

## REPORT TO WEST AREA COMMITTEE

16th NOVEMBER 2011

### Report of the Deputy Chief Executive

#### **COMMUNITY ACTION IN SUNDERLAND WEST – PROGRESS REVIEW Workplan 2011/2012: Child Poverty, a family model piloted in a neighbourhood, the Southwick Neighbourhood Alliance**

#### **1 Purpose of the Report**

- 1.1 The purpose of this report is to update the Area Committee on the progress to date of the Sunderland Child and Family Poverty Strategy, to set out the current position in relation to poverty levels and to consider how the Committee can engage in the programme to reduce Child and Family Poverty through a neighbourhood model for the West.

#### **2. Introduction/background**

- 2.1 Members will recall receiving a report in March 2011 setting out the Sunderland Child and Family Poverty Strategy's key priorities to 'poverty proof' all our Strategic Plans to reflect the commitment to tackle child and family poverty and to develop integrated neighbourhood models of service to re-target and deliver Early Years and Early Intervention.
- 2.2 In April 2011, the Government published a National Child Poverty Strategy to break intergenerational cycles of poverty by tackling the root causes, (building on the reviews from Graham Allen and Frank Fields which respectively considered early intervention, and poverty and life chances). The core principles of the Strategy included strengthening families, encouraging responsibility, promoting work, guaranteeing fairness and supporting the most vulnerable.
- 2.3 The Government is also carrying out a comprehensive programme of Welfare Reforms which will bring in changes to employment and housing benefits, working tax credits and a new universal payment by 2013. These changes are likely to have a significant combined impact on children and families in poverty.

### 3. Child Poverty Update 2009

3.1 HMRC has recently released the following information for 2009

	2006	2007	2008	2009
England	20.8%	21.6%	20.9%	21.3%
North East	23.4%	24.3%	24.0%	24.5%
Sunderland	24.2%	25.4%	25.0%	25.9%

Sunderland Localities	Coalfields	19.8%	21.5%	20.9%	22.2%
	Sunderland East	27.5%	29.7%	28.7%	28.5%
	Sunderland North	24.9%	26.0%	24.0%	24.8%
	Sunderland West	24.8%	27.1%	27.0%	27.7%
	Washington	18.6%	18.7%	19.6%	20.2%

Ward Areas		2006	2007	2008	2009
West	Barnes	18.2%	19.3%	20.5%	19.0%
	Pallion	35.8%	38.6%	38.2%	38.1%
	St Anne's	34.4%	35.8%	34.0%	37.8%
	St Chad's	18.5%	20.4%	20.4%	21.7%
	Sandhill	30.1%	31.7%	32.0%	31.9%
	Silksworth	23.9%	25.5%	24.6%	25.5%

These figures suggest that whilst the West continues to have levels of poverty above the Sunderland and North East average, the overall picture remains fairly static. The exception to this, however, is St Anne's Ward which is showing an increase of 3.8%

### 4. A Neighbourhood Pilot Task Group

4.1 A Neighbourhood Pilot Task Group representing a strong partnership between key local organisations who were each committed to the Child and Family Poverty agenda came together to take forward the City Strategy to develop a neighbourhood model which would be piloted in Southwick and rolled out across the City. The Southwick Partnership established the following vision:

***"To establish family centred working practices, using new and innovative ways of working with partners to move families out of poverty at a neighbourhood level"***

4.2 The group which is now known as The Southwick Neighbourhood Alliance agreed the following set of principles which provides the focus and represent the characteristics of the Neighbourhood Model:

1. Put the family fore-front of development process and outcomes
2. Work in robust partnership based on trust
3. Respond to the families priorities (not ours)
4. Have a 'can do - will do' approach
5. Enable the local community to be a catalyst for change by giving them ownership
6. Work with individual families who have established a relationship with a partner and been identified as ready to make a journey out of poverty
7. Effectively use and share data to support individual families
8. Explore changing systems for the better
9. Raise aspirations of the community

4.3 The model developed to date relies on a strong commitment from a wide range of partners to come together to establish priorities to tackle child and family poverty within a neighbourhood and agree local outcomes from an integrated response to individual child and family circumstances.

## 5. **Products developed and progress to date**

5.1 The Neighbourhood Model development, whilst still in its early stages, has produced the following products which are currently being tested:

**a) Local mapping to identify a specific neighbourhood and its' needs**

**b) A new information portal for Child & Family Poverty through RIEP.**

**c) A neighbourhood model Pathway** - which shows the relationships and responsibilities between key components of the model, the family, the neighbourhood friend, the lead partner(s) and the Neighbourhood Alliance (Attached **Annex 3**)

**d) The Family Star** as a tool to engage with families who are ready to go down a pathway to get out of poverty. The tool will be flexible to enable schools, Children's Centres and partners to identify those families who would benefit from the support of the Neighbourhood Alliance and to capture their key issues and record outcomes / impact. (Attached **Annex 4**)

**e) A Partner Catalogue** - A detailed list of contactable partners for each neighbourhood, the contactable partners must be committed to the child poverty agenda and the family centred pathway which responds to their needs.

**f) A Referral Form**- structured but flexible template which can be used between partners to share relevant information about the individual family including the identification of a lead officer and contact details

**g) Information Sharing Guidance**- basic outline details of the information sharing legalities for individual cases, which can be used by all involved to respond to a individual family needs in the best way by sharing information.

**h) Privacy Notice Example**- although the pathway process is voluntary, therefore consent is not required, information can be accessed about the individual family if it is used for a positive outcome, however it is good practice to

share a privacy notice with that family can be provided to ensure the family understand what information will be accessed

**i) Case Studies-** Examples of good practice, which can be shared, demonstrating how we engaged families, what we did, and what outcome was achieved.

5.2 The progress of individual families who have participated in the pilot will be presented at the meeting.

## **6. Improving Futures Big Lottery Bid – Tackling Child Poverty**

6.1 A bid has been submitted by Sunderland AFC Foundation and was successful in getting into the final 20 applications. The next stage of the application has been submitted and a decision is expected in the New Year. If successful the bid is worth £900K over a 4-year period.

The Sunderland based project has been designed to develop an evidence based model of partnership working with complex families and communities, whilst building social capacity and sustainability. Developing the Sunderland Partnership's established priority, combined with the power of football the project will:

- Develop a neighbourhood modelling approach (initiated in Southwick) with a view to rolling out the change practice across the City to other targeted communities and possibly including St Anne's in the West.
- Engage families in communities to shape the neighbourhood and design family support services to meet the needs of complex families.
- Improve the desired outcomes for children in targeted families.
- Bring additionality to the development of the User Permissioning Protocol to increase efficiency and remove duplication for the benefit of families and Partners working in the neighbourhoods.
- Investing in families and neighbourhood Friends in terms of time, training and intervention in order to change culture, embed a new ethos, and ensure sustainability within communities.

## **7. Next Steps**

7.1 The Southwick Neighbourhood Alliance is continuing to develop, pilot and test a neighbourhood model for tackling poverty which can be rolled out across the City. This will hopefully be supported by the Big Lottery Improving Futures Project if approved, which will also seek to operate Citywide in each of the 5 areas.

7.2 Whilst only a relatively small number of families have been engaged to date there have been a number of 'quick wins.' As the number of families engaged increases, we will be able to draw on the lessons learnt and capture the emerging good practice. We will then be in a position to consider the best means by which to share the outcomes of the pilot with other areas of the City and to

engage local Partners in each area to develop their own neighbourhood model for tackling child and family poverty. The Committee may wish to consider how this could be best achieved in the West.

**8. Recommendation**

8.1 Area Committee is recommended to:

i) Note the updated Child Poverty figures published by HMRC for 2009 in relation to the West area.

ii) Note the progress to date in the Southwick Neighbourhood Model and the Big Lottery Improving Futures Bid.

iii) Receive further reports.