



# CHILD POVERTY MATTERS

THE CHILD POVERTY STRATEGY FOR PLYMOUTH 2013-2016

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Cover Graphic: Child Poverty Wordle created by children and young people as part of the consultation on the Children and Young People's Plan 2011-2014.

## **SECTION I: INTRODUCTION**

Child poverty is essentially a result of poverty in families.

Child poverty matters because it means children suffer now and their future lives can be blighted.

In 1999, the Government made a commitment to end child poverty by 2020. The Child Poverty Act was published in 2010 to deliver on this and places a number of duties on Local Authorities and other local delivery partners to work together to tackle child poverty.

Plymouth has shaped its response to child poverty based on its understanding of child poverty as the outcome of economic, environmental and social factors that can damage a child's development and limit or prevent children and young people from having many of the experiences and opportunities that others take for granted<sup>1</sup>.

Income is central to the lives of all families in poverty. This reflects the current national measure which classes families earning less than £251 per week as living in poverty. In Plymouth this equates to 11,560 children, of which 10,190 are aged under 16<sup>2</sup>.

Amidst the deepening economic crisis, it is an opportune time to develop our local plan to tackle child poverty. Falling incomes, unemployment, rising cost of living, reduced economic activity and major changes to the way that welfare assistance is provided are having a real impact on Plymouth families both in the short and long term. For example, stressors such as job loss, home foreclosure, or loss in family savings can place strain on parental relationships and on the family as a whole. It can affect educational achievement of children by reducing families' abilities to provide a supportive learning environment or adequate nutrition, or by forcing a delay or abandonment of higher education plans.

A simultaneous reduction in public sector funding also means that difficult financial decisions will need to be made by the Council and other agencies in the coming years.

This three year strategy presents how Plymouth aims to tackle the causes and impact of child poverty, while also acknowledging the limits and challenges presented by the current economic and social environment.

***Poverty can be such a destructive force because of its long-term grip on families and communities, holding them back generation after generation. The disadvantages and barriers that parents experience are the source of this long-term impact. These barriers have a detrimental effect on children's progression and well-being, which can impact right through into their adulthood, in turn affecting the subsequent generation. The way that disadvantage perpetuates is shaped by the experiences, attainment and outcomes of children growing up in socio-economic disadvantage and by the way that negative parental activities experienced through childhood may repeat in adulthood<sup>3</sup>.***

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<sup>1</sup> Definition taken from the Plymouth Children and Young People's Plan 2011-2014

<sup>2</sup> Based on HMRC definition (Number of children in families in receipt of either out of work (means-tested) benefits, or in receipt of tax credits where their reported income is less than 60 per cent of median income. Snapshot at 31 August 2010.

<sup>3</sup> Allen, G (2011) 'Early Intervention: the next steps' An Independent Report to Her Majesty's Government.

## **PLYMOUTH'S COMMITMENT TO TACKLING CHILD POVERTY**

Child Poverty in Plymouth is being taken seriously.

Tackling inequalities is a shared priority for Plymouth City Council and its partners, with child poverty a key outcome measure for which there is collective responsibility across all partners. Following a motion agreed at Full Council in July 2011, Plymouth City Council made a firm commitment to tackling child poverty in the city and this is reflected in its Corporate Plan 2012-15.

Agencies working across Plymouth can demonstrate that they have not been reticent in how they work with our most vulnerable families. Much of this work is already taking place under the auspices of existing activity delivered within, but not limited to the Local Development Framework 2006 - 2021, Children and Young People's Plan 2011-14 and the Housing Plan 2012-2017.

The upcoming Plymouth Plan, expected in 2015, will lay out the integrated and holistic long term plan for the city up to 2031, encompassing the city's major plans such as the upcoming Health and Wellbeing Strategy, Local Transport Plan, Local Economic Strategy and many others including those listed above.

Its key aim is to provide a framework which will draw links and connections between all areas of the city's business, in order to identify ways to deliver change in the city and to tackle complex socio-economic problems including Child Poverty. It is a clear intention that the major themes and issues identified within this Child Poverty Strategy will subsequently feed into those being developed under the auspices of the Plymouth Plan.

## **DEVELOPING A LOCAL CHILD POVERTY STRATEGY**

Plymouth City Council, in line with its statutory duty to tackle child poverty and acknowledgement of child poverty as both an adult and child focused issue, has led the development of a local Child Poverty Strategy, working closely with key partners and partnerships. This work has been overseen by the Child Poverty Cross Party Working Group chaired by Councillor Chris Penberthy, Cabinet Member for Cooperatives and Community Development, and vice chaired by Councillor Sam Leaves, Shadow Cabinet Member, Children and Young People.

As part of the Joint Strategic Needs Assessment, a Child Poverty Needs Assessment was undertaken in 2012 and can be accessed at [Plymouth City Council - Child Poverty](#).

A series of consultations have been undertaken to support the development of the Child Poverty Strategy for Plymouth as follows:

- Consultation to agree a local definition of child poverty - 27 May to 31 July 2012.
- Consultation event on the Child Poverty Needs Assessment as the basis on which to develop Plymouth's Child Poverty Strategy - 15 October 2012.
- Consultation on the draft Child Poverty Strategy - 12 December 2012 to 31 January 2013.

The Needs Assessment and consultation feedback have been consistently used to inform and shape each step of the strategy development process. All documents can be accessed at [Plymouth City Council - Child Poverty](#).

## A LOCAL APPROACH TO TACKLING CHILD POVERTY

As part of achieving the city's vision "to become one of Europe's, most vibrant waterfront cities where an outstanding quality of life is enjoyed by everyone", the Child Poverty Strategy for Plymouth aims to **reduce child poverty and mitigate its impact** over the next three years.

It is important to be clear what this strategy aims to achieve within the next three years.

There is already a significant breadth of excellent work being undertaken across the city to tackle child poverty. Plymouth is not starting from scratch when it comes to tackling child poverty, and this strategy will acknowledge and celebrate existing work rather than seek to duplicate it. This strategy will add value to this work by directing resources to identified gaps and areas of additional need identified through the Child Poverty Needs Assessment and extensive consultation with key stakeholders.

To know more about the gaps and areas of additional need outlined in this strategy, please visit [Plymouth City Council - Child Poverty](#).

## A FRAMEWORK FOR CHILD POVERTY

Child poverty is a complex issue that cannot be achieved with a single faceted approach. This strategy uses four overarching themes to outline its approach, as shown below.



Each theme represents the factors that have the largest and most direct impact on child poverty, based on evidence based frameworks designed to assist the development of local child poverty strategies<sup>4</sup>.

<sup>4</sup> These include the 'Building Blocks Framework' developed by the Child Poverty Unit, and the framework outlined within the National Child Poverty Strategy: 'A New Approach to Child Poverty: Tackling the Causes of Disadvantage and Transforming Families' Lives'

## SECTION II: WHAT PLYMOUTH AIMS TO DO

This section presents each theme in turn as follows:

- Overview of local needs<sup>5</sup>
- What we want to achieve
- What is already happening – areas of good practice
- Existing plans and upcoming opportunities
- What we will focus on over the next three years

While each theme is presented separately, it is essential they are not understood as isolated from each other – the interrelationships between each are central to the success of this plan.

### THEME I: FINANCIAL SUPPORT AND INDEPENDENCE

Unemployment is widely considered to be one of the key drivers of poverty. As well as being a major source of income, work generally improves people's well-being and mental and physical health, with positive implications for their children<sup>6</sup>. The quality of employment rather than employment in itself is a key factor. Individuals can suffer recurrent poverty as they become caught in a low pay/no pay cycle caused by insecure low paid work. Jobs that are not of high quality in terms of pay, conditions, flexibility and sustainability will not break the poverty cycle and can be detrimental to health and well-being in the long-term.

It is recognised that for a significant number of people, employment is unlikely to provide them with an adequate household income. Recent successes in driving down child poverty show that supporting parental employment and subsidising low paid employment are effective in reducing poverty<sup>7</sup>.

It is more expensive to be poor! For example, people on low incomes often end up paying more for the services they need because they cannot access mainstream financial products. Households using a pre-payment gas or electric meter are more likely to be in fuel poverty than those using other payment methods<sup>8</sup>. Many families living in poverty live in areas where public transportation isn't readily available or affordable, and can't afford to own a car. Unmanageable personal debt can drive a cycle of poverty and distress that is very difficult for families to escape. It reduces household income available to spend, creates further pressures on parents and relationships, and in extreme cases has a significant impact on children's quality of life and life chances.

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<sup>5</sup> The full needs assessment can be accessed at [Plymouth City Council - Child Poverty](#). Key implications identified within the child poverty needs assessment can be found in Annex I.

<sup>6</sup> Waddell, G and Burton, K (2006) 'Is Work Good for your Health and Well-Being?' The Stationery Office; Black, C (2008) 'Working for a healthier tomorrow: Dame Carol Black's Review of the health of Britain's working age population'

<sup>7</sup> Ibid

<sup>8</sup> Department for Energy and Climate Change (2011) Annual Report on Fuel Poverty Statistics. DECC, London. [www.decc.gov.uk/assets/decc/Statistics/fuelpoverty/2181-annual-report-fuel-poverty-stats-2011.Pdf](http://www.decc.gov.uk/assets/decc/Statistics/fuelpoverty/2181-annual-report-fuel-poverty-stats-2011.Pdf).

## OVERVIEW OF PLYMOUTH'S NEEDS

- Plymouth has high levels of deprivation with a number of neighbourhoods among some of the most deprived in the country. The 2010 Indices of Multiple Deprivation highlights that Plymouth is just above the bottom 20% of local authorities for levels of deprivation, being ranked 72 out of 326. Plymouth is most deprived in the domains of income and employment scale.
- One in five Plymouth children are living in poverty based on household income levels. The highest rate of child poverty can be found in North Prospect with 57.6% of children in poverty in one Local Super Output Area (LSOA) alone. Five other LSOAs have over 50% of children in poverty and these can be found in the neighbourhoods of Devonport, Stonehouse, City Centre and North Prospect / Weston Mill.
- While the majority of child poverty is located in the South West and North West of the city, there are growing pockets in more affluent parts of the city. As the majority of data predates the recession, actual levels of child poverty could be higher than reported in the needs assessment.
- Welfare Reform changes are estimated to impact 20% of the city's population, and will disproportionately affect some of Plymouth's most vulnerable families. This will lead to growing difficulty to manage household finance within an already challenging economic climate which has seen the costs of living rise significantly. While more data is required to understand the level and types of household debt across the city, there are clear indications of a growing need for workless and low income households to manage increased financial pressures including payment of bills, credit cards, vulnerability to loan sharks/personal debt.
- In-work child poverty poses a significant risk to the city. Plymouth residents have a lower than average rate of pay and Plymouth has a high level of part-time workers.
- Overall, Plymouth has a lower qualified workforce, due in part to outward migration of people with higher qualifications in addition to a perceived lack of basic employability skills including literacy, numeracy and communication.
- Nearly 70% of children in poverty in Plymouth live in lone parent families with Barne Barton having by far the highest rates.

For more detailed information please refer to the Child Poverty Needs Assessment at [Plymouth City Council - Child Poverty](#).

## WHAT WE WANT TO ACHIEVE

- More parents are in work that pays
- Financial support is responsive to families' situations

## EXISTING PLANS AND UPCOMING OPPORTUNITIES

<b>Local Economic Strategy (LES)</b>	The LES identifies the economic development priorities necessary to deliver a step change in economic growth to 2026. Its aspirations are to increase competitiveness, diversify knowledge, improve the skills base of the workforce, build sustainable, well connected and inclusive communities and intensify the overall business base of the city. This will attract private investment, raise incomes and help tackle economic and social exclusion.
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<b>Local Development Framework (LDF)</b>	The LDF provides the spatial planning framework for the development and growth of the city. Together with the Local Transport Plan, it provides a strategic framework for the spatial development of the city.
<b>Plan for Jobs</b>	<p>The Plan for Jobs will create over 2,000 jobs and apprenticeships over the next two years to stimulate the city's economy and create jobs. The five commitments of the Plan for Jobs are to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Create jobs for local people by unlocking or speeding up major development projects, including housing</li> <li>• Help the city's unemployed gain skills and experience to help them get work as well as retain talented graduates</li> <li>• Proactively sell the city, its businesses, its products and its people</li> <li>• Unlock access to finance and provide support to enable job creation</li> <li>• Use the Council's assets, influence and buying power to increase jobs by using local supply chains and local goods where possible</li> </ul>
<b>Community Economic Development Trust</b>	Aims to support communities in the north west of the city to improve their access to employment opportunities.

## WHAT IS ALREADY HAPPENING? – GOOD PRACTICE CASE STUDIES

### **Creating new business opportunities – Outset Plymouth**

Outset Plymouth provides intensive support to local people seeking to be self-employed or start a new business. So far, Outset has helped to create 162 businesses, which equates to 199 jobs in the local community. The types of support offered include 1:1 sessions with a coach as well as a structured training programme which guides budding enterprisers from a foundation stage through to sustainability.

### **1000 Club**

The 1000 Club Campaign aim is to recruit 1000 companies in the Plymouth area to commit to support young people into employment, whether that be through work experience, apprenticeship, graduate internships or employment. Experience of the world of work is key to developing well rounded young people that are ready to become effective employees and meet the expectations of employers. Plymouth City Council currently has 40 young apprentices- including a number created specifically as a result of the 1000 Club campaign. The 100th member of the 1000 Club, Bluebird Care, recently provided a position to a young unemployed person who had expressed an interest in working in the care sector to her Jobcentre Plus adviser. The company put the young person through their four-day induction course and several days of shadowing before offering her a position.

### **Plymouth Community Homes - Financial Inclusion**

Our financial inclusion team assists families in rent debt to maximise their incomes and enable them to sustain their tenancies. We provide support including budgeting skills /advice and debt advice.

Our team also works with South West Water to jointly work with households to provide advice on reducing water usage, ensuring clients are on the most effective tariff and water meter installation.

Many of our clients do not have access to mainstream banking so our partnership with Barclays Bank enables any customers to open a bank account even where they have a poor credit history or have been declared bankrupt. Our partnership with Citizens Advice Bureau enables those in significant debt to receive specialist advice and support. Over the last year we have worked with over 260 households, and have facilitated receipt of over £86,459 in additional benefit and reduced housing evictions by over 60%.

## **Whitleigh Partnership's Worklessness Strategy**

The Whitleigh Partnership is a group of organisations and individuals that work directly within the neighbourhood to respond to issues of concern identified by local residents. Financial management and improving aspirations for work have been identified as key issues for the neighbourhood and so the partnership developed its own local worklessness strategy. Key activities include the establishment of a local work club in February 2013, delivery of confidence building activities like Timebanking and 'Lets Get Cooking', as well as community based budget support and debt advice through the 'every penny counts' project. The Partnership is also heavily engaged in supporting the resident led **Whitleigh Big Local** to engage in the upcoming Community Economic Development Trust.

## **Advice Plymouth**

The Advice Plymouth service is commissioned by Plymouth City Council to deliver targeted help to families. This includes advice on general benefit entitlement and financial capability. Advice Plymouth encompasses Age UK Plymouth supporting those over the age of 50, Plymouth Guild supporting those with disabilities, Citizens Advice providing help on debt and employment issues and Routeways specialising in child and family related advice.

The Service has very strong links with Children's Centres and also works with Parent Support Advisors in local schools delivering advice sessions which of late have all been focused on the impact of Welfare Reform. The project works with employed families and those unemployed, sick and disabled however there are no qualifying conditions to access the service.

*'Without your help I would not be claiming the right money for my new baby. I was very worried how I would manage whilst on maternity leave and thought because I worked I would not be entitled to any help. This is a great relief as a single parent and will help me to plan my return to work and future.'*

## **Stoke Damerel Work Club**

Stoke Damerel Community College (SDCC), Jobcentre Plus (JCP) and Cornwall College have been working together to develop an on-site work club for parents. A number of parents attend each week, all of whom have children at the school. The work club is also open to parents at feeder primary schools, as well as friends and relatives.

There has already been an incredible shift with the parents since its launch in January 2013.

"None of the parents could use a computer 6 weeks ago, now all can. They all have their own email addresses, CVs, and are actively job searching using Universal Jobmatch. They now have confidence to do a whole range of activities on-line, including searching for better deals, to save the family money. Three ladies are now doing an IT course at North Prospect Community learning. A few more are doing courses at their local library, St Aubyn's. One lady is now working with young offenders, in a voluntary capacity, and hopes to work in this area."

The work club has built the mum's confidence, and this in turn has also had an incredible impact on the child.

## **WHAT WE WILL FOCUS ON OVER THE NEXT THREE YEARS:**

### **Promote work as the best route out of poverty**

- Develop and deliver a skills plan for the city, in line with the future growth agenda for the city.
- Promote the adoption of the Living Wage across both public and private sector employers.

### **Income management and maximisation**

- Develop cooperative approaches to maximise household income.
- Provide budgeting advice and support for families affected by the current economic climate and welfare reforms, including debt management guidance.
- Maximise the impact of financial inclusion activities by joining up commissioning across partner agencies.

## THEME 2: FAMILY LIFE AND CHILDREN'S LIFE CHANCES

Parents living in poverty are much more likely to be facing a range of issues other than material deprivation which may affect their parenting. These include low levels of education and few qualifications, lack of access to jobs and services, isolation, mental/physical ill health and domestic violence.

With regards to achievement, the successes that individuals achieve during their adult life can be predicted by the level of cognitive and non-cognitive skills that children already possess on their first day at school.<sup>9</sup> While the gap is slowly closing between attainment levels of those on free school meals and other children are smaller than in previous years<sup>10</sup>, children growing up in poorer families still emerge from school with substantially lower levels of educational attainment<sup>11</sup>.

The relationship between poverty and ill-health is bi-directional: poverty contributes to ill-health and ill-health contributes to poverty. There is a social gradient in health – the lower a person's social position, the worse his or her health. Children born into low income households are more likely to experience health problems from birth and accumulate health risks as they grow older. In addition, they are less likely to access healthcare.

### OVERVIEW OF PLYMOUTH'S NEEDS

- There is a greater concentration of families with multiple and/or complex needs living in the most deprived areas of the city. Multiple and complex needs may include lone parents, disability, health problems, parenting problems or social isolation amongst others.
- There is a significant attainment gap at all levels, from early years foundation stage, Key Stage 2 (primary schools), Key Stage 4 (secondary school) and post 16 education, between those eligible for Free School Meals and those not. Research indicates that, without effective intervention, this trend is established at a very early age and continues with the child into adulthood.
- There are inequalities in life expectancy with life expectancy lower in more deprived areas. For example the average life expectancy for people in Devonport is nearly 13 years less than those in Chaddlewood.
- Despite improvements in recent years health outcomes for families in the most deprived areas of Plymouth are less positive than their more affluent neighbours with lower rates of breastfeeding (at birth), higher rates of teenage pregnancy, and higher rates of low birth weights, smoking and childhood obesity.

For more detailed information please refer to the Child Poverty Needs Assessment at [Plymouth City Council - Child Poverty](#).

### WHAT WE WANT TO ACHIEVE

- Ensure that poverty in childhood does not translate into poor experiences and outcomes.

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<sup>9</sup> Field, F. [The Foundation Years: preventing poor children becoming poor adults](#), 2010, HM Government

<sup>10</sup> Aldridge, H. et al, [Monitoring Poverty and Social Exclusion 2011](#), 2011, Joseph Rowntree Foundation

<sup>11</sup> Goodman, A. and Gregg, P., Poorer children's educational attainment: How important are attitudes and behaviour? 2010, Joseph Rowntree Foundation

## EXISTING PLANS AND UPCOMING OPPORTUNITIES

<b>Health and Wellbeing Strategy (due 2013)</b>	This Joint Strategy will set out the overarching framework to address the health and wellbeing needs of Plymouth's local communities and citizens. It will also act as a key driver for tackling health inequalities and improving health outcomes for individuals and communities.
<b>Children and Young People's Plan 2011-2014</b>	This plan outlines how partners across the Children and Young People's Trust will work together to achieve better outcomes for children and young people under five priorities: i. Equip young people with skills, knowledge and opportunities to make a successful transition to adulthood, ii. Improve levels of achievement for all children and young people, iii. Tackle child poverty, iv. Provide all children with the best possible start to life, and v. Tackle risk taking behaviour.
<b>Prevention and Early Intervention Strategy 2012-2015</b>	This strategy seeks to deliver Plymouth's commitment to families and young people to make positive change to their lives together. It aims to reduce vulnerability and improve outcomes for children, young people and families by responding early to young people's needs.
<b>Alcohol Strategy (due 2013)</b>	Sets out how the city will minimise alcohol related harm and promote responsible drinking. Includes a focus on i. Changing knowledge, skills and attitudes towards alcohol, ii. Providing support for children, young people and parents in need, and iii. Creating safer drinking environments.
<b>Healthy Child Programme</b>	A programme for children, young people and families, which focuses on early intervention and prevention including screening, immunisations, developmental reviews, information and guidance on parenting and healthy choices. Aims to identify families who need additional support or are at risk of poor health outcomes.

## WHAT IS ALREADY HAPPENING? – GOOD PRACTICE CASE STUDIES

### Green Ark Children's Centre

Green Ark is one of several Children's Centres across the city actively working to tackle and reduce child poverty. They offer a comprehensive volunteer programme, with the opportunity for volunteers to engage in a range of training and gain work based experience. The centre also works with partner agencies to offer a range of qualification, training and parenting courses, as well as offer clinics facilitated by partner agencies. Families tell us they feel more able to manage their finances following receipt of budgeting and money advice. Successful application of grants has enabled families to purchase essential furniture/equipment for their children, and successful completion of both accredited and non-accredited courses has led parents/carers to choose to enrol upon and complete further courses/training. This has led to increased self-esteem and feelings of confidence, and parents have said that they feel able to begin looking for work.

## **Use of the Pupil Premium in Schools**

The Pupil Premium is additional funding given to schools so that they can support disadvantaged pupils and close the attainment gap between them and their peers. Many schools choose to spend their pupil premium on school based activities including subsidized breakfast clubs, parent support advisors, emotional literacy support or additional literacy and numeracy support. Below is an example of a school that chose to allocate its Pupil Premium in a different way.

'Plymstock School took a new approach to the Pupil Premium – we took £38,000 of the Pupil Premium and consulted directly with parents and students entitled to free school meals or who are in the care of the Local Authority on how these funds can be used. We called this the Plymstock School Achievement Voucher. Approximately £400 has been allocated to each individual eligible child to be spent on equipment to facilitate home learning, one to one and small group tuition in key subjects, revision guides and textbooks, support with travel costs, engagement in out of school clubs such as football, swimming and rowing, counselling and additional work experience opportunities'.

## **Helping my Child to Learn**

There is evidence that family involvement in school matters much more for children from low-income families than those from better-off families and that even where families live in poverty, children can achieve well if parents are helped to be involved in and committed to their child's education.

During the Spring term of 2013 we worked closely with a group of parents and parent support advisor from Woodfield Primary School to deliver the 'Helping my Child to Learn' programme to help parents and carers support the learning of their children. The programme covered topics like how to get our brain ready to take on new learning, how we learn in different ways, how to make learning stick and the importance of emotions in learning and of positive talk and enjoyment to engage and motivate children.

*'I will be able to help my child much better'*

*'Learning for me at school was rubbish but I am determined it won't be like that for my children'*

## **Support for Service Children**

Her Majesty's Schools Heroes is a unique, national, pupil voice group formed for the support of Service children and young people. The impact of deployment upon Service children creates a unique level of emotional poverty that can see them failing in their academic lives and losing control of their emotions, leading to antisocial behaviours in school.

Additionally, lone parents can be under significant pressures whilst a serving partner is deployed. HMS Heroes help to support them through involving them in their activities, giving them a focus and listening.

Through the Service Premium, HMS Schools Heroes have been able to allocate staff time to support the set up and development of the clubs, provide bases for the children to meet and use to talk about their worries and gain support from their peers, to ensure no child has to worry alone. All these opportunities and activities create confidence building environments and provide space for these young people to explore their emotions and gain support from each other.

Executive Head Teacher, Andrea Norris notes: HMS Heroes has given our schools a clear focus and direction for the delivery of our provision for service families. Through involvement with this group we have been more able to support and enhance the lives of our service children.

## **Devon and Cornwall Police - Encompass**

The Encompass scheme works with schools, children and families, and was established by the Police to protect children who have witnessed or suffered domestic violence at home.

The scheme has been designed to provide early reporting of any domestic violence incidents that occur, which might have an impact on a child in school. This is done through a phone call to their school from the Police in the morning following an incident. The project ensures that at least one member of the school staff, is trained to liaise with the Police and to use the information that has been shared, in confidence to support the child. This may be something as simple as letting a child bring a favourite toy into school on that day, or making provisions if that child is tired because they have been kept awake due to an incident. Encompass will be rolled out to Early Years settings such as Children's Centres later this year.

## **Plymouth City Council - Family Group Conferencing**

Family Group Conferencing has been vital to supporting and enabling families and communities to come up with their own solutions to the problems and difficulties they are facing. It is a restorative approach which draws on strengths and resources of the family and or community experiencing the problem and enables more effective working relationships between family members and professionals. The process so far in Plymouth has enabled over 1400 children through 654 Family Group Conferences to be kept safely living within their family and prevented family breakdown.

## **Routeways Centre Limited - Parents Apart**

Research has documented the potential for family breakdown to contribute to children's behavioural problems, educational attainment and their future as effective parents. Parents Apart, a nationally recognised child poverty pilot, supported parents during their separation or with issues related to their separation to improve outcomes for their children and mitigate the impact of child poverty. Multiple issues often get mixed up together - for example, an inability to resolve financial arrangements can impact on agreeing parenting time.

The aim was to encourage both fathers and mothers to recognise their family's particular needs, their strengths and challenges. Through consistent interaction with a key specialist worker they were able to understand ways to make a significant contribution to helping their children cope with family change.

There were many similarities around family needs including the need to improve financial stability, secure workable residence and contact arrangements and to reduce conflict. Caseworkers found that money management and debt advice would often not be raised initially. But once a relationship was established, they would be able to approach these issues with clients to make a positive and practical difference to children at risk of poverty and build resilience within the family and strategies for surviving the next knock.

362 children were impacted by the work of Parents Apart and families accessed a range of support from either their caseworker directly, project partners or linked agencies with key partners such as Relate, Citizens Advice Bureau, Changing Families, Coast and the Family Information Service. This intervention impacted on 362 children in total.

## **Supporting Parents**

Plymouth Parent Partnership (PPP) provides advice, information and guidance for all parents and carers in Plymouth around a range of issues. It also has a statutory duty to provide impartial support to parents of children with additional needs. It can offer one to one support for parents at meetings with schools and other agencies, help parents to understand the processes and procedures of other agencies and organisations, and provide structured parenting programmes.

*"PPP listened to me when it was getting too much, they have also supported me during meetings at my sons school so I don't feel as intimidated as I used to"*

Between 2007 and 2011, Plymouth Partnership also managed the delivery of the Parent Support Adviser Project which aimed to provide impartial and confidential information, advice and support to parents through schools. To date, more than 60 schools across the city have chosen to retain and fund their own dedicated Parent Support Adviser or some form of parent support. They are seen as an essential part of the school team and invaluable to those parents with whom they are in contact.

*"I would have cried without the support of the PSA. I wouldn't have known where to go. I have just moved here and I didn't have any friends. I feel very supported by the PSA, I have so many issues going on in my head...I can come and talk to my PSA".*

## **Plymouth Family Intervention Project**

The Plymouth Family Intervention Project offers targeted and intensive long term support for families with the aim to promote change in negative behaviours and address often high levels of domestic abuse, substance misuse, poor mental health, poor school attendance and worklessness, and to enable families to live independently in the community.

The Project has a multi-agency team and a strong partnership with other key partners who also work closely with families to deal with any issues they may have regarding debt. Families are supported in setting up payment plans as well as maximising benefit take up to ensure they are in receipt of all the right benefits.

To date we have supported 155 families, all of which would fall within the child poverty threshold.

*'It's totally strengthening for me, I mean as I say, I was so much shut down before hand, and they would just be giving me the odd nudge all the time, like come on you know, you are the father of this house, take a bit more responsibility cause they're your children as well, don't just shut yourself off, put your little word in for your kids and eventually I did. Ever since then my kids have totally turned their lives around.'*

## WHAT WE WILL FOCUS ON OVER THE NEXT THREE YEARS:

### Give children and young people the best start to life

- Targeted parent support for families with children aged 0-7yrs.
- Ensure early intervention and prevention resources are commissioned in partnership with schools and GPs to address child poverty outcomes, with a focus on key risk factors including:
  - Parental mental health
  - Domestic abuse
  - Parental drug and alcohol misuse
  - Parental worklessness
  - Absenteeism from school
  - Disability

## THEME 3: COMMUNITIES AND NEIGHBOURHOODS

Neighbourhoods play an important role in the socialisation of children. Individuals judge their position in society in relation to their neighbours, so growing up in a deprived neighbourhood often leads to lower aspirations. Young people may copy or learn antisocial behaviour from other people in the area so that poor behaviours are normalised. The poorer the neighbourhood, the more likely it is to have high rates of crime, poor air quality, lack of green spaces and safe places for children to play<sup>12</sup>.

Families living in poor housing are more likely to suffer from a range of health problems including poorer mental health and cognitive development as well as respiratory and stomach problems. Those growing up in the poorest households are more likely to suffer enduring physical and mental health problems in adulthood and have increased risk of severe, long-term and life-limiting illness. Children in these households are more likely than their more affluent peers to have difficulty in sleeping, studying or playing at home which can affect their health, their school lives and their social participation<sup>13</sup>.

### OVERVIEW OF PLYMOUTH'S NEEDS

- Plymouth has high levels of families with children living in overcrowded housing.
- The number of homeless families requiring temporary accommodation remains stubbornly high despite intervention to prevent this from happening.
- 33% of Plymouth's private sector stock across the city is old and considered non decent – this equates to around 30,000 private sector homes of which 9,500 are occupied by 'vulnerable' residents in receipt of qualifying benefits. There is not enough data at present to determine how many house families living in poverty.
- Social housing, located predominantly in the West of the city is often well maintained and more energy efficient than older private sector housing. The age, condition and tenure of private sector housing stock in Plymouth is of concern and may be impacting on the health of the most vulnerable families.
- Deprived neighbourhoods in the city are most likely to experience higher levels of crime, antisocial behaviour and domestic abuse. However patterns of youth offending across the city are less clear cut with less deprived areas seeing similar number of offenders as the more deprived areas.
- Further work needs to be undertaken to better understand how services currently target those groups considered more vulnerable to poverty and whether their needs have been fully considered in service planning.

For more detailed information please refer to the Child Poverty Needs Assessment at [Plymouth City Council - Child Poverty](#).

### WHAT WE WANT TO ACHIEVE

- Child's environment supports them to thrive.

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<sup>12</sup> Marmot, M (2010) 'Fair Society, Healthy Lives' p. 78

<sup>13</sup> Hawthorne et al. (2003) 'Supporting children through family change.' Joseph Rowntree Foundation

## EXISTING PLANS AND UPCOMING OPPORTUNITIES

<b>Housing Plan 2012-2017</b>	This plan lays out the city's housing ambition and priority objectives for developing, improving and investing in people's homes, neighbourhoods and communities.
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## WHAT IS ALREADY HAPPENING? – GOOD PRACTICE CASE STUDIES

### Joining Forces - Home Start and Jobcentre Plus Plymouth

Home Start supports parents with children under the age of 5 years who live in areas of deprivation - they also train and support volunteer parent mentors from the local community to support any family that is struggling to cope. Andrea has been working with mentor parents over the last year or so. 'Of the 73 volunteers we have trained 19 have, with our support, left to take up a college place (usually Social Work) or employment. A further seven have gained employment or training but continued volunteering. This equates to 35% going on into education or employment. Of the volunteers who have gone on into employment and/or education, 65% were previously unemployed and 45% were themselves lone-parents.'

One of the ladies (lone-parent) who after attending the event at the job centre undertook the Prep Course said, '*Even if I never get to support a family I have got so much from just attending the 10 week course. I found it amazing. I feel so much more confident about myself.*' She is currently looking into how she can set up her own gardening business and is keenly awaiting a match to a family.

### Breastfeeding latch on groups – Plymouth Community Healthcare

The Plymouth Latch-on network of volunteers offers mother to mother breastfeeding support in their local communities, by highly skilled and knowledgeable peer supporters. The network is city wide, with peer supporters in all 17 children centres. Breastfeeding rates are lowest in the most deprived localities, therefore greater resources are targeted to these areas. This includes pro-active telephone support, early registration with children centres, increased advertising and promotion of the great expectations antenatal programme.

The Plymouth Latch-on network aims to support mothers to initiate and continue breastfeeding, so that their baby can enjoy the long term health benefits and address health inequalities. Recent figures demonstrate a steady increase in women choosing to breastfeed and sustaining it beyond 6 weeks.

*'It is a good idea having a peer supporter at the hospital and I found it really good to talk to someone about my Baby. I sat and spoke for ages and it was good to speak to someone who wasn't medical. As a first time Mum, I didn't know anything and it made it worse that Baby was early, so having someone to ask questions and listen to me yap was good'*

### Addressing the Impact of Welfare Reforms - Housing Services, Plymouth City Council

Plymouth City Council Housing Services have taken a proactive approach to supporting those families impacted by changes to welfare reform. Families face a stark choice of either spending a greater proportion of their income on rent (with less available for other essentials), falling into rent arrears and risk homelessness, or turning to high interest / doorstep money lenders.

We wanted to offer families who were particularly vulnerable to homelessness an opportunity to understand the impact of welfare reforms on their household finances, maximise their income wherever possible (including encouragement to link with employment related initiatives), and increase their money management skills so that they could adapt to the changes. We commissioned the 'Housing Extension' to the Advice Plymouth service to deliver alongside our Housing Options service based in the Civic Centre.

Every customer of the Housing Service is offered a welfare rights and affordability check, as well as the opportunity to attend 1:1 and group sessions to receive money management and debt advice. By providing this service at the earliest possible stage of our customers' involvement with the service, we are already seeing positive outcomes in terms of preventing families from reaching crisis and reducing the risk that they will lose their homes and need to live in temporary accommodation. Living in temporary accommodation is unsettled housing for all who experience it but it is especially detrimental for children.

## **A Community Partnership**

The Honicknowle Partnership of Extended Services (HoPES) is a community action partnership made up of a wide range of groups, including schools, churches, youth workers and volunteers who are dedicated to the development of services and opportunities for the local community. The partnership was set up because local groups had lost out on funding in the past because they did not work together.

HoPES have kickstarted a number of initiatives including the Art of the Community, hosted by All Saints Academy, which aims to break down barriers and encourage everyone to get to know each other while learning new, enjoyable skills. In total 146 children took part, as well as teachers, teaching assistants and many parents and relatives. Another project 'Young Health Champions' aims to reduce health inequalities among young people living in areas of disadvantage by using young volunteers as peer leaders.

A new Multi-Use Games Area (MUGA) and play hub building has recently been secured in collaboration with the sports development partnership, YMCA, the police and Plymouth Argyle Football in the Community.

## **Peer Support to Stop Smoking**

Over the last three years a partnership pilot programme between Plymouth City Council and Public Health Plymouth has successfully delivered the Decipher ASSIST peer supporter intervention in seven schools in Plymouth. More than 300 influential Year 8 students were recruited and trained to work as 'peer supporters' and given on-going support to have informal conversations with more than 2000 Year 8 students about the risks of smoking and the benefits of being smoke-free.

The project builds engagement among children and young people and for those peer supporters who also engage with the programme it helps to further develop their communication skills that will improve their school performance. Evidence suggests that delivery of the programme can reduce uptake of smoking by 15% over a two year follow up period. We estimate that we have prevented around 70 children from starting to smoke over the previous two years.

## **WHAT WE WILL FOCUS ON OVER THE NEXT THREE YEARS:**

### **Provide decent homes for Plymouth families**

- Improve housing standards in the private rented sector

### **Enable communities to lead change and self-manage their neighbourhoods**

- Facilitate greater use of community assets and social capital across the areas of highest deprivation in Plymouth.

## **THEME 4: CHILD POVERTY IS EVERYONE'S BUSINESS**

At the heart of the child poverty plan is the need to increase visibility and ownership of the child poverty agenda amongst key stakeholders, partner agencies and communities.

## **WHAT WE WILL FOCUS ON OVER THE NEXT THREE YEARS:**

### **Leadership and Ownership**

- Embed child poverty within key citywide plans and strategies including the Plymouth Plan, the Council's Corporate Plan and the Operating plans of major partners.

### **Raising the profile of child poverty as everyone's business**

- Deliver an annual standing conference on Child Poverty.

## SECTION III: DELIVERING THE STRATEGY

### GOVERNANCE

In the past year the local child poverty agenda has received a significant boost in profile by having a nominated Cabinet level champion, who is also chair of the Child Poverty Cross Party Working Group, responsible for development of this Strategy and Action Plan.

Delivery of the Child Poverty Strategy and Action Plan will continue to be overseen by the Child Poverty Cross Party Working Group, who will provide an annual written report of progress to Cabinet and the Co-operative Scrutiny Board.

Operational delivery of the Child Poverty Action Plan will be via a network of Child Poverty Champions across the city, overseen by the Plymouth City Council Director for 'People' who, via the 'People' Programme Board, will provide regular progress reports to the Child Poverty Cross Party Working Group.

### RESOURCING THE STRATEGY

Effective delivery of the Child Poverty Strategy is highly dependent on having a comprehensive understanding of how resources are being commissioned against child poverty outcomes across Plymouth City Council and its partners. The strategy identifies areas and opportunities where pooling and alignment of resources may be required around common outcomes, for example within the early intervention and prevention strategy commissioning processes.

For existing plans and strategies, is it expected that commissioning of services to support child poverty outcomes will take place based on agreed priorities within approved budgets and resources.

### MANAGING PERFORMANCE

The most well-known measure available at present for capturing relative low income poverty<sup>14</sup> is 'the proportion of children living in families in receipt of out of work (means-tested) benefits or in receipt of tax credits where their reported income is less than 60 per cent of median income'.

Evidence shows that at below 60 per cent of the median income, material deprivation becomes a significant problem with families struggling to meet basic needs like food, heating, transport, clothing and the extra costs of schooling like equipment and trips.<sup>15</sup> The links between material deprivation and living below 60% median income are strong and the correlation between poor outcome and children living on relatively low income is too strong to ignore.<sup>16</sup>

The problem with having a single finance based indicator for child poverty is that it cannot capture the complexities of the issue, as outlined in the Introduction. It is therefore proposed to develop a basket of meaningful indicators that would help to capture any impact on a broad range of factors contributing to child poverty locally. The basket of outcome indicators assess impact and can be seen in the table overleaf.

<sup>14</sup> Child Poverty Act 2010 – defined by Her Majesty's Revenue and Customs, 2009 (formerly National Indicator 116)

<sup>15</sup> Child Poverty Map of the UK, March 2011, Campaign to End Child Poverty

<sup>16</sup> The importance of income in measuring and tackling child poverty, Save the Children, June 2012

## Child Poverty Basket of Indicators

### Proportion of children in poverty

<b>Ensure that poverty in childhood does not translate into poor experiences and outcomes</b>	Inequality gap in achievement by 19 yr old	<b>Child's environment supports them to thrive</b>  <b>More parents are in work that pays</b>  <b>Financial support is responsive to families' situations</b>	Satisfaction of local area
	Free School Meals/ Non Free School Meals achievement gap		Amount of new affordable housing
	Special Educational Needs/non Special Educational Needs achievement gap		Working age population qualified to at least Level 2
	Proportion of children achieving the expected level of achievement		Proportion of residents with no qualifications
	Under 18yr old conception rate		Average earnings of employees in the area
	Percentage of live births under 2.5kg		Overall employment rate
	Life expectancy at birth		Proportion of children in workless households
	Proportion of obese / underweight children		Proportion of take up of child care by low income working families
	Proportion of persistently absent children		Time to process Housing Benefit/Council Tax Benefit new claims
	Rate of children in need per 1000 children		16-18yr old young people not in employment, education or training (NEET)

### CHILD POVERTY ACTION PLAN

The Child Poverty Action Plan that accompanies this Child Poverty Strategy can be found in Annex I.

It should be noted that many of the activities currently listed in the action plan are in a formative stage. This is to be expected within a three year strategy and more detail will start to emerge as work progresses and as more partners and services engage. It also reflects the dynamics of the changing environment in which we are currently working and ensures that discussions on how we tackle child poverty in line with the strategic themes continue to take place.

As such, the action plan will remain a live plan which will be updated and added to during the life span of the strategy.

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## ANNEX I: CHILD POVERTY ACTION PLAN 2013-2016

Objective	Actions	Output / Outcome	Timescale	Lead	
<b>Promote work as the best route out of poverty</b>					
1.	Develop and deliver a skills plan for the city, in line with the future growth agenda for the city.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Produce and agree the scope of the Skills Plan</li> <li>▪ Engage partner commitment to deliver the Skills Plan</li> </ul>	A Skills Delivery Plan is agreed that identifies and seeks to align existing skill gaps and future skills needs of adults and young people with the city's growth aspirations and future employment opportunities.	June 2013 September 2013	Judith Harwood, Assistant Director for Education, Learner and Family Support on behalf of the Employability Sub-Group
2.	Promote the adoption of the Living Wage across both public and private sector employers.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Implement the principles of a Living Wage across Plymouth City Council.</li> <li>▪ Identify next steps to encourage other city employers to adopt the Living Wage</li> </ul>	Plymouth based employees, including low income families with children, are able to maintain a safe, decent standard of living within the community with the ability to save for future needs and goals.	October 2013 May 2014	Mark Grimley, Assistant Director for Human Resources and Organisational Development  TBC
<b>Support income management and maximisation</b>					
3.	Develop cooperative approaches to maximise household income.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ The Energy Cooperative business case directly addresses the needs of families living with child poverty by delivering a range of cost savings to lower income households including energy bill reductions and energy efficiency measures.</li> <li>▪ Minimise home energy bills and reduce fuel poverty and greenhouse gas emissions <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Deliver Schools Energy Workshop Programme</li> <li>○ Deliver Energy Switch workshop programme</li> </ul> </li> <li>▪ Implementation of the Plymouth Digital Inclusion Project to inform, encourage, train and enable all Plymouth citizens to use the web in order to address wider economic and social issues including social exclusion and isolation.</li> <li>▪ Work with individual schools to highlight levels of Free School Meals eligibility v. levels of take-up. Develop cooperative approaches and information to support schools in evidencing the benefits to families not taking up their eligibility.</li> <li>▪ Explore other co-operative approaches to maximise household income.</li> </ul>	The Energy Co-operative business case embeds tackling child poverty as a key outcome. All families with children that are engaged with the Energy Co-operative experience cost savings. More equitable tariffs available between different payment options.  Families with children are aware of and enabled to engage in ways to further reduce energy bills through use of energy efficiency measures and fuel switching.  Vulnerable residents, including families with children that are living in poverty, have increased ability to engage in education, work and social opportunities.  Greater numbers of families with children entitled to Free School Meals provision have taken up their eligibility and reduced the amount being spent on providing school lunches.  Co-operative models are identified that would deliver economic benefits to individual households, including families with children.	June 2013 April 2014 April 2014 May 2014 May 2014 May 2014	Jonathan Selman, Low Carbon City Team  Jonathan Selman, Low Carbon City Team  Sheldon Ryan, Senior Economic Development Officer  Brad Pearce, Educational Catering Manager, Education, Learner and Family Support  Giles Perritt, Head of Policy, Performance and Partnerships

4.	<p>Provide budgeting advice and support for families affected by the current economic climate and welfare reforms, including debt management guidance.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Delivery of financial inclusion services via Advice Plymouth are further targeted to ensure families with children are well informed over personal finance support and empowered to resolve issues, including reducing debt.</li> <li>▪ Coordination of frontline advice and support to customers in response to the impact of Welfare Reforms</li> <li>▪ Delivery of Welfare Changes Awareness Raising Campaigns to include but not limited to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Families Campaign April 2013 to July 2013 - Plymouth City Council, Advice Plymouth and Routeways</li> <li>○ Carers Campaign July 2013 to October 2013 and Disability Campaign July 2013 to October 2013 - Plymouth City Council, Advice Plymouth with DIAC/Advice UK</li> <li>○ Universal Credits Campaign October 2013</li> </ul> </li> <li>▪ Increase the capacity of credit union provision to families with children.</li> </ul>	<p>Families with children are informed about and able to access personal finance and debt management support.</p> <p>Families with children are informed of changes to benefits and how they can access help and support, including previously unclaimed benefits.</p> <p>Families with children are informed of changes to benefits and how they can access help and support, including previously unclaimed benefits.</p> <p>Increased number of families with children can access an active credit union account, save at their own pace as well as take advantage of the range of services available including affordable loans.</p>	December 2013     By June 2014     May 2014	Commissioning Manager, Joint Commissioning and Adult Social Care     Pete Aley, Head of Community Services, Homes and Communities, Plymouth City Council  PCSO Tracey Naismith, Devon and Cornwall Police    Darin Halifax, Community Cohesion Officer    Darin Halifax, Community Cohesion Officer
5.	<p>Maximise the impact of financial inclusion activities by joining up commissioning across partner agencies.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Identify new opportunities to align existing and upcoming joint commissioning activities, including schools and GPs, to maximise access to financial inclusion support for those families most at risk of child poverty and/or families affected by the current economic climate and welfare reforms.</li> </ul>	<p>Commissioning plans for families with children are integrated with financial inclusion activities. Families with children can access financial inclusion services and support within/alongside other service provision such as children's centres and schools, or health care services such as smoking cessation.</p>	September 2014	Joint Commissioning Partnership –lead commissioner to be identified following appointment of the Head of Joint Strategic Commissioning
<b>Give children and young people the best start to life</b>					
6.	<p>Targeted parent support for families with children between 0-7yrs.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Increase the number of free early years education places available for eligible 2yr olds in disadvantaged neighbourhoods.</li> <li>▪ Refocus Children's Centres and partners to embed child poverty specific outcomes, specifically looking at separated families as a key group at risk of child poverty.</li> <li>▪ Embed child poverty specific outcomes within the joint commissioning of the Primary Excellence Cluster (PEC), specifically looking at separated families as a key group at risk of child poverty.</li> </ul>	<p>Eligible families with children are able to access free child care entitlement.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- 800 free places</li> <li>- 1400 free places</li> </ul> <p>Families with children, in particular separated families can access support and services at Children's Centre specifically aimed at tackling child poverty.</p> <p>Families with children, in particular separated families can access support and services at schools within the PEC specifically aimed at tackling child poverty.</p>	Sep 2013     Sep 2014     Rolling programme between 2013-2014     June 2014	Judith Harwood, Assistant Director for Education, Learner and Family Support     Jo Hall, Senior Advisor, Early Years and Childcare.    Fiona Fleming, Commissioning Manager, Joint Commissioning and Adult Social Care

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Undertake a review of all parenting and parent support services to ensure they are aligned with and directly tackle child poverty in line with the upcoming Health and Wellbeing Strategy.</li> </ul>	Families with children are able to access appropriate parent and parenting support services.	May 2014	Judith Harwood, Assistant Director for Education, Learner and Family Support and Alison Botham, Assistant Director Children's Social Care
7.	<p>Ensure early intervention and prevention resources are commissioned in partnership with schools and GPs to address child poverty outcomes, with a focus on key risk factors including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Parental mental health</li> <li>▪ Domestic abuse</li> <li>▪ Parental drug and alcohol misuse</li> <li>▪ Parental worklessness</li> <li>▪ Absenteeism from school</li> <li>▪ Disability<sup>17</sup></li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Embed child poverty within the upcoming Health and Wellbeing Strategy</li> <li>▪ Review, amend and align existing commissioning plans with the Health and Wellbeing Strategy and reflect the key areas identified within this objective.</li> </ul> <p><b>Current commissioning plans include:</b></p> <p>Early Intervention and Prevention Strategy Domestic Abuse Partnership Commissioning Plan Alcohol Commissioning Plan (upcoming) Families with a Future action plan</p> <p><b>Current gaps in joint commissioning that will need specific and additional consideration include:</b></p> <p>Parental Mental Health Disability (<i>in relation to mitigating child poverty</i>)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Review options for more integrated service assessment and delivery of adult and children's services to address child poverty.</li> </ul>	<p>Tackling child poverty is identified as a key objective within the upcoming Health and Wellbeing Strategy.</p> <p>Activities/services to address the key child poverty risks factors identified are embedded within commissioning plans developed and/or amended to deliver the upcoming Health and Wellbeing Strategy. Areas identified as gaps in relation to child poverty are addressed within commissioning plans with services and support delivered according to need.</p>	July 2013  April 2014  September 2013	Carole Burgoine, Director for People  Craig McArdle, Head of Service, Joint Strategic Commissioning  Judith Harwood, Assistant Director for Education, Learner and Family Support and Dave Simpkins, Interim Assistant Director Joint Commissioning and Adult Social Care
<b>Provide decent homes for Plymouth families</b>					
8.	Improve housing standards in the private rental sector	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Align the review of the Assistance Policy and interventions following an analysis of target hardening on private sector housing for families with children living in poverty.</li> <li>▪ Offer assistance to improve homes, to include targeting of vulnerable residents living in the worst housing in deprived neighbourhoods such as families with children living in poverty.</li> <li>▪ Work with private and social Registered Providers to review their proposals to meet the decent homes standard.</li> <li>▪ Undertake targeted work on the poorest performing landlords with the worst housing for families with children and young people.</li> </ul>	<p>The number and situation of families with children living in private rented sector is better understood and used to influence the design and delivery of interventions aimed at improving the standard of housing in the private rented sector and providing support to those families. Poorest performing landlords with family tenants are improving the standard of their houses.</p>	December 2013  Ongoing to April 2014  Ongoing to April 2014  Ongoing to April 2014	Stuart Palmer, Assistant Director Homes and Communities  Phil Mitchell, Private Sector Housing and Regeneration Manager  Linda Johns, Team Leader, Private Rented Team, Homes and Communities  Linda Johns, Team Leader, Private Rented Team, Homes and Communities

<sup>17</sup> Definition of disability under the Equality Act 2010 is a physical or mental impairment that has a 'substantial' and 'long term' negative effect on your ability to do normal daily activities.

<b>Enable communities to lead change and self-manage their neighbourhoods</b>					
9.	Facilitate the greater use of community assets and social capital across the areas of highest deprivation in Plymouth.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Deliver the Community Economic Development Trust in the north of the city.</li>   <li>▪ Ensure that child poverty is embedded within the review of existing neighbourhood working and community engagement across the city, by encouraging increased identification and use of community assets, more participation in local decision making and enabling communities to have an influence on, and greater say in service provision.</li> </ul>	<p>Local employment and training opportunities are created, with provision of support for the local economy and community infrastructure.</p> <p>Support is in place to enable children and young people to grow up in empowered and thriving communities where they are helped to realize their potential.</p>	2015  September 2013	Christopher Grace, Head of Economic Development  Stuart Palmer, Assistant Director Homes and Communities, Fiona Scapens, Regeneration Manager, Homes and Communities, Paul Palmer, Principal Surveyor (Corporate Estates) Economic Development
<b>Enable strong leadership of the child poverty agenda</b>					
10.	Embed child poverty within key citywide plans and strategies including the Plymouth Plan, the Council's Corporate Plan and the Operating plans of major partners.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Cabinet to endorse Child Poverty Strategy and Action Plan 2013-2016</li> <li>▪ Confirm SMT, Directorate and Partner/Partnership child poverty champions</li>   <li>▪ Co-operative Scrutiny Board to receive a child poverty impact assessment on annual Council budget setting decisions.</li>   <li>▪ Engage with the Plymouth Fairness Commission to influence its recommendations to address issues of fairness and inequality across the city.</li>   <li>▪ Ensure that the Child Poverty Strategy is embedded within the upcoming Plymouth Plan.</li>   <li>▪ Ensure that all major plans and strategies acknowledge how they aim to tackle child poverty</li> </ul>	<p>Strategy and action plan endorsed.</p> <p>Champions identified and understand their role to promote child poverty as everyone's business.</p> <p>Budget decisions have been reviewed and amended based on full understanding of their impact on child poverty.</p> <p>The recommendations of the Fairness Commission identify key areas where actions to address child poverty in Plymouth must be strengthened</p> <p>The long term strategy for the city acknowledges and embeds how the city will address and reduce child poverty in the medium and long term. This will replace the need for a stand-alone child poverty strategy.</p> <p>Child Poverty outcomes and actions aligned with child poverty strategy in:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Health and Wellbeing Strategy</li> <li>- Local Economic Strategy</li> </ul>	May 2013  September 2013  December 2013  May 2013 – March 2014  July 2015  March 2014	Child Poverty Cross Party Working Group / Carole Burgoine, Director for People / Judith Harwood, Assistant Director for Education, Learner and Family Support
<b>Raise the profile of child poverty as everyone's business</b>					
11.	Deliver an annual standing conference on Child Poverty.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Plan and deliver standing child poverty conference</li> <li>▪ Ensure the Chair of the Standing Conference is a member of the Child Poverty Cross Party Working Group.</li> </ul>	3 Conferences delivered. Strategic links are made between the objectives of the Child Poverty Cross Party Working Group and the Standing Conference. The profile of the local child poverty agenda remains highly visible across the city.	2013-2015	Child Poverty Cross Party Working Group / Judith Harwood, Assistant Director for Education, Learner and Family Support