

Peterborough Strategic Development Plan for poverty reduction and social mobility

Adopting a 'Think Poverty' approach



June 2012
Final Draft

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National Context

The Coalition government's commitment to eradicate child poverty builds on the work of the previous Labour government, the result of which was the Child Poverty Act 2010. This Act placed a number of duties on local authorities and named partners, including the Local Strategic Partnership, to meet four income targets. The purpose of this strategy is to set out plans proposed by Peterborough partnerships to fulfil our duties under the Child Poverty Act and to tease out actions that we feel can combat the causes and consequences of family poverty in the local area.

For the purpose of this strategy, we have determined that 'family poverty' is a more appropriate way of conceptualising Child Poverty. We have therefore adopted this term as the focus for our work. Childhood experiences in **families** suffering from high levels of worklessness, in work poverty or reliance on benefits restricts choices or imposes severe hardships; childhood experience in **deprived neighbourhoods** where opportunities to participate in society through social interaction, leisure or support networks are undermined compounds disadvantage; and childhood experience in **cities** with a legacy of low levels of attainment, skills and productivity, where local economies lack dynamism or quality of life, impacts on aspirations for all. The context in which children are growing and living lays the foundations for later life.

This document sets out our Phase 1 (2011-2014) plan for a city wide set of strategic aims and actions. It represents our joint commitment to try and provide opportunities to all,

Defining Poverty

1. Income Targets

The most common definition of Child Poverty in England relates to the proportion of children living in families in receipt of out of work benefits...

The numbers of Job Seekers' Allowance (JSA) male benefit claimants (March 2011) in Peterborough was 6.5% compared to 4.1% in the East of England. For females, the figures were recorded as 2.9%, compared to 2.5% in the East of England.

... or tax credits where the reported income is less than 60% of the equivalent median income...

The median gross weekly pay for a full time worker in Peterborough (2011) was identified by NOMIS as £376.30 for a female worker and £498.90 for a male worker. These figures were amongst the lowest when compared to the East of England identified as £450.60 and £541.90 respectively. This might indicate a female in full time employment in Peterborough earning just £225.78 a week.

Families experience severe poverty where they have access to less than 50% median income and experience material deprivation. The numbers who fall into this category in Peterborough are projected to be approximately 3,500.

2. Social Mobility

More recently, the drive to eradicate poverty embodies a broader aim which is the promotion of social mobility¹ (strengthening families, achievement, aspiration and opportunities) and social justice² (providing support for the most vulnerable).

¹ HM Government, April 2011. [Opening Doors, Breaking Barriers: A Strategy for Social Mobility](#)

² Social Justice

This strategy is founded on the understanding that a new approach³ to tackling poverty and securing social justice in the decade ahead needs to be adopted. Eradicating poverty must address immediate financial concerns for many families and also build the life chances of children by increasing opportunity, supporting families and raising aspiration.

Developing our vision

A life in poverty means risks to health, educational attainment, life expectancy, choices and opportunities that have short and longer term consequences. Yet, despite such pressures, it was notable from extensive consultation that stigma remains a significant barrier to families in sourcing and accepting help. A key aim of our work will be to mitigate against such sentiment. Across the workforce we will work to ensure sensitivity, responsiveness and a well developed understanding of how poverty might impact on households.

A key transformation in our approach will be a model of work that supports families over a life span, alongside our commitment to focus on improving life chances. This is in line with Central government's planned response to the Field⁴, Munro⁵, Allen⁶ and Tickell⁷ Reviews. The Marmot Review⁸ of Health Inequalities has also drawn attention to the role of health in shaping life chances by drawing our focus to those earliest beginnings, for example, outcomes for low birth weight babies.

³ HM Government, April 2011. [*A New Approach to Child Poverty: Tackling the Causes of Disadvantage and Transforming Families' Lives*](#)

⁴ HM Government, December 2010. [*The Foundation Years: preventing poor children becoming poor adults – the report of the Independent Review on Poverty and Life Chances by Frank Field*](#)

⁵ Department for Education, May 2011. [*The Munro Review of Child Protection: Final Report*](#)

⁶ HM Government, January 2011. [*Early Intervention: The Next Steps*](#) by Graham Allen MP

⁷ Dame Clare Tickell, March 2011. [*The Early Years : Foundations for life, health and learning – An Independent Report on the Early Years Foundation Stage*](#)

⁸ Strategic Review of Health Inequalities, February 2010. [*Fair Society, Healthy Lives: The Marmot Review*](#)

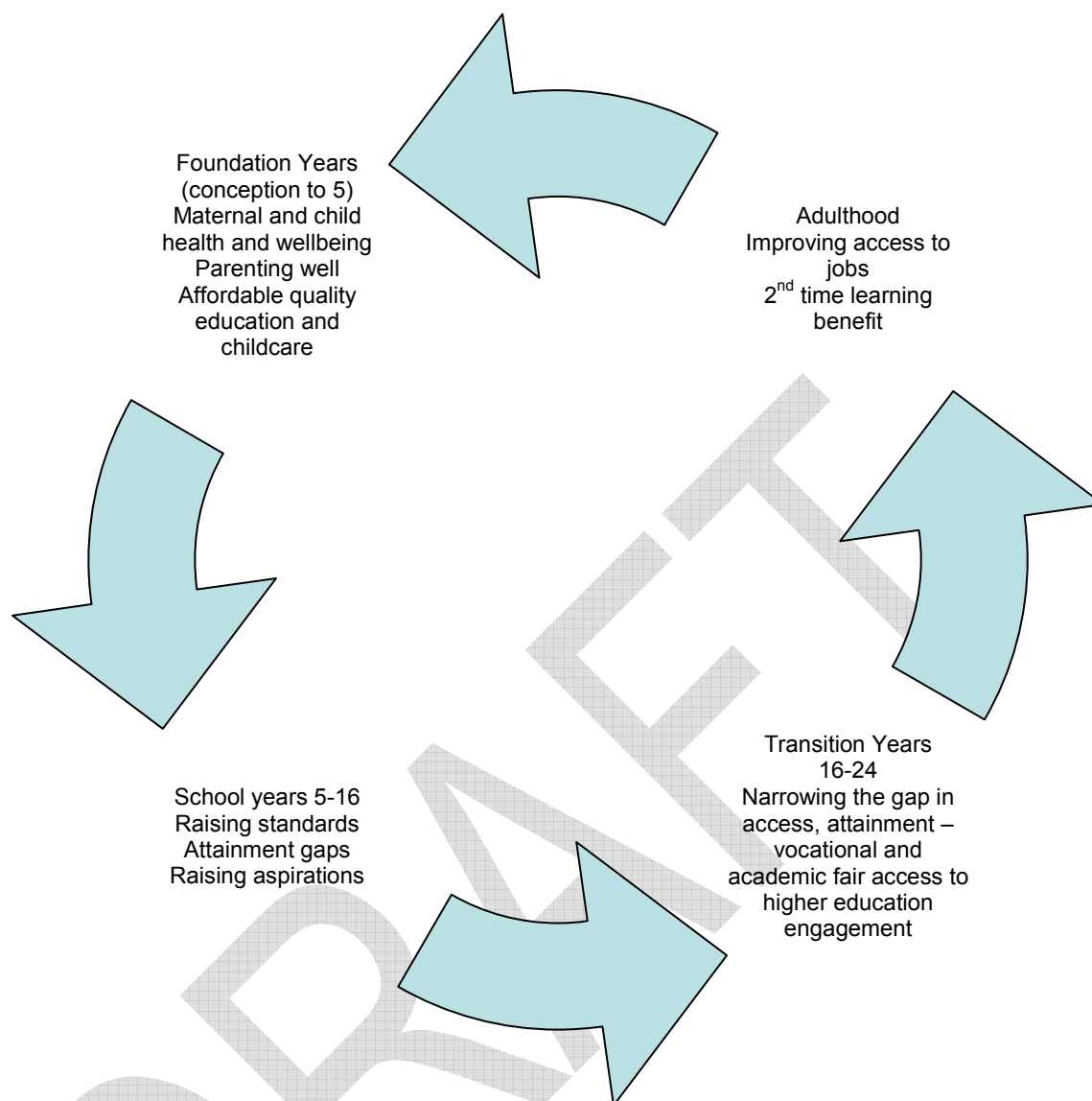


Diagram 1: Social Mobility across the life cycle

There may be difficult challenges ahead. We know more than ever before about the causes and consequences of poverty. Short term monetary poverty approaches produce more immediate effects, often within the lifespan of a project but will be challenged by planned welfare reform (see Appendix A). We need to balance this alongside longer term goals and investment in capacity building projects designed to tackle the cyclical nature of poverty.

To make change happen each one of us must recognise our role in challenging poverty. As a city we must recognise that it is **‘Everybody’s Business’** to act. We must acknowledge our underlying shared purpose which is to work together to achieve change.

Key Messages

Child poverty is relatively high in Peterborough (25.3%), compared to 16.4% in the East of England region and 21.6% nationally, and rising year on year.

Peterborough's population has a high proportion of children and young people compared to the rest of England.

'In work' poverty and low income levels impact on a significant proportion of our local families at a higher rate than the national average.

Peterborough has a higher percentage of children living in families receiving out of work benefits than the national average.

The percentage of adults qualified to Level 2 is lower than the national average.

Peterborough's average weekly rent is much higher than both the national average and when compared to one of our statistical neighbours.

The take-up of the childcare element of working tax credits among eligible parents in Peterborough has fallen and is below the national average.

Peterborough has a higher rate of children in care per 10,000 population than both the statistical neighbour and national averages.

Peterborough has a higher number of houses of multiple occupation than the two of its statistical neighbours with the closest overall population figures.

Peterborough has a lower percentage of students achieving 5 A*-C GCSEs with English and Maths than both the statistical neighbour and the England averages.

Everybody has a part to play in reducing child poverty

The purpose of this document is to identify where opportunities exist to effect positive change.

We welcome the opportunity to develop a strategy for the city that allows all partners to contribute to our work in tackling poverty and achieving social mobility.

We believe by aligning work across partnerships, we can ensure a co-ordinated response and a better use of valuable resources.

The **Sustainable Community Strategy 2008-2021** sets out the overarching agenda for Peterborough and places significant emphasis on pursuing growth and regeneration, increasing prosperity and improving skills, education and health, all of which are critical to tackling poverty in the city.

The **Housing Strategy 2011-15** sets out the council's housing-related agenda over the next four years. It's contribution to the tackling poverty agenda include actions to reduce fuel poverty, improve local housing stock, prevent rough sleeping and provide support for vulnerable people and those experiencing housing difficulties.

The **Peterborough Local Economic Assessment** (April 2011) identified the challenges facing the city including high levels of benefit claimants, unemployment and long term worklessness. It's recommendations to raise skill levels, innovation and enterprise, increase inward investment and tackle worklessness will play a significant role in lifting local families out of poverty.

The **Safer Peterborough Partnership Plan 2011-14** sets out a number of actions to reduce crime, tackle anti-social behaviour and hate crime and build stronger communities. This work contributes to the tackling poverty agenda by protecting vulnerable groups, improve local neighbourhoods (by reducing crime), strengthening local communities and supporting people to move away from crime.

The **Childcare Sufficiency Assessment 2011** highlights, among other issues, that the quality and sustainability of Peterborough's childcare market can be considered good enough and stable enough to support a sufficient market place, although the market will need to keep pace with the growing city. It also highlights potential to increase knowledge of support options (including financial support information) for families and employers, while focus groups held with parents of children with additional needs identified some concern about the lack of provision as children get older, with a significant reduction at age 14. Working to

address these issues will support people into work and improve outcomes for children, demonstrating the relationship between childcare and poverty.

All these elements have a role to play in improving local lives. We believe this strategy provides the means to encourage an effective and joined up approach to eradicate poverty.

Evidence based approaches indicate that work with families who experience inter generational deprivation and worklessness leads to improvements where multi professional teams work together.

...Jointly we can make progress and support change.

What success looks like?

Improved life chances amongst out most vulnerable children.

Young people and parents assisted to get into, and stay in. work that pays.

Services that can reflect the needs of differently disadvantaged communities.

Families who know how to access information, advice and guidance and understand what it might mean for them.

Support for families to take those first steps so as to benefit from expertise and services already operating in Peterborough.

What will it take to eradicate child poverty?

A whole family approach.

Connectivity and collaboration amongst partners.

Co-operation amongst services to promote and share data that will improve the co-ordination of services and help us to monitor the outcomes.

Commitment of front line staff to tackle poverty.

Engagement of communities and parents in strategies that effect change and transformation.

Commissioning of evidence based approaches and integrated pathways.

The cost of child poverty

The case for investing in a local poverty and social mobility strategy

In Peterborough, families face multiple risk factors, including persistent, deep seated poverty, as well as additional barriers that make employment difficult for many families to access, such as:

- Disability
- Communication / language needs
- Mental health needs
- Households with members who undertake 'caring' responsibilities

'It has long been recognised that local government is a key player in creating the conditions for material wellbeing. It does this through increasing employment opportunities, regenerating the physical environment and strengthening the local economy. But more recent evidence also highlights the importance of nurturing well being in local populations so that all residents can reach their potential and live a good life'

(HM Government, March 2010. [New Horizons: Confident communities, brighter futures: a framework for developing well-being](#))

Notwithstanding the poor outcomes associated with living in poverty, child poverty is expensive both in terms of direct costs to services during and after childhood, and in costs to the economy when children grown up. Some estimates put the costs at £25 billion a year.

Moving all families above the poverty line will not instantly balance the books, but an ever increasing demand against services might be prevented through early intervention and awareness.

Drawing on Government published statistics, data might indicate that in Peterborough the scale and distribution of poverty looks something like this:

22% of all children in relative poverty = 10,560
17% of all children in both low income and material deprivation = 8,160
12% of all children were in absolute poverty = 5,760
12% of all children were in persistent poverty (3-4 years) = 5,760

Our needs assessment (March 2011) demonstrated that currently 25.3% (12,144) of our children aged under 19 years, are recorded as living in relatively low income households. Locally, this means we have considerable work to achieve the government target of eradicating poverty by 2020. Retrospectively, local figures may well increase. Our direction of travel and agreed actions will need to reflect a shifting context which to some degree is beyond our immediate control.

Areas where Peterborough does well

- MMR immunisations
- Early years childcare
- Placement stability
- Sports participation rates
- Short Breaks for families with disabled children

Areas for concern and action

- Admission rates for injury
- Childhood obesity
- NEET
- First time entrants to the youth justice system
- Child mortality
- Teenage conceptions
- Hidden pockets of poverty in areas of new housing
- Public transport issues
- Gaps in health inequalities and educational attainment between children from poorer backgrounds and their better off peers
- Debt issues and access to appropriate financial support
- Families experience of private rented accommodation
- Adult smokers
- Adult Skill Levels

Risks and poverty

The strategy also acknowledges that we cannot do everything. Difficult decisions had to be made to focus our efforts.

‘Everybody has a part to play in reducing child poverty’

The purpose of this document is to identify where opportunities exist to effect positive change.

1. Who is most at risk?

Local consultation mirrors national findings where those identified at greatest risk of disadvantage and poor outcomes were:

New birth households, particularly lone-parent families⁹

Children in households where there are no members in full time employment

Households comprising members of Pakistani, Black African and Bangladeshi minority ethnic communities¹⁰

Households with a disabled child or adult

Households where there are more than three children

2. Where in Peterborough is poverty most likely to be experienced?

The link between poverty and deprivation is well established. 'Communities' who may experience particular difficulties in accessing services are often termed 'hard to reach'. Area based approaches have tended to signal where services have needed to target much of their work. Historically, activities focused on improving accessibility, making services more user friendly, and meeting language and communication needs, as models of work to designed to increase the take up of services and to secure relationships within those communities. Data does indeed reveal a stark contrast in experience dependent upon where you live in the city. Using nationally derived data, Dogsthorpe, Central and East are wards identified as areas with significant levels of child poverty. Using locally interpreted data, our top five most deprived wards include Dogsthorpe, Central, East, Orton Waterville and Paston.

⁹ Peterborough has a much higher fertility and birth rate than both the national average and the East of England average. During 2008, there were 2,987 live births in Peterborough. Of these, 55% were to married women. (Information provided by the Performance Management and Information Team)

¹⁰ 4.5% of Peterborough's population were Asian Pakistani compared to the England figure of 1.8% using 2007 statistics. (Performance Management and Information Team)

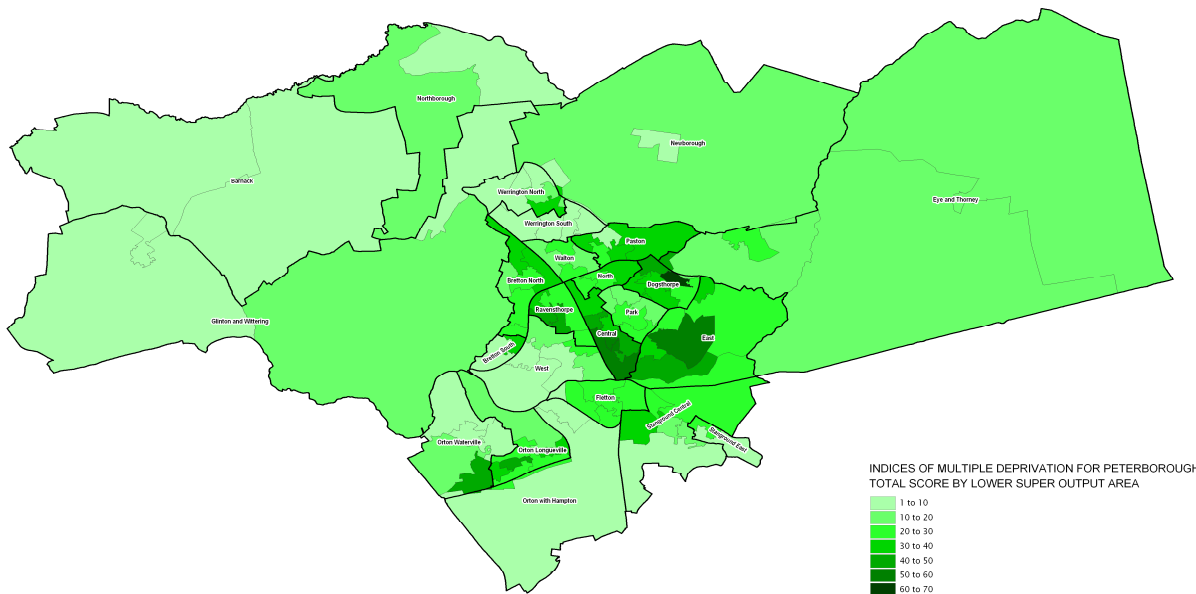


Diagram 2: Indices of Multiple Deprivation (IMD) for Peterborough by Ward (2007)

A shifting picture

There has been significant population change, increased mobility and growth of transient communities within Peterborough. Taken together these factors begin to suggest a new picture of deprivation in the locality. Hidden pockets of deprivation are emerging across the city, such as Orton with Hampton. Likewise, six LSOAs¹¹ have seen a significant move in the IMD ranking (i.e. more than 10%). These areas include: Bretton, North, Newborough, Orton with Hampton, Park and Werrington South.

¹¹ Lower Super Output Areas – [LSOAs](#) have between 1,000 and 3,000 people living in them with an average population of 1,500 people. There are 32,482 LSOAs in England, with 1 being the most deprived and 32,482 the least deprived.

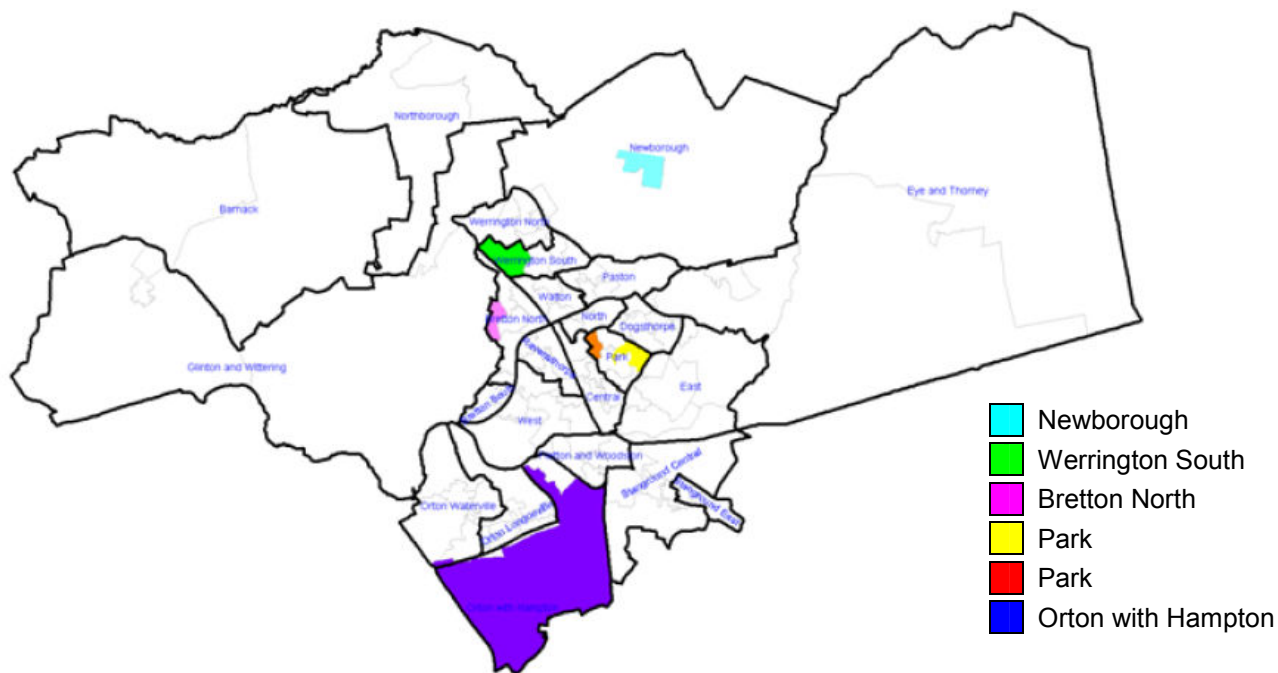


Diagram 3: Lower Super Output Areas for Peterborough

First read analysis by the Performance Management and Information Team indicates that the most common reasons underpinning change, differs within each locality:

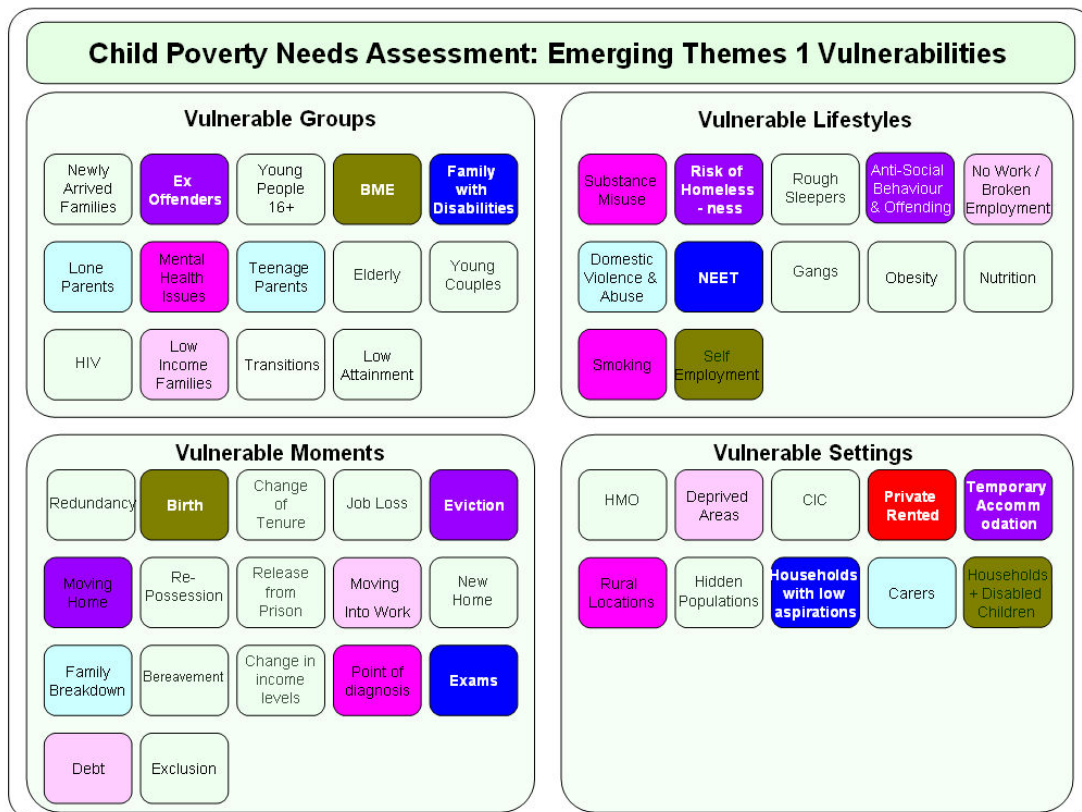
- Bretton North – Education
- Newborough – Housing
- Orton with Hampton – Housing, closely followed by Crime
- Park – Housing, Education, closely followed by Crime
- Park – Employment, Health
- Werrington South – Income, Health and Housing have moved significantly

The ward that has changed the most is Orton Waterville, which has dropped 4,197 places in rankings.

To some degree, understanding and tackling deprivation depends on our ability to contextualise this data. By using our data well, we can begin to see the need for different models and approaches to reflect localised change happening across the city. More importantly, we can consider factors that increase vulnerabilities for individual households within locations not generally associated with poverty.

Priority needs in Peterborough

The Poverty Needs Assessment suggests the first steps we can take together, to make a positive difference to quality of life in Peterborough and was developed through extensive consultation. There was a consensus that our local focus should be on Family Poverty, reflecting our desire to work holistically and adopting a ‘think family’ type approach.



Since the production of this table the special circumstance of families with no recourse to public funds has been acknowledged as a significant area for examination.

There is acknowledgement that creative solutions and targeted work to support communities with significant need is already happening. The strategy aims to build on that work where possible.

However, to only focus on those already experiencing extreme difficulties will not necessarily reduce vulnerabilities in the population, where the complex causes of problems and inequalities remain the same. Eradicating poverty needs more work to be done at the population level to limit the future impact of difficult circumstances through early intervention

and preventative work. We need to focus on streamlining our objectives, integrating pathways and aligning budgets.

The emphasis of this strategy is to highlight key areas which we believe will impact positively on poverty and social mobility and against which the partnership can take action.

Five broad objectives have been identified:

Supporting vulnerable groups

Supporting individuals with vulnerable lifestyles

Supporting individuals during vulnerable moments and circumstances that tip them over the edge

Supporting individuals in vulnerable settings

Improving the way we work

What national poverty pilots suggest is working

1. Validated Practice

- Family based support for early learning to improve children's attainment
- Access to high quality support and information to engage families likely to be excluded from children's centres
- Mentoring for 5-11 year olds with behavioural difficulties
- Partnership working with Jobcentre Plus
- Integrated multi agency services
- Community entrepreneurs linking deprived communities
- Partnerships with welfare rights organisation to improve benefit take up amongst families with special needs
- Equitable access for vulnerable children to access community paediatric services

2. Promising Practice

- Social Innovation Bulk Buying Project
- Staying together
- Partnership approaches to address fluctuations in pupil members due to temporary accommodation demands
- Tailored mentoring for 5 – 11 year olds at risk of offending

Our approach

Adopting poverty and social mobility as a strategic priority will lead to gains for all statutory and the wider communities of Peterborough.

Eradication of child poverty is considered to be a core priority for Peterborough. It is closely linked to a wider vision for the city stimulating the local economy, supporting job growth, skills and education, crucial to develop strong and supportive communities. Our partnerships are well developed, and have the key ingredients for successful collaboration. Partnerships have clear views on the guidance and support they need to drive their work forward but are concerned about how they will turn their strategic planning into effective action, and whether their strategies will have a positive impact on families and children.

Partnerships can make a difference if they focus on direct intervention with families rather than macro-economic issues.

The focus of our work is two-fold. The dynamics of poverty mean it is necessary to support families to 'escape poverty' as well as develop a preventative framework, to stop them from 'falling into poverty'. These are the two distinct but overlapping fields of work. Persistent, transitional and recurrent poverty may produce similar income effects but need differential approach to meet a broader conceptualisation of poverty where family, home environment, health and education are crucial factors. We are also directed by National Government towards meeting the needs of those experiencing severe poverty. It is anticipated that this category will become a stronger focus over time.

A whole system approach will make better use of existing and planned budget lines: Community Budgets, New Social Fund, Early Intervention Grant, Pupil Premium and a raft of other initiatives planned by central government.

Our strategic plan will dovetail with the overarching aims of the National Strategy where it reflects local interest.

Ensure, as far as possible, that poverty and disadvantage in childhood does not translate into poorer outcomes for children as they move into adulthood.

Support more parents to be in work that pays, or pays better.

Ensure the child's environment supports them to thrive.

Target financial support to be responsive to family situations.

Extensive consultation has highlighted a number of questions:

Should our strategy reflect short term, medium term or longer term objectives?

Should we look to achieve immediate results by targeting resources towards income maximisation or softer outcomes such as capacity building?

Should we prioritise longstanding, generational poverty or support those experiencing change and transitional arrangements?

Poverty is complex and longstanding. We are also facing unprecedented challenges in terms of national economic change and public expenditure cuts. There are no dedicated resources to meet this identified need. With this in mind, this strategy acknowledges that the most significant impact we can have is by adopting a 'think poverty' approach to all our work together with close partnership working. The priorities reflect that the greatest resource we have to hand is the commitment, skills and competencies of our workforce.

By working differently we can achieve our goals...

Model of work

We have adopted a model of work that ensures a multi-dimensional approach:

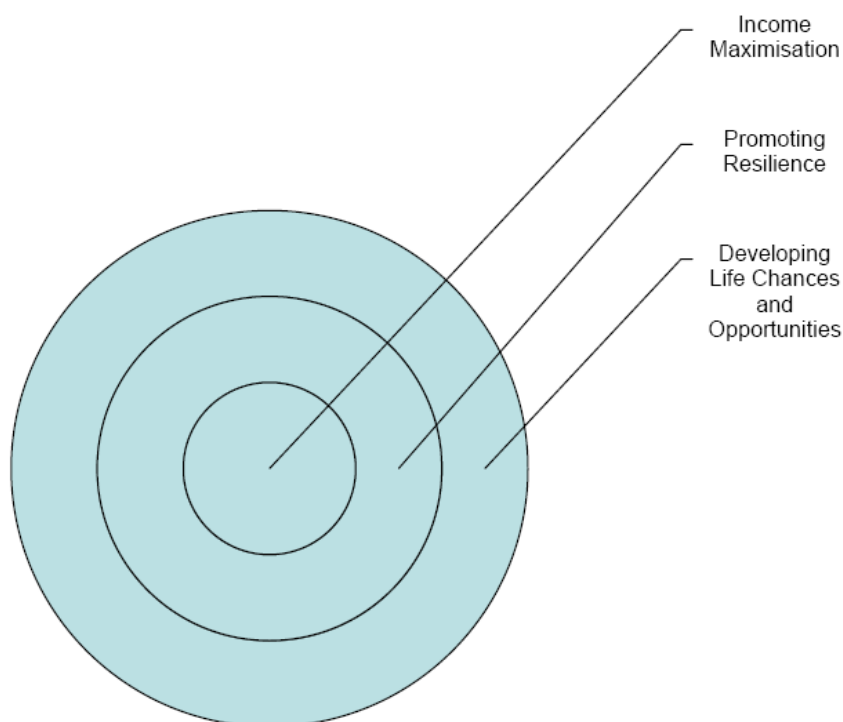


Diagram 4: Challenging Family Poverty on 3 dimensions

Strand 1: Income Maximisation – families with low incomes are supported to maximise income generation through actions that increase benefit take up, encourage families to manage money and avoid debt and/or support access into employment where appropriate.

Strand 2: Promoting Resilience – a model of work responding to vulnerable moments and tipping points. Short terms interventions with the potential to address risk factors before the need for services arise and prevent challenging family circumstance from escalating.

Strand 3: Developing Life Chances¹² and Opportunities – parents / guardians are supported to ensure children grow in households where employment, aspiration and attainment are priorities, reducing the gap between rich and poor.

¹² Life Chances are qualified by Government to be Intergenerational Social Mobility (the extent to which people's success in life is determined by who their parents are) and Relative Social Mobility (the comparative chances of people with different backgrounds ending up in certain social or income groups). (HM Government, April 2011. [Opening Doors, Breaking Barriers – A Strategy for Social Mobility](#))

Our strategic approach combines these three strands to encompass a broad and comprehensive set of **drivers of poverty**. Poverty is considered as specific incomes domains alongside multidimensional frameworks and particular movements in time. Adopting this approach allows us to re-orientate our focus away from prioritising one group over another to consider how we might approach our work differently.

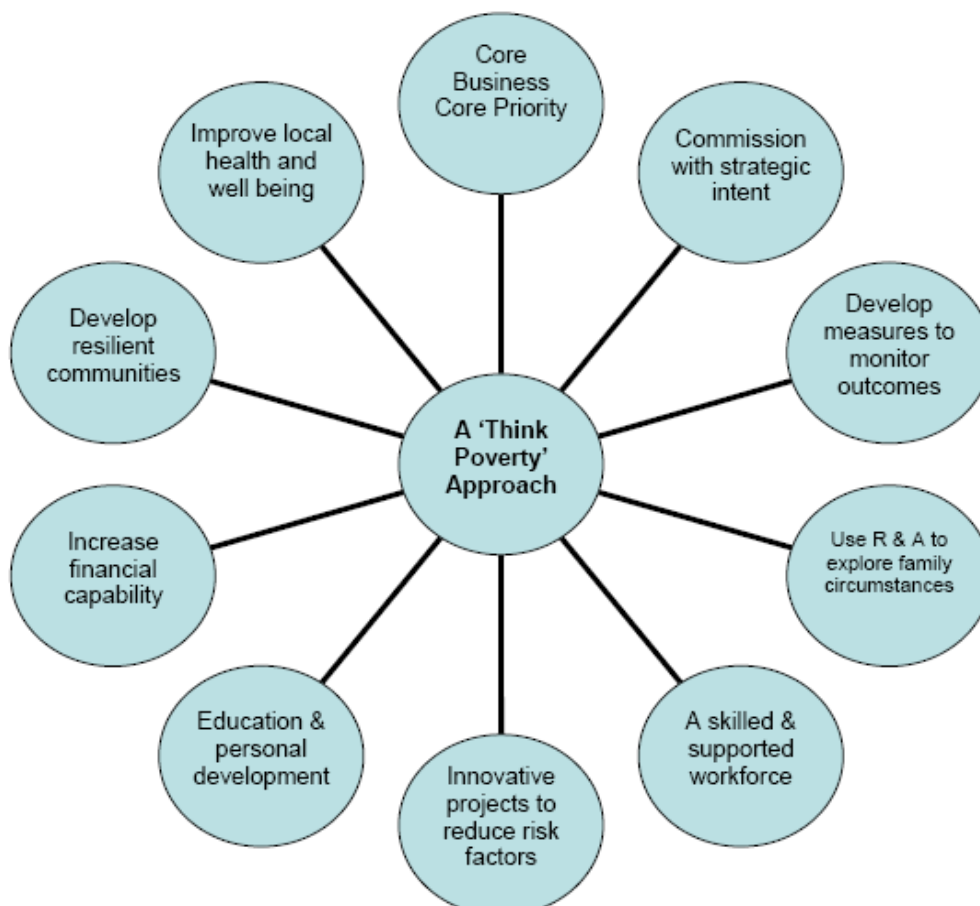
Moving forward

How might we support individuals or communities to cope positively with change, challenge and adversity?

How can we design an approach to services that benefits the maximum number of people?

Undertaking a think poverty approach from front line service to scrutiny will make a difference.

A Think Poverty Approach



Strategic Objectives and Key Deliverables

A reduction in headline Child Poverty statistics by 2014 – lifting approximately 2,000 children above the poverty line

Strategic Objective 1: Partners who use their influence to embed systems and processes within their organisations that can really make a difference

Strategic Objective 2: Excellence at the first point of contact

Strategic Objective 3: Models of work that identify risk factors, intervene early and enable communities to develop resilience

Strategic Objective 4: Improved education and personal development of all children and young people to narrow the gap in achievement between the poorest children and the rest

Strategic Objective 5: Increased financial capability, employability and take-up of benefits amongst families

Strategic Objective 6: Improved mental health within the local population to reduce the gap in health inequalities and to promote healthy lifestyles

Strategic Objective 7: Creation of inspirational places to live and cohesive communities

Governance and timelines

The planning, policy and procedural implications underpinning this strategy will be co-produced by experts in the field. Action plans broadly embracing professionals from Children's Services and Health, together with partners from Jobcentre Plus, Citizens' Advice Bureau, and voluntary and community sectors will convene around key work streams to overlay existing work plans with any newly identified strategic priorities. This way we can recognise that much good work is already underway. This strategy will encourage partners to adopt a 'think poverty lens' to services that they are already delivering or intend to commission. Chairs from each workstream will act as champions.

Single Delivery Plan (SDP)

Progress will be reported to the Greater Peterborough Partnership (GPP) through one of its thematic partnerships – **Supporting the most vulnerable families and tackling causes of poverty.**



SDP Guiding Principles for

- **Outcomes**, not organisations
- Addressing the **root causes** of issues – a preventative agenda
- **Innovation** – doing things differently for less
- **Prioritisation** – clear focus, not everything we do
- Big Society – a vehicle for **joint delivery by / with all**

The Single Delivery Plan represents the short term actions the Greater Peterborough Partnership will take to deliver the Sustainable Communities Strategy therefore...

Performance management (PM) should concentrate on the delivery of the Sustainable Communities Strategy

and...

PM will take into account the interrelated nature of the programmes and projects, as opposed to projects in isolation.

The Peterborough Children Commissioning Partnership Board and Peterborough Safeguarding Children Board will have a role in monitoring and implementation of this strategy.

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