

**CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE**  
**REVIEW OF CAMBRIDGESHIRE'S CHILD POVERTY STRATEGY**

*To:* **Cabinet**

*Date:* **17<sup>th</sup> April 2012**

*From:* **Children and Young People Overview and Scrutiny Committee (OSC)**

*Electoral division(s):* **All**

*Forward Plan ref:*

*Key decision:* **No**

*Purpose:* **To present the findings and recommendations of the Children and Young People OSC following its overview of the Child Poverty Strategy at its meeting of 29<sup>th</sup> March 2012**

*Recommendation:* **Cabinet**  
**a) consider the findings and recommendations**  
**b) support the recommendations set out in the report**

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## **1. BACKGROUND**

- 1.1 The Child Poverty Strategy for Cambridgeshire was introduced to the CYP O&S Committee as having been developed by the Children's Trust in response to the Child Poverty Act 2010. It is intended that progress on the measures detailed in the strategy will be monitored through a Service Level Agreement with the Council's Research Group. As a result meaningful progress reporting would commence in January 2013.

## **2. MAIN ISSUES**

- 2.1 A number of Members indicated that as part of the consultation development they had provided details of specific targeted activities which they had wished to be included and which did not appear to be reflected in the document provided. Furthermore concern was expressed that the Strategy provided no targets or measures of success. There was also no indication of whether the strategy targeted specific areas of the county. It was explained in response that there was an action plan that sat behind the strategy which addressed many of the issues of concern raised and which included measurable objectives.
- 2.2 Cabinet are asked to have regard to the impact of benefits changes as the Strategy is implemented.
- 2.3 The action plan is in place, so it was agreed that it would be circulated to all Members.

## **3. FINDINGS**

- 3.1 A number of specific findings were identified and it was agreed that the following should be brought to the attention of Cabinet and to the responsible officers as the Strategy is implemented. These were:
1. the importance of measurable and meaningful data was highlighted to ensure that action was carefully targeted to make an effective impact. While it was easier to target resources in larger pockets of deprivation, most child poverty was scattered in very small groups across the County
  2. the overlap in membership of the Champions Group and the Children's Trust was noted. It was important the Champions Group added value to the Trust and that there was clarity in terms of objectives and targets.
  3. Objective three – currently contains an “outcome” worded “Workless parents understand that they are better off in work”. This was considered to be inaccurate wording in that currently in some cases there may be a financial disincentive to work where the benefit money lost was greater than the employment wage. This wording should be changed.
  4. As many of the Council's other strategies had a target of reducing child poverty strong links should be made to other relevant strategies and how they were helping contribute to the overall policy / overarching strategy.

#### **4. ALIGNMENT WITH PRIORITIES AND WAYS OF WORKING**

##### **4.1 Supporting and protecting vulnerable people when they need it most**

There are no significant implications for this priority.

##### **4.2 Helping people live healthy and independent lives in their communities**

There are no significant implications for this priority

##### **4.3 Developing the local economy for the benefit of all**

There are no significant implications for this priority

##### **4.4 Ways of Working**

#### **5. SIGNIFICANT IMPLICATIONS**

##### **5.1 Resource and Performance Implications**

There are no significant implications.

##### **5.2 Statutory, Risk and Legal Implications**

There are no significant implications

##### **5.3 Equality and Diversity Implications**

There are no significant implications

##### **5.4 Engagement and Consultation**

There are no significant implications

#### **6. RECOMMENDATIONS**

- 6.1 It is recommended that Cabinet accepts the findings in Section 3 above and agrees to ensure that they are taken account of as the Strategy is implemented.

<b>Source Documents</b>	<b>Location</b>
Breaking the Cycle – A strategy for tackling child and family poverty and economic disadvantage in Cambridgeshire 2011-2014. Cambridgeshire Children's Trust	Ian Lambert Room 116, Shire Hall, Cambridge