personalised advice and guidance and matches unemployed people to suitable job opportunities. Together they help people who are not job ready to develop the skills and competence to become employable.

Bury College/Schools Mentoring Project – A programme of interactive workshops which will offer alternative learning environments and support positive attitudes towards education to raise aspirations and widen opportunities for disengaged 14-16 year olds. They will be mentored by Bury College students who have progressed from Level 2 to Level 3 programmes and can endorse that education has given them choices and potential to achieve success.

Bury College Apprenticeships – Supported and funded by the National Apprenticeship Service (NAS) and the Skills Funding Agency (SFA), apprenticeships at Bury College provide top quality work-based training programmes. These give apprentices the opportunity to earn a real wage as they learn and gain practical skills in the workplace.

Sportivate Programme – offers 14-25 year olds who are not participating regularly in sport the opportunity to take part in 6 to 8 weeks of high quality coaching sessions and supports them to continue playing sport afterwards.

Health and Wellbeing Strategy – Public Health and Early Years are working together on the cross-cutting priority ‘Starting Well’, ensuring a positive start to life for children, young people and families by supporting positive and resilient parenting, developing integrated services across education, health and social care focussing on the needs of children and creating positive opportunities for young people.

Strategic Issues

Keeping poverty issues high on the agenda was a key need, with strong governance required by Team Bury to ensure that the action plan for Reducing Inequalities is implemented, monitored and evaluated. The key areas of work include:

- Partnership Working Identified as a strength by almost every consultee, partnership working is working in Bury but it often relies on personalities or 'born networkers' rather than systematic methods and these arrangements are therefore at risk as and when the individuals move on. There needs to be more systematic working practices and procedures to ensure this risk is addressed.
- Policy Impacts There is a risk that key policies and decisions could be implemented without an understanding of how they could impact on the poorest people in the borough. The addition of 'poverty' to the current Equality Analyses could address this need.
- Valuing People Delivering services is hard, and delivering some of our services to people who do not want them, is even harder. Nevertheless the feedback from some consultees that as organisations we do not always successfully instil our values in all our staff has to be addressed.
- Supporting Communities, Improving Lives The Supporting Communities, Improving Lives Programme builds on existing work both within Bury and across Greater Manchester to improve and reform public services, with the twin aims of reducing dependency/cost of public services and improving outcomes for those families who may be defined as troubled, complex or experiencing multiple problems.

Projects

Equality Strategy – The objectives of the strategy include improving educational achievement of vulnerable children, enabling greater autonomy for elderly people and people with disabilities, understanding and working to reduce levels of hate crime, anti-social behaviour and domestic violence and aiming for a workforce which reflects our diverse community.

Team Bury Equality Charter – is committed to the principles of equality, diversity and human rights. The charter strives to recognise people's different needs, situations and goals, and remove the barriers that limit what people can do or be. It ensures Team Bury services are accessible to, and meet the needs of all people.

Bury Local Plan Core Strategy – seeking an even spread of employment growth across the borough and addressing our regeneration areas fit well in this area.

Community Cohesion Plan – recognises the work we need to do with the voluntary, community and faith sectors across Bury to actively engage communities to build fair and more equal communities and create a sense of belonging.

Every Contact Counts

The paid and volunteer workforce of Team Bury is immense, with a wide reach and, for some of our workforce, access to residents who other services can not reach. We need to ensure that when our services are in contact with residents, that our front-line staff are confident and able to signpost people to other appropriate services. The key areas of work include:

- Team Bury Business Card - The development of a business card which has the contact details for a range of organisations that support people in poverty, for example Citizens Advice Bureau, Revenues and Benefits and Career Advice for adults. The card would be widely available and provided to front-line workers for distribution.
- One web-page or site - There are some good examples from other areas where the wide range of organisations have developed a joint web-page which provides information, advice and contact details for organisations that can help. Links from the websites of all partners would, again, maximise the benefit arising from a single contact with a single organisation via its website.
- Training Front-Line Workers - We want to train front-line workers and those entering residents' properties, so that they feel confident in recognising where residents may need advice and assistance because of poverty, and that they know which services can help.
- Life Events Interventions - We know the risk factors that can very often mean people moving into poverty, what we don't always do is address this risk when dealing with the immediate life event. When someone's partner dies, a relationship breaks down, or a young person is housed independently, do our services recognise the risk and refer people to other services appropriately?
- Children's Centres - Independent research demonstrates that Children's Centres are an effective way of supporting families to overcome the experience of living in poverty. We need to maximise and support the effectiveness of our network of Children's Centre to support as many families as possible.
- Township Forums - Township Forums have been created to promote engagement and partnership at the local level. There are six Township Forums across the borough and public meetings are held six times a year, usually in the evenings, in local community venues.

Projects

Bury Citizens Advice Bureau Social Policy Development Plan – includes training for staff and volunteers regarding the use of the website and Facebook to publicise events and awareness campaigns. Also to improve partnership working training has been made available via lottery funding with outside agencies to deal with the impact of the Welfare Reform changes.

Customer care training – is now available to staff as an e-learning or tutor-led course. The programme is available to front-line employees who are new to the council and for those who would like to develop the skills which contribute to exceptional customer service.

Communications Protocols and Toolkit – aims to cover all eventualities and recognising that we need to communicate in different ways depending on the audience. This document identifies that if an audience is hard to reach, we have to try harder. We have to make sure information is tailored to people's needs.

Website links to partnership organisations – to promote the work of our Team Bury partnership agencies, links will be made available to each partner's website on their web pages.

Performance Indicators

Performance Measure	Baseline (2012/13 year end result unless specified)	Target 2013/14	Target 2014/15	Target 2015/16
Percentage of take up of formal childcare by low-income working families	TBC	TBC	TBC	TBC
Under 18 conception rate	TBC	TBC	TBC	TBC
Number of households living in temporary accommodation	TBC	TBC	TBC	TBC
Proportion of children living in poverty	TBC	TBC	TBC	TBC
Proportion of population aged 19-64 for males and 19-59 for females qualified to at least Level 2 or higher	TBC	TBC	TBC	TBC
Percentage of 19 year olds with qualifications at level 3	TBC	TBC	TBC	TBC
Narrowing the gap between the lowest achieving 20% in the Early Years Foundation Stage profile and the rest. (foundation stage)	TBC	TBC	TBC	TBC
Achievement gap between pupils eligible for free school meals and their peers achieving the expected level at Key Stage 2	TBC	TBC	TBC	TBC
Achievement gap between pupils eligible for free school meals and their peers achieving the expected level at Key Stage 4	TBC	TBC	TBC	TBC

Inequality gap in the achievement of a Level 3 qualification by the age of 19	TBC	TBC	TBC	TBC
Inequality gap in the achievement of a Level 2 qualification by the age of 19	TBC	TBC	TBC	TBC
Percentage of 16-18 year olds by academic age who are not in education, employment or training (NEET)	TBC	TBC	TBC	TBC
The % of Looked after children achieving 5 A*-C GCSEs (or equivalent)at key stage 4 (inc English & Maths)	TBC	TBC	TBC	TBC
The Special Educational Needs (SEN)/non SEN gap achieving 5 A* C GCSE inc. English and Maths	TBC	TBC	TBC	TBC
Key Stage 4 attainment for Black and minority ethnic groups: Pakistani Heritage	TBC	TBC	TBC	TBC
Key Stage 4 attainment for Black and minority ethnic groups: White Other	TBC	TBC	TBC	TBC
Key Stage 4 attainment for Black and minority ethnic groups: Gypsy Roma	TBC	TBC	TBC	TBC
Number of schools where fewer than 30% of pupils achieve 5 or more A* C grades at GCSE and equivalent including GCSEs in English and Maths	TBC	TBC	TBC	TBC
Reduction in number of schools where fewer than 55% of pupils achieve level 4 or above in both English and Maths at KS2	TBC	TBC	TBC	TBC
Overall employment rate for Bury	TBC	TBC	TBC	TBC

Working age people on out of work benefits	TBC	TBC	TBC	TBC
Working age people claiming out of work benefits in the worst performing neighbourhoods	TBC	TBC	TBC	TBC
Adults with learning disabilities in employment	TBC	TBC	TBC	TBC
Number of Level 1 qualifications in literacy (including ESOL) achieved	TBC	TBC	TBC	TBC
Learners achieving an Entry Level 3 qualification in numeracy	TBC	TBC	TBC	TBC
Working age people on out of work benefits	TBC	TBC	TBC	TBC
Time taken to process Housing Benefit/Council Tax Benefit new claims and change events	TBC	TBC	TBC	TBC
In work tax and childcare credits	TBC	TBC	TBC	TBC
Council tax benefit	TBC	TBC	TBC	TBC
Housing benefit	TBC	TBC	TBC	TBC
Pension tax credits Attendance Allowance	TBC	TBC	TBC	TBC
Carers' Allowance	TBC	TBC	TBC	TBC

Free school meals	TBC	TBC	TBC	TBC
Disability Living Allowance	TBC	TBC	TBC	TBC
Number of participants attending at least one sport & physical activity session from a top 20 % deprived area	TBC	TBC	TBC	TBC

Glossary

To help you read this strategy, an explanation of the special words and phrases that you will find used in the strategy is set out below:




What does it mean?	
Association of Greater Manchester Authorities (AGMA)	A local government association representing the ten local authorities of Greater Manchester and includes other public, private and voluntary sectors. AGMA works together to drive new investment, co-ordinate planning and deliver results for its residents.
Bury Citizen's Advice Bureau	Provides a free and comprehensive advice service to Bury's residents. The service helps to resolve legal, money and other problems by providing confidential advice.
Bury Youth Cabinet	A group that supports young people to have a voice and to make positive changes for others. The group is supported by the United Kingdom Youth Parliament (UKYP) and allows young people to work alongside politicians at all levels to ensure that young people are well represented.
Employment Support Allowance	Replaced Incapacity Benefit and Income Support paid on incapacity grounds in 2008. It offers personalised support and financial help to prepare for work.
Equality Analyses (EA)	Provides a comprehensive and consistent approach for analysing the effect upon equality and community cohesion of all our services, policies and practices.
HIGHLIGHT Review	An intensive six-week structured focus on a particular issue. It involves research and consultation and will provide an in-depth understanding of the issue.
Incapacity Benefit (IB)	See Employment Support Allowance.
Indices of Multiple Deprivation (IMD)	The Index pulls together data on different forms of deprivation into one overall deprivation score. The main types of deprivation that are easily measured are: income (poverty), employment (or exclusion from the labour market), education, health, crime, access to services and housing.
Job Seekers Allowance (JSA)	A benefit paid to eligible people who are currently unemployed and looking for work.
Joint Strategic Needs Assessment (JSNA)	The Local Government and Public Involvement in Health Act 2007 require PCTs and local authorities to produce a Joint Strategic Needs Assessment (JSNA) of the health and wellbeing of their local community.
Life Chances Indicator (LCI)	Performance indicators that emphasise personal and individual characteristics rather than social and environmental factors.

Office of Fair Trading (OFT)	The UK's consumer and competition authority. Their mission is to make markets work well for consumers by being open, fair and vigorous competition with each other for the consumer's custom.
Office for National Statistics (ONS)	Collects, compiles, analyse and disseminate a range of economic, social and demographic statistics relating to the UK.
Office of Communications (OFCOM)	The communications regulator that regulates the television and radio sectors, fixed line telecoms, mobiles, postal services, plus the airwaves over which wireless devices operate.
Office of Gas and Electricity Markets (OFGEM)	Promotes competition, wherever appropriate, and regulates the monopoly companies which run the gas and electricity networks.
Super Output Area	SOAs are a unit of geography used in the UK for statistical analysis. SOAs were created with the intention that they would not be subject to frequent boundary change. The SOAs referred to typically have around 1,500 residents.
Team Bury (Local Strategic Partnership)	Team Bury is the name given to Bury's Local Strategic Partnership. The partnership consists of the major public agencies and representatives of other sectors of the community and works to deliver the ambitions for the borough – as set out in the Community Strategy.
Welfare Reform	The Welfare reform Act 2012 became law in March 2012. The Act introduces a wide range of reforms to the benefits and tax credits system.

Throughout this plan, you will find further details on what we have done and what we plan to do next. We hope you find this useful. If you have any comments or questions on how we could improve further, please email us at improvementteam@bury.gov.uk

Contact us

For further information about the Poverty Strategy please contact:

-  Log on to www.bury.gov.uk
-  Email us at improvementteam@bury.gov.uk
-  Write to us at Policy and Improvement Team, Bury Council, Bury Town Hall, Knowsley Street, Bury , BL9 0SW