

CABINET	DATE 21 March 2018	ITEM NO 6
TITLE Greenwich Social Mobility Strategy: a fair chance for everyone in Greenwich	WARD (S) All	
CHIEF OFFICER Director of Housing & Safer Communities	CABINET MEMBER Housing and Anti-Poverty	
DECISION CLASSIFICATION - Key Decision - Non-Exempt	FINAL DECISION To be made at this meeting on the recommendations in this report	
- 28 Days' Notice Issued? Yes		

1. **Decisions required**

- 1.1 To agree the vision and broad objectives of the Council's Social Mobility Strategy 2018 – 2022.
- 1.2 To agree that a further report and detailed delivery plan, including financial considerations, are considered at a future meeting
- 1.3 To agree that officers review the effectiveness of the expenditure and interventions associated with the previous draft Anti-Poverty Strategy, and make proposals for any remaining resources to be utilised to greatest effectiveness within the Social Mobility Strategy delivery plan.

2. **Links to the Royal Greenwich Strategy**

- 2.1 The Council has determined that tackling poverty allied to the promotion of growth are two of its key strategic priorities within the Corporate Plan. In accord with these priorities, the Council's Medium Term Financial Strategy (MTFS) agreed a three-year funding package worth £11.25 million to support its draft Anti-Poverty Strategy.
- 2.2 Officers have built-on the recommendations from the Fairness Commission in developing the Social Mobility Strategy. In addition, officers will align and integrate the objectives and delivery plans for the Strategy with those in other key Council strategies, as set out in Section 8.

3. **Purpose of Report and Executive Summary**

- 3.1 The Cabinet Member and corporate Anti-Poverty Strategy Group have been working on a comprehensive, whole system approach to tackling poverty in the borough. During this work across the council, it has become clear that there is a need to address the pathways and opportunities to move out of poverty, as well as the support for those facing the hardest of times and a lack of means to support themselves. To meet these aspirations, the Council's approach is best described as its Social Mobility Strategy with its overarching objective **to ensure a fair chance for everyone in Greenwich.**
- 3.2 Underneath this overarching objective, three themes are proposed. Each theme relates to a different cohort of Greenwich residents, with different needs and requiring different interventions for them to get a fair chance in Greenwich.
- **Help when times are very hard** – focusing on those on or under the absolute poverty line who may be facing multiple effects of, for example, fuel and food poverty, as well as an acute lack of housing affordability in the private sector.
 - **Opportunities out of poverty** – focusing on those around the JRF measure of relative poverty (60% of median incomes) who may just be making ends meet through a mix of employment and benefits, but who are at risk of economically slipping back. Childcare costs and wage uncertainty, potentially with zero hours contracts, are often significant in this cohort.
 - **Moving on and moving up** – focusing on these who may be above measures of poverty but whose social mobility has stalled, despite their aspirations and potentially significant skills and educational attainment. Increased social mobility here would be one of the main means to reduce social inequality.
- 3.3 This report seeks Cabinet agreement for the vision and broad objectives for the Social Mobility Strategy, which has been developed following a needs analysis, stakeholder consultation events and feedback from 'Better Together' meeting. Officers have also taken account of recommendations from a recent Joseph Rowntree Foundation (JRF) report, in developing the vision and objectives for the Strategy.
- 3.4 Following Cabinet agreement on the vision and broad objectives, officers will enhance and refine the evidence base, relating to each cohort's needs, gaps in provision and quantifiable measures of poverty, inequality and social mobility in Greenwich. Officers will set out the delivery plan to meet the vision and

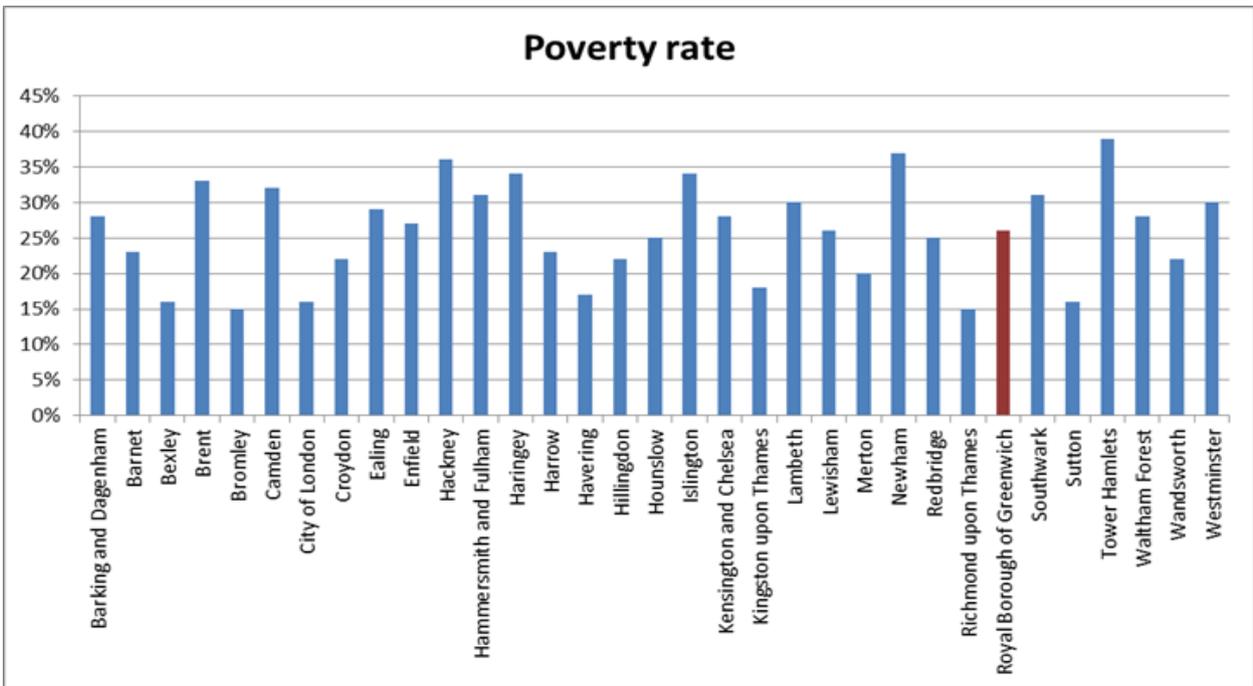
broad objectives in a future Cabinet report. The delivery plan will identify the priorities, interventions and resource implications required to meet the broad objectives, as well as assess the effectiveness of some existing interventions.

- 3.5 The delivery plan will be ambitious and will recognise that there is no one ‘silver bullet’ to increase social mobility and alleviate poverty. It will therefore be based on the need for continual review, embedded learning and project measurement and evaluation. Undoubtedly some interventions will be less successful than others, but the plan will build organisational curiosity, ongoing evaluation and early responses to lessons learnt.

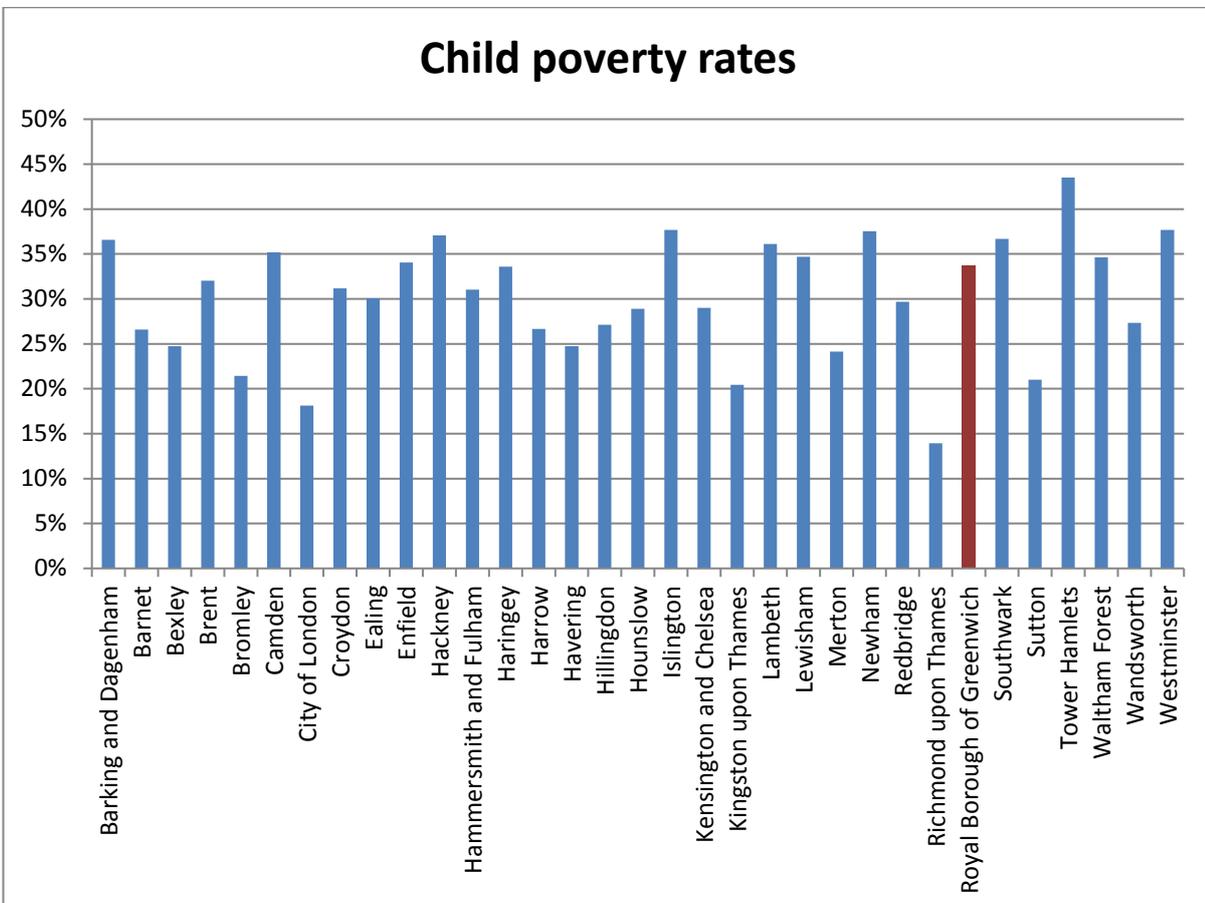
4. **Introduction and Background**

- 4.1 The Trust for London has estimated that 26% of the Royal Greenwich (RBG) population are currently experiencing poverty¹ and that this figure rises to 34% for children (tables below). The most recent research from the Joseph Rowntree Foundation (JRF), ‘UK Poverty 2017’, has found that poverty rates have increased over the last four years. The Institute for Fiscal Studies, in a recent analysis, estimated that the number of children living in poverty is set to rise to a record 5.2 million over the next five years, with the freeze in benefits and the introduction of Universal Credit contributing to this surge.
- 4.2 The JRF analysis also found evidence that families in work were experiencing poverty. In Greenwich 45% of working age households in employment claim benefits and the borough has a relatively high proportion of lone parent households with dependent children and families with 2 or more children aged 0-4 compared to England and Wales.

¹ The Trust for London defines poverty as having insufficient resources to meet one’s needs, both materially and also for participating in society. Poverty levels are calculated by taking account of a range of factors including median income, costs and household size.



Trust for London



Trust for London

4.3 The Strategy Group has carried out substantial needs analysis, including reviewing data contained in other key Council strategies, in order to

understand the scale and impact of poverty faced by our residents, and the challenges they face. Officers have reviewed the needs analysis, against the evidence and findings from the JRF, about what driving poverty is, and what national and local government should do to address it. Taken alongside the recommendations from the Greenwich Fairness Commission, the Cabinet Member and officers have identified a vision and seven broad objectives that the strategy will focus on.

- 4.4 On December 2017 over eighty stakeholders participated in a consultation event, which included presentations from the Cabinet Member setting out the Council's ambitions for tackling poverty, the JRF on the challenge for local government, and senior officers outlining seven broad objectives. Stakeholders then participated in workshops focused on the overall vision and each of the seven broad objectives. The Leader of the Council attended the event and set out her support and ambitions for the strategy.
- 4.5 The feedback from stakeholders has informed the development of the vision and broad objectives.

5. **Profile of poverty in Royal Greenwich**

- 5.1 In the 2015 Index of Multiple Deprivation (published every 5 years), RBG is ranked 78th most deprived local authority district in England and 14th most deprived in London. Both rankings reflect an improvement from the 2010 rankings, which were 28th and 8th respectively. However, there are a number of wards with extreme levels of deprivation including Woolwich Dockyard, Woolwich Common, Middle Park, Abbey Wood, Peninsula and Thamesmead. There are also high levels of income deprivation affecting older people in the north of the borough, particularly around Woolwich Common and Plumstead.
- 5.2 The following 'headlines' provide an indication of the extent and nature of poverty in RBG:
- Average net household income for RBG residents is £31,000 per annum compared to £35,600 for London, between 2008 and 2016 gross weekly earnings went up by 4% in RBG compared to 9% in London
 - Households affected by the Total Benefit Cap are predominantly larger families with an average of 4 children per household. The majority of those affected have not worked for a number of years or have never had a job and face significant barriers to employment.

- The Benefit Cap has disproportionately affected large families, lone parents and children
- The proportion of the RBG population with level 4 qualifications² and above has improved but is still significantly lower than London.
- Although unemployment levels are lower than 10 years ago they are comparatively higher in RBG, the Job Seeker Allowance (JSA) claimant count unemployment rate of 1.5% (2, 839 people) compares to 1.1% for London
- Housing affordability is an increasing concern with rising private sector rents and a static Local Housing Allowance (LHA)
- Currently 17, 000 households are on the Council's Housing Waiting List
- The Institute for Fiscal Studies (2015) estimated that 63% of children in poverty were in working households
- Around 22,375 RBG residents experience food poverty
- The proportion of children in RBG who meet the criteria for the pupil premium:
 - in primary schools is 34% (the England average is 25%)
 - in secondary schools is 44% (the England average is 29%)
- In RBG 9.9% of households (10,011 homes) experience fuel poverty

5.3 Residents experience poverty due to a range of complex interrelated factors and the evidence indicates that it has a disproportionate impact on vulnerable groups, such as older people, children, and people with a disability. Therefore, the Council will need to adopt a whole system approach that utilises all its resources. The Council's approach and strategy will therefore be ambitious and broad-based, innovative, and built on partnership.

6. **Vision and Broad Objectives**

Vision

6.1 The Council and its partners will unlock a fair chance for everyone in Greenwich. Together, we will create the conditions for an increase in social mobility and a reduction in the number of people experiencing poverty from 2018 to 2022.

² BTEC Professional Diplomas, Certificates and Awards, NVQs at Level 4, Key Skills Level 4 and Certificates of higher education

Introduction

- 6.2 The Council will address the key determinants of social mobility and poverty, adopting a whole Council approach and working with local communities to find help when times are very hard, provide opportunities out of poverty, and create the conditions for people to move on and move up. The Council will also build upon the analysis and recommendations of the Greenwich Fairness Commission.

Broad Objectives

6.3 Boost incomes and reduce costs

- Provide support, training and skills for under-employed people to raise their income levels and improve their overall job prospects
- Look to alleviate fuel, utility and food poverty, including potential fuel/utility purchasing as a collective or through consumer cooperatives.
- Promote the further development of the Greenwich and Bexley Credit Union
- Maximise digital inclusion by improving:
 - internal digital systems
 - the digital accessibility of services
 - the digital skills (hardware, broadband and connectivity) of service users
- Invest in money and debt management advice including mobile advice provision
- Increase awareness of debt advice and money management amongst partners

6.4 Support those RBG residents affected by Welfare Reform

- Create a support framework for Universal Credit targeting vulnerable and struggling residents by roll out date, currently October 2018
- Build on the work of the existing multi-agency services to support residents affected by welfare reform, such as the Welfare Reform Team and Greenwich Local Labour Programme (GLLP)
- Review the Council Tax Support scheme to ensure that support is effectively targeted to residents with the lowest incomes and highest need (taking into account the recommendation in the Fairness Commission)
- Ensure that the Council's discretionary and hardship schemes provide the greatest opportunity out of poverty and promote independence

- Continue to fund statutory and independent advice services to support residents, whilst avoiding duplication and inefficiencies

6.5 Continue to raise educational attainment and enhance skills

Short Term

- We will re-commission the information, advice and guidance service for young people, shaping the specification to meet the needs of young people, schools and routes to employment
- We will work at the London and sub-regional level to influence the London Skills Strategy and planning for devolved funding of Adult skills budgets from 2019/2020 and to ensure that Greenwich receives a fair allocation of skills funding needed to address the skills challenges residents and businesses face
- We will review our childcare sufficiency strategy to continue to ensure there is sufficient, quality childcare available for parents

Medium Term

- We will deliver the recommendations of the Fairness Commission and the priorities of Greenwich's Children and Young People Plan 2017-2020 to raise educational attainment of young people who achieve below the national average and to raise standards in 'A levels'.
- We will explore and implement ways to bring additional income to the borough, in order to further improve children's educational attainment.
- Royal Greenwich's Corporate Parenting Board will take action to maximise opportunities for looked after children and care leavers to develop skills for adulthood and progression to employment, education and training.

6.6 Promote employment and economic growth

This board objective will cross reference the Economic Development Strategy. In particular:

- Decrease the number of economically inactive people, through employment and business development support
- Increase the earnings of Greenwich residents, primarily through London Living Wage (LLW)
- Target a further 100 Greenwich based businesses to become LLW employers (Fairness Commission recommendation) and extend the LLW into the Council supply chain
- Encourage increased business density and the number of medium-sized businesses, providing a wider range of jobs. Examine the availability of business space for existing business growth in terms of relocating from potential displacement and relocating for growth.
- Use the Council's procurement process to maximise the benefits of Social Value
- Use the five-year Housing Investment Programme to maximise local employment, skills, and training opportunities and the development of local businesses
- Maximise the accessibility and numbers of apprentices in the public and private sector through the Apprenticeship Levy
- Continue to target employment support at people most affected by benefit cuts

6.7 Ensure the supply of genuinely affordable homes and prevent homelessness

This broad objective will cross reference the priorities in the Housing Strategy. In particular:

- Increase the provision of genuinely affordable housing
- Increase the number of cases where the Council prevents homelessness
- Provide safe and high quality homes across all tenures, and explore the option of a Council Lettings Agency, or other interventions, in order to improve access and the quality of private rented accommodation
- Support those with specific housing needs

6.8 Strengthen families and support vulnerable people

Short Term

- We will undertake a review of services that aim to build the overall wellbeing and resilience of children, young people and families, commissioned by different departments of the council. This will inform future commissioning and help us to ensure the best use of resources.
- We will review council owned community spaces to ensure that communities continue to benefit from local hubs and the best use is made of available resources. This will inform future commissioning from 2018 onwards.
- Provide information, advice and support to vulnerable people so that they are not disproportionately affected by the factors that lead to or trap people in poverty.

Medium Term

- We will continue to invest in universal access to support for families, children and young people, following the end of current contracts in 2019 and onwards.
- We will review the impact of our support for vulnerable women who have had a child removed from their care. We will continue to invest in support beyond the current Department of Education funding if this support continues to have a positive impact and provide value for money.
- We will use learning from our Families First programme and best practice to ensure that all services working with children, young people and/ or parents work with all family members, taking into account the context of their family, relationships and community.
- We will complete a commissioning review of supported housing and homelessness provision

6.9 **Protect and improve the health and wellbeing of residents**

- Reduce food and fuel poverty through programmes such as Stay Warm, Stay Safe and social prescribing
- Improve access to healthier food for low income families
- Implement the *Thrive Greenwich* (mental health) programme
- Identify and address ill health barriers to employment, including offering tailored employment support to over 1,000 people with long term health conditions.

7. **Greenwich Fairness Commission**

7.1 In April 2017, the Greenwich Fairness Commission, which was established to investigate inequality in the borough, made 61 recommendations covering:

- Education
- Employment
- Health
- Housing
- Financial inclusion
- Fairer Policy

7.2 A Review and Development group has been established, which will examine information and progress against each recommendation. This group is chaired by the Cabinet Member for Housing and Anti-Poverty and independent Commissioner Stephen Howlett. The themes will be examined in depth by a sub-group to help provide more focused monitoring. Each sub-group will have 3-4 members who will deal with the recommendations from that particular theme; they will be chaired by different members within the group.

7.3 The Review and Development group will provide an update report in the spring of 2018 and the Cabinet Member and lead officer will ensure that the Commission's recommendations are integrated into the Strategy's detailed delivery plan.

8. Links to Council strategies and Plans

8.1 The strategy and delivery plan will be closely aligned to key Council Strategies and reports including:

- Children and Young People Plan 2017-2020
- Domestic Violence and Violence Against Women and Girls Strategies
- Economic Development Strategy
- Food Poverty in the Royal Borough of Greenwich, 2017
- Greenwich Fairness Commission
- Greenwich Smart City & Digital Strategy
- Health and Wellbeing Strategy
- Housing Strategy
- Regeneration Strategy
- Voluntary and Community Strategy 2017-2022

9. Cross-Cutting Issues and Implications

Issue	Implications	Sign-off
Legal, including Human Rights Act	<i>The report raises no legal issues.</i>	Azuka Onuorah 30 th January 2018
Finance and other resources, including procurement implications	<p>An annual budget for the previous draft Anti-Poverty Strategy of £3.75m over 3 years up to 2019 was identified totalling £11.25m. This report asks officers to review the effectiveness of the expenditure and interventions associated with the previous draft Strategy, and make proposals for any remaining resources to be utilised to greatest effectiveness within the Social Mobility Strategy delivery plan.</p> <p>Any such proposals will need to be scrutinised by the Director of Finance to ensure that they remain contained within the financial envelope / the Council's Medium Term Financial Strategy.</p>	Kim Sullivan Finance Manager 01/02/2018

Equalities	This strategy will improve the situation and outcomes for a number of vulnerable groups such as older people, children and people with a disability, who are at greater risk of experiencing poverty than other members of the community.	Alain Lodge Senior Public Health Manager (Determinants) 1/02/2018
Staffing Establishment	No implications for staffing at this stage.	Alain Lodge Senior Public Health Manager (Determinants) 1/02/2018
Risk Management	No implications for risk management.	Alain Lodge Senior Public Health Manager (Determinants) 1/02/2018
Environment and sustainability	The strategy and delivery plan will be closely aligned to the Housing and Regeneration Strategies.	Alain Lodge Senior Public Health Manager (Determinants) 1/02/2018
Community safety	The strategy and delivery plan will be closely aligned to the Domestic Violence and Violence Against Women and Girls Strategies.	Alain Lodge Senior Public Health Manager (Determinants) 1/02/2018
Health and Safety	No implications for health and safety	Alain Lodge Senior Public Health Manager (Determinants) 1/02/2018
Health and wellbeing	Protect and improve the health and wellbeing of residents is one of the broad objectives of this strategy. The implementation of this strategy will benefit the health and wellbeing of local people.	Alain Lodge Senior Public Health Manager (Determinants) 1/02/2018

11. **Background Papers**

Department for Communities and Local Government (2015) English Indices of Deprivation 2015, available at:
<https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/english-indices-of-deprivation-2015>

Greenwich Fairness Commission, April 2017, Greenwich: Our future together, available at
<https://greenwichfairnesscommission.files.wordpress.com/2017/04/fairness-commission-report-8-spreads.pdf>

Institute for Fiscal Studies, Andrew Hood and Tom Waters, November 2017, Living standards, poverty and inequality in the UK: 2017-18 to 2021-22, available at: <https://www.ifs.org.uk/publications/10028>

Institute for Fiscal Studies, Robert Joyce, February 2015, Child poverty in Britain: recent trends and future prospects, available at:
<https://www.ifs.org.uk/publications/7584>

Joseph Rowntree Foundation (2016), UK Poverty: Causes, costs and solutions, available at <https://www.jrf.org.uk/report/uk-poverty-causes-costs-and-solutions>

Joseph Rowntree Foundation (2017), UK Poverty 2017, available at
<https://www.jrf.org.uk/report/uk-poverty-2017>

Royal Society for the Arts (March 2017) Inclusive Growth Commission Final Report, available at
https://www.thersa.org/globalassets/pdfs/reports/rsa_inclusive-growth-commission-final-report-march-2017.pdf

Trust for London (2017) London Poverty Profile, available at
<https://www.trustforlondon.org.uk/data/poverty-borough/>

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