

# Building Resilience

Tackling poverty in Tameside 2023-27





# Foreword



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Executive Member (Population Health & Well-being)

**Welcome to the new Building Resilience Strategy, aimed at tackling poverty in Tameside. This document sets out in detail our principles and vision for combating the scourge of poverty and its consequences in Tameside.**

Behind the economic facts and figures there lies a very real human cost to poverty. Its impact on the lives of individuals cannot be understated, and encompasses everything from mental and physical health, poor outcomes in education and employment, substandard housing, social marginalisation and even drug and alcohol addiction. Poverty also puts significant extra pressure on services and communities that are already seriously overstretched by a decade of austerity. Even for those who are fortunate enough to have never experienced poverty in their lives, the reality is that any number of unexpected events including bereavement, relationship breakdown, ill health or job loss could very easily leave a household or individual suddenly struggling to make ends meet.

Over the past few years the scourge of poverty has escalated into one of the gravest social issues we face as a country, as the coronavirus pandemic gave way to the worst cost of living crisis in a generation. Large increases in the price of consumer goods and energy, exacerbated by the conflict in Ukraine, have driven the rate of inflation to 10.5% as of January 2023. In response, interest rates have been raised to the highest level since the 2008 Financial Crisis, piling additional pressure on all households but especially those with mortgages or other loans.

Such is the severity of the economic crisis we face that the Bank of England has warned that we are now in the midst of what they predict will be the longest recession in a century.

Despite all this, we must never lose sight of the fact that none of this means that poverty is inevitable. As one of the richest and most developed countries in the world, we can and must do better. If the right support is put in place then not only will those in poverty have a chance to lift themselves out, but we will all enjoy the benefits of a stronger economy, a healthier society and a fairer country too. While much of the work that would be required to make this a reality can only be launched by central government, there are still decisions that local areas working in partnership can take to fight poverty locally.

The Strategy lays out exactly what that means in practice. Over the past year, we have consulted extensively with our residents on what they think about poverty in Tameside and what they would like to see done about it. Much of the information that shapes this Strategy has come from people who have struggled with the reality of poverty in their everyday lives, or organisations that fight on the frontline against poverty within our communities.

In particular, I want to acknowledge the extraordinary bravery and commitment of the members of the Tameside Poverty Truth Commission, whose tireless work and fierce advocacy for change has influenced much of our new approach.

Thanks to the data we have collected from the Tameside Poverty Truth Commission and our Poverty Needs Assessment, we have gained a comprehensive insight into the challenges we face, the areas where good work is already being undertaken, the places where there may be gaps in our provision, and the opportunities that exist to start making a difference.

This in turn has shaped the key priorities that lie at the heart of this Strategy. In no particular order, these include:

**“Raising incomes”** – supporting residents to maximise their income and access all benefits they are entitled to.

**“Making Tameside work for everyone”** – securing high-quality and high-wage employment for all residents.

**“Poverty is everybody’s business”** – supporting residents, communities and partners to spot the signs of poverty and direct those in need to the appropriate help.

**“Climbing out of the debt trap”** – Taking action against the high levels of debt, insolvencies and poor access to good credit experienced by many residents.

**“Breaking the cycle”** – Focusing specifically on providing the best start in childhood and education for our young people.

**“Laying the foundations”** – Ensuring residents have access to what they need in order to live in comfort and dignity, including food, housing and warmth.

**“Putting people first”** – Making sure that our working practices, both customer-facing and internal, are best placed to identify and support those in poverty.

**“No one left behind digitally”** – Focusing specifically on digital skills to help residents access support and opportunities.

**“One size doesn’t fit all”** – Providing additional support for residents identified as being at particular risk of poverty, including disabled residents, carers, ethnic minorities, and those suffering from poor mental health.

**“Advocating for change”** – Highlighting the need for action on poverty-related issues where responsibility lies with national government.

This Strategy complements, and should be viewed in conjunction with, other documents such as the Inclusive Growth Strategy, the Housing Strategy, the ‘Grow with Me’ Child and Parent Relationship Strategy, the Early Help Strategy and the Adult Social Care Strategy.

My thanks go out to everybody involved in this Strategy’s development, and I look forward to working with all of you over the next few years to transform Tameside into a borough where every resident is offered dignity, respect and the opportunity to succeed.



# Introduction

**Poverty in the modern world is a complex and multi-faceted problem. While the Joseph Rowntree Foundation describes poverty as, “When a person’s resources (mainly their material resources) are not sufficient to meet their minimum needs (including social participation)”, there is no single and universally accepted definition.**

This is a reflection of the fact that poverty comes in many shapes and forms, and can vary significantly both in terms of its duration and severity. While some people may experience poverty for a short period due to adverse circumstances (For example, when moving between jobs) for others it is an entrenched situation that can last several years or even bridge generations. At the same time some people may experience poverty as a limiting but survivable condition, while for others it could mean not being able to afford the basics needed to live, such as housing, food, clothing, and energy.

This complexity is also evident when it comes to measuring poverty. In the absence of a single universally accepted best measurement of poverty, different methods are used determined what the best way to capture the desired information is. Some of these include:

- **Absolute income poverty:** This is a measure of whether those in the lowest income households are seeing their incomes rise in real terms. It is defined as “households whose income is below 60% of inflation-adjusted UK median income in 2010/11”
- **Relative income poverty:** This is a measure of whether those in the lowest income households are keeping pace with the growth of incomes in the economy as a whole. It is defined as “households whose income is below 60% of UK median income in the same year”
- **Material deprivation:** Where households or individuals cannot afford certain essential items and activities.
- **Destitution:** Where households or individuals cannot afford basic necessities such as housing, food, clothing etc.

- **Minimum income standard:** Where an income level that allows people to live a “minimum acceptable standard of living” is calculated, and households are considered to be in poverty if they fall below this line.

Typically, these measurements are presented after taking into account direct taxation (including Council Tax) and National Insurance contributions. Housing costs, including rent, mortgage, insurance, water rates etc can also be considered, with measurements defined as “before housing costs” or “after housing costs” as appropriate.



# Causes of Poverty


**Poverty is often a result of a range of factors as opposed to a single cause, and some of the causes can also be consequences, leading to a downward spiral of poverty that can be incredibly difficult to escape. Individual life events – such as sickness, bereavement, job losses and relationship breakdown – can be common triggers, as well as larger scale events such as economic recessions.**

In a broad sense, some of the primary causes of poverty in the UK in recent years include:

- **Employment:** Despite historically low levels of unemployment, an increasing number of jobs do not provide decent pay, security, or potential for progression. This can also lead to inadequate savings and pensions, leaving people more vulnerable to financial shocks beyond their control. Far from being the main route out of poverty, in many cases insecure and/or low-paid employment can actually exacerbate poverty, deprivation and financial insecurity.
- **Low levels of skills or education:** People without necessary skills and qualifications can find themselves at a serious disadvantage when it comes to finding employment, and are at an increased risk of being channelled into low-quality jobs as described above. This is particularly true in the case of digital skills, as a large amount of employment opportunities now require at least a degree of computer literacy.

- **Ineffective and inadequate benefits:** As a result of changes to the benefits system over the past decade, the level of benefits received by people – whether they are in work, seeking work or unable to work because of health or care issues – is no longer sufficient to avoid falling into poverty in many cases. The benefit system, as it stands, is also difficult to understand and navigate, leading to errors or delays, punitive withholding of benefits through sanctions, low take-up of benefits despite people being entitled to them, and increased risks when moving into jobs or increasing working hours.
- **Increasing costs:** While living costs have been increasing at a faster rate than the average wage for a number of years, the cost of living crisis and rising inflation have dramatically accelerated this trend. The high cost of housing and essential goods and services (electricity, water, Council Tax, telephone and broadband) is driving many into poverty. This is not felt equally by all, with some people facing particularly high costs either due to where they live, increased needs (For example, due to ill health or disability), or because they are paying a “poverty premium” – the extra costs people on low incomes and in poverty pay for essential products and services.

- **Inequality of outcomes:** Inequality of outcome occurs when some individuals gain much more than others from a social or economic transaction, regardless of how this came to be. In the context of poverty, it refers to any measurable differences in outcome between those who have experienced poverty and the rest of the population. This includes education, health, employment, living standards, security and participation in public life.
- **Inequality of opportunities:** Differences in people’s backgrounds or circumstances can also have a significant influence on poverty by restricting their access to services and opportunities to improve their condition. While this could be due to protected characteristics such as gender, ethnicity, disability, age, sexuality, religion or parental status, suffering from poverty can also be a source of inequality of opportunities in itself.
- **Life issues:** Issues in people’s own lives, including but not limited to; neglect, abuse or trauma, relationship breakdown or drug and alcohol misuse can lead to, or exacerbate, poverty. This can also lead to further co-morbid issues such as poor mental health, negative impacts on development, education, and social or emotional skills or receiving a criminal record. Children are often particularly at risk in situations such as these.



## What Does Poverty Look Like in Tameside?

**According to the latest English Indices of Multiple Deprivation (IMD) data, 17.5% of the population in Tameside was income-deprived in 2019. Of the 316 local authorities in England, Tameside is ranked 37th most income deprived, falling within the 20% most income deprived local authorities nationally. Of the 141 neighbourhoods in Tameside, 54 were among the 20% most income-deprived in England.**

While the nature of poverty in Tameside aligns closely with many of the national trends described previously, there are a number of specific factors that must be taken into account.

Studies such as The Marmot Review have shown that poverty and health are inextricably linked, with each being a cause and a consequence of each other. Living in poverty increases the chances of poor health, for example through malnutrition, substandard living conditions or inability to afford basic hygiene products, to give just three examples. Poor health can also trap people in poverty, for example by making it harder for them to find and sustain employment.

While several pieces of national-level research have shown a significant difference in life expectancy in the most- and least-deprived parts of the country, this trend is especially apparent in Tameside. The borough is ranked 5th lowest out of 10 in Greater Manchester for male life expectancy and healthy life expectancy, and 9th lowest out of 10 for female life expectancy and healthy life expectancy. There are also significant disparities in life expectancy within Tameside, with a difference of 8.7 years between men and 7.9 years for women in the most deprived wards compared to the least.

The distribution of poverty within Tameside is also unusual when compared to other local authorities. As a rule of thumb, local authorities with a higher overall level of income deprivation tend to have distinct areas of affluence and poverty. However, Tameside is abnormal in that it has a high level of income deprivation, but poverty in the borough is less clustered and more evenly spread geographically. This must be borne in mind when developing recommendations and policies. For example, a focus on targeting the most deprived areas in Tameside may not be effective in delivering support to those that require it.





# Developing the Building Resilience Strategy

**Information was gathered through the following exercises to facilitate the creation of this tackling poverty:**

## **Service mapping**

43 individual services were mapped to capture the views of service users and front-line staff, and to understand processes, demand, and pinch-points across the local public and voluntary sector infrastructure. This was achieved through a combination of desk research and conversation with stakeholders, included council officers, representatives from local VCSFE groups and residents' panels. Particular attention was focused on the views of young people and those with disabilities. To engage with these groups, officers attended the Tameside Youth Council and People First Tameside.

## **Public surveys**

An 8-week consultation was launched in Summer 2022, asking respondents “What do you think about poverty in Tameside?” and “What can we do about poverty in Tameside?”.

Following the completion of the first draft of the Building Resilience Strategy in December 2022, this was followed up with a second survey asking for residents' and partners' views on the proposed recommendations as a whole.

## Focus groups

Stockport-based DJS Research Ltd, an employee-owned market research company, was commissioned to conduct a series of four focus groups with people with lived experience of poverty in Tameside.

## Partnership Engagement Network



Poverty was the headline focus of the July 2022 Partnership Engagement Network Conference, exploring the themes emerging from early consultation and service mapping work.

## Poverty Truth Commission

To amplify the voices of people living in poverty, Tameside Council have supported the Poverty Truth Commission, delivered by Greater Manchester Poverty Action. The commission brought together grassroots commissioners, people with lived experience of poverty and senior civic, political and business leaders, known as civic commissioners, on an equal footing to inform decision making within Tameside. Grassroots commissioners shared difficult stories and worked tirelessly to help identify and shape urgent priorities across the borough, focusing on: housing, access to services and mental health.

Recommendations from these groups have enormously influenced the development of the Tackling Poverty in Tameside Strategy as well as the wider approach to poverty across the borough.

## Data

Data, research, literature and other qualitative and quantitative data was used to inform the Tackling Poverty in Tameside Strategy and supporting material such as the Needs Assessment. Exact sources have been referenced where appropriate.

## Inequalities Reference Group (IRG)

The Inequalities Reference Group (IRG) aims to reduce inequality in Tameside & Glossop. The group meets on a quarterly basis, providing a forum for the sharing of ideas and thoughts on carrying out responsibilities under the Equality Act 2010 and the Public Sector Equality Duty. Membership is drawn from Tameside Council elected members, local NHS Governing Body members, VCSFE representatives and the Tameside Independent Advisory Group.

The group has produced a number of papers on topic ranging from Barriers to Accessing Information to Voices of People with Learning Disabilities which have been incorporated into this Strategy.

# Needs Assessment

A comprehensive Needs Assessment was created to understand the nature of poverty in Tameside, as well as gaps in services and processes. The full document has been attached as Appendix 1 to this report. However, key challenges identified are as follows:



## Benefits

**4.8%** of people in Tameside were in receipt of benefits.

As of July 2022, 4.8% of people in Tameside were in receipt of benefits, compared to just 3.7% of people in Great Britain.

**£5.2million** unclaimed pension credit per year in Tameside.

Many benefits are under-claimed. For example; there is an estimated £5.2million unclaimed pension credit per year in Tameside.

## Debt



**Almost 1 in 4** of Tameside residents are over-indebted

(i.e. owing money that needs to be paid back, but struggling to do so).

**7th highest rate**

of individual insolvencies in the country.

**36%** of respondents expected their financial circumstances to worsen.

Data collected from the DJS surveys show that 36% of respondents expected their financial circumstances to worsen over the next five years.



## Food Poverty



**15.07%** experiencing struggle with food insecurity” in Tameside.

The percentage of households defined as “experiencing struggle with food insecurity” in Tameside is the highest in Greater Manchester at 15.07%.



**12,976** food parcels distributed by foodbanks in 2020-21.

The number of food parcels distributed by foodbanks in the Trussell Trust Network in Tameside increased from 9,917 in 2019-20 to 12,976 in 2020-21.

## Fuel Poverty



**14.1%** of households in Tameside are estimated to be in fuel poverty.

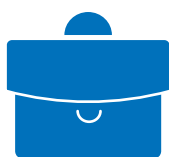
This is higher than the national average of 13.2%.



**60%**

of homes in Tameside are considered to be energy inefficient.

## Employment



**71.5%** of Tameside jobs pay the Living Wage.

Tameside has the lowest proportion of jobs paying the Living Wage or above in Greater Manchester at 71.5%, compared to the Greater Manchester average of 79.2%.



**26.6%** of residents achieve an NVQ4 or above level qualification.

Tameside has the lowest rate of residents with higher level of qualifications in Greater Manchester. Just 26.6% of residents achieve an NVQ4 or above level qualification, 17% lower than the national average.

## Council Tax



**25%** of working age claimants receiving Council Tax Support within Tameside.

When compared to other Greater Manchester local authorities, working age claimants receiving Council Tax Support within Tameside had to pay the highest percentage of their bill as a minimum contribution (25%).



**Four in five respondents (79%)**

to a UK-wide survey of National Debtline clients with council tax arrears felt that the actions of their council in collecting the debt had a negative impact on their wellbeing.

## Mental Health



**19.5%** of Tameside residents aged 16 or over have one or more **Common Mental Disorder (CMDs)**

The estimated rate of Common Mental Disorders (CMDs) in Tameside is 19.5% for residents aged 16 or over. This is above the England average of 16.9%.

There is a significant gap in terms of employment support for people with CMDs, with only 33% of respondents to a poll conducted by the Money and Mental Health Policy Institute (MMHPI) saying that they had received such a service.

## Disabilities



**£583** extra costs a month for adults with disabilities. Families with children with disabilities face average extra costs of £581 a month due to issues associated with disability and ill health.

Tameside's disability employment gap in 2019-20 was 31.9%, the 4th highest in Greater Manchester.

## Life Expectancy



While Tameside is ranked 5th out of 10 in Greater Manchester authorities for male life expectancy and healthy life expectancy, it is ranked 9th out of 10 for female life expectancy and healthy life expectancy.

There are significant disparities in life expectancy within Tameside. Males born in Denton West can expect to live 8.7 years longer than those born in St. Peters, while females born in Stalybridge South will live 7.9 years longer than those born in St. Peters.

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## Carers

**11% (14,106)** of residents in Tameside have some kind of unpaid caring responsibilities.

Additionally, according to data from the 2011 Census, 2.9% of residents (6,359) provided more than 50 hours of unpaid care a week.

**30%** of families in receipt of Carer's Allowance and in poverty in 2019-20.

Research from the Joseph Rowntree Foundation has also shown that the number of families in receipt of Carer's Allowance and in poverty has doubled from 15% in 2005-6 to 30% in 2019-20.

## Barriers to Accessing Services



**14.9%** Digital exclusion in Tameside

Digital exclusion in Tameside is high, with 14.9% of LSOAs with a Digital Exclusion Risk Index score of 5.0+ compared to 4.2% across Greater Manchester.



**59%** of residents found it "difficult or very difficult" to access information and services before the Covid-19 pandemic.

This increased to 80% during the pandemic.

## Service User Experience



**People** in poverty should be treated with more dignity, respect and compassion by council staff and services. A number of respondents to our consultation stated their belief that people in poverty should be treated with more dignity, respect or compassion by council staff and services.

## Child Poverty



**1,250** households in Tameside are affected by the two-child limit on Universal Credit and tax credits.



**30%** of Children in Tameside were eligible for Free School Meals (FSMs)  
In the 2022 Summer term, 30% of Children in Tameside were eligible for Free School Meals (FSMs) which is 7.15% higher than England's national average.

## Social Housing



**71.7%** of tenants in the affordable rented sector receive an income of less than £300 gross each week. Data from the latest Tameside Housing Strategy shows that 71.7% of tenants in the affordable rented sector receive an income of less than £300 gross each week and 41.3% receive less than £200 gross each week.



**1,628** affordable homes, have been built in Tameside in the 13 years between 2006/7 and 2018/19.

In the 13 years between 2006/7 and 2018/19 5,985 homes, of which 1,628 were affordable, have been built in Tameside. This is significantly below the target of 8,720 for the same period.

## Private Rent



**£40** a month gap between Local Housing Allowance (LHA) and average rent in Tameside.

Between 2020 and 2021, the gap between Local Housing Allowance (LHA) and average rent in Tameside increased from £30 to £40 a month. This is the 3rd highest increase in Greater Manchester over this period.



**20%** median rent increase for properties in Tameside.

The median rent for properties in Tameside has increased by nearly 20% across all property sizes in the last 4 years.



## Homelessness



**31%** increase in the number of people requiring temporary accommodation in Tameside from June-December 2021.

Following the lifting of lock down measures, including the eviction ban, there has been a 31% increase in the number of people requiring temporary accommodation in Tameside from June-December 2021.

**66,000** more people nationally will be homeless by 2024 due to the cost-of-living crisis.

According to Crisis, due to the cost of living crisis, more than 66,000 more people nationally will be homeless by 2024, with the bulk of the increase being among people forced to “sofa surf”.



# What are we doing already?

While this strategy will be used to develop a more strategic approach to combating poverty in the borough, there is a recognition that the impact of the cost of living crisis will require immediate action in the coming months to protect residents. To that end, the following actions have been undertaken:

## Tameside Helping Hand

Tameside Helping Hand is a one-stop-shop specifically curated for cost of living support. The core aim of Helping Hand Tameside is to ensure that people know how to get in touch with local services and organisations, how to book appointments for support, and that they receive money they're entitled to, for example pension top up credit, Healthy Start vouchers and tax free child care.

Activities launched under the Helping Hand programme include Cost of Living support events, complemented by a Helping Hand Roadshow which proactively brings information stalls, council officers, and elected members to communities across Tameside. A website and a series of printed leaflets have also been created to signpost to services which can help residents with a number of issues, such as finances, housing, employment, digital literacy, and health and wellbeing.



## Accessibility of Services

In order to strengthen awareness and accessibility of services, a number of Cost of Living Champions have been recruited and trained to provide advice and signposting in their own workplaces and communities. This has been complemented by a new face-to-face Customer Services offer, which allows residents to book in-person and telephone appointments with services provided by Tameside Council and the Citizen's Advice Bureau within Tameside One.

## Tameside Money Advice Referral Tool (MART)

The Tameside Money Advice Referral Tool (MART) is a joint project by Tameside Council's Welfare Rights service, Citizen's Advice Bureau, Greater Manchester Poverty Action and local VCSFE groups. The MART is set up to assist frontline workers through a conversation with service users about their financial difficulties so they can confidently direct them to relevant advice and support within the local area. The aim is to help people to get all the money that they are entitled to, and to reduce the need for referrals to food banks, by increasing referrals to other kinds of support.

## Household Support and Winter Pressure Funds

Tameside Council manages a number of one-off discretionary payment schemes to support local residents and organisations through cost of living pressures. This includes the Household Support Fund, which provides money for essentials such as food and energy to vulnerable households, and the Winter Pressure Fund which supports local activity that can help to alleviate pressures, create additional capacity, or extend existing provision where other funds are not available over the winter period.

## Warm Welcome Hubs

Warm Welcome Hubs have been launched across the Borough to provide a warm, safe and welcoming space for anyone to use. Warm Welcome Hubs are located within libraries during staffed hours. Partnerships have also been undertaken with the VCFSE sector to promote any community-based Hubs to residents and, using the Winter Pressures Fund, provide financial support to several Warm Welcome Hubs.



## Digital Skills and Inclusion

The use of technology in the workplace, the rollout of Universal Credit (which is predominantly accessed via an online journal) and the trend of local authorities to encourage residents to access services online has made it increasingly necessary for all residents to have at least a basic level of digital literacy. The Tameside Digital Inclusion Strategy aims to improve digital skills and ensure that every resident has free access to high quality internet services through libraries and SWIFT public Wi-Fi. This strategy will help to prevent residents suffering from financial hardship or poor health outcomes as a result of digital exclusion.



# Building Resilience:

## Tackling Poverty in Tameside Strategy Recommendations and Key Themes

### 1. “Raising incomes” – supporting residents to maximise income and access all benefits they are entitled to

- Influence employers in the borough to become both Living Wage and Living Hours employers, and provide support for them to do so through improved productivity and skills development through delivery of the Inclusive Growth Strategy.
- Further promote the effective use of the Tameside Money Advice Referral Tool in all appropriate settings and commit to updating as required. Promote a culture of effective referrals over signposting.

### Case Study

#### Royal Borough of Greenwich

Partners across Greenwich have funded the rollout of three advice hubs in partnership with Citizens Advice, Greenwich Housing Rights, and Plumstead Community Law Centre. These weekly drop-in sessions include a range of services such as free face-to-face benefits, debt, immigration, and housing advice. Roaming advice hubs have also been introduced at five further locations across the borough to maximise the delivery of face-to-face support.

- Strengthen our preventive approach to tackling poverty by facilitating easier access to advice at an earlier stage. This includes exploring opportunities to deliver increased outreach, welfare rights and debt advice and making sure everyone knows their role in tackling poverty and supporting residents.
- Introduce and adequately resource a permanent Local Welfare Provisions scheme which is responsive, easy to access and connects residents to support to resolve root causes of presenting issues providing timely help, to those in crisis.

## Case Study

### Salford Assist

Salford Assist offers help for residents facing financial hardship to meet their immediate needs by providing support with food, baby milk, nappies, fuel, essential furniture items or white goods, bedding, cooking equipment, costs associated with moving, and copies of birth certificates for homeless people. The service also links in with advice and referrals to other services, agencies or funds. Assistance may also include things such as seeking debt advice, referral routes to affordable loans and recycled furniture schemes. They also give advice on how to access more affordable fuel tariffs and benefits.

The scheme is linked to other support services including homelessness prevention, debt advice, welfare rights, money management skills, affordable loans and council tax.

- Proactively identify and support households on legacy benefits ahead of the 2024 managed migration to Universal Credit to ensure they are receiving everything they are entitled to.
- Ensure everyone who needs welfare rights advice can access support by securing capacity within the Welfare Rights Advice Team, associated services and other partners to carry out targeted work with groups known to be under-claiming benefits, such as older residents missing out on pension credit.

## Case Study

Scott Silverton was referred to the Welfare Rights Team as he had worsening memory loss issues and was struggling for money after paying rent and Council Tax in full each month out of his State Pension. His son had tried to apply for benefits on his behalf but had been unsuccessful. A benefit check was completed which identified that claims for Housing Benefit, Council Tax Support, Pension Credit and Attendance Allowance were required. This included a request to backdate the housing benefit and council tax support by 3 months. Following the team's intervention Mr Silverton was in a much more secure financial position, able to afford his rent and not required to pay any Council Tax.

- Work with water and energy utility providers to identify opportunities for low-income customers to move to reduced or social tariffs.

## Case Study

### Maidstone Borough Council

Maidstone has launched a data sharing partnership with South East Water UK to identify low-income customers and transfer them to a social water tariff. The council have utilised the powers set out in the Digital Economy Act - a piece of legislation aimed at improving public services through the better use of data - to achieve this. It is expected that a total of 7,000 residents will benefit from the scheme, equating to around 10% of the total properties in the borough.

- Improve the ability of households to pay their energy bills by raising awareness of discounts and how to apply e.g. Winter Fuel Payment, Warm Home Discount, Cold Weather Payments, energy provider discretionary funds.

## 2. “Making Tameside Work for Everyone” – securing high-quality and high-wage employment for all residents

Expand the capacity of the Routes to Work programme to meet demand.

- Reform Social Value approach to increase the weighting applied to “real living wage” and “real living hours” providers in tendering applications, ensuring that contract values enable this.
- Use links with businesses to identify skills gaps in the local economy and drive education and training opportunities to match.

### Case Study

Since its launch in January 2022, Tameside In Work has supported over a third of its customers into better paid work or increased their working hours. The programme has successfully helped residents overcome skills barriers, increased their confidence to help them meet their potential, and provided specialist information on how they can develop skills for different employment sectors and job opportunities. Year 2 of the programme will enhance the offer further with an increased focus on specialist skills training, digital skills tools and peer mentoring group sessions.

- Further develop the Tameside-in-work progression programme to enhance progression opportunities for those in work.
- Promote awareness of skillsets that disabled and neuro-diverse people can offer to drive employment and support employers to reduce the barriers those groups face in the workplace.
- Improve access to employment opportunities and address in-work poverty for people in housing need or those at risk of becoming homeless, to help them sustain long-term housing.

### 3. “Poverty is Everybody’s Business” – supporting residents, communities and partners to spot the signs of poverty and signpost to support

- Build on the ‘Helping Hand’ campaign to deliver a financial resilience communications plan to raise awareness of the support on offer for residents experiencing hardship both nationally and locally, highlighting priorities at opportune times such as The International Day for the Eradication of Poverty.

## Case Study

### Partnership Working - Bradford

In Bradford, the council health and voluntary and community sector partners, have come together to support residents with the cost-of-living crisis. Together they are running a number of activities to support residents and colleagues. Work includes community outreach, webinars and meetings for frontline professionals and a targeted cost of living campaign aimed at local people.

[NHS England » Partnership working in Bradford District and Craven helps communities with the cost-of-living crisis](#)

- Promote a ‘no wrong door approach’ by offering training to organisations in community settings (Community Champions, GPs, market traders, charity workers, hairdressers, schools etc) to identify vulnerable residents, and refer them to appropriate support with sensitivity and compassion.

## Case Study

### Collective Response to Cost of Living Crisis – North WALES

#### Community Housing Cymru ([chcymru.org.uk](http://chcymru.org.uk))

Six North Wales Housing Associations with a ‘common social purpose to make a positive impact on local people across North Wales have produced a joint commitment to tackle poverty in their area.’

- Partners across Tameside to explore how to increase capacity across across VCFSE sector, acknowledging the increased demand upon services as a result of the Cost of Living crisis.
- Strengthen coordination with local Registered Providers to share good practice and resources to best support their tenants and also the wider community, including incorporating lived experience into decision-making.
- Embed a customer-focused approach by reviewing resident feedback of their journey through services to ensure support is easy to access, non-stigmatising and effective.



## Case Study

### Onward Homes – Helping Hand Winter Warmer Event

Local housing association Onward Homes partnered with Tameside Council to host a Cost of Living Support event, Helping Hand's Winter Warmer.

The event linked Tameside residents who were struggling with cost of living pressures to a wealth of support services and organisations who provided help with finances, debt, housing, food, employment, mental health and wellbeing. Onward's tenancy support team was also on hand to provide details on local work and skills coordination, income management and social investment.

#### 4. “Climbing out of the debt trap” – Tameside residents have relatively high levels of debt and insolvencies, and poor access to good credit as a result.

- Formulate a task and finish group under the Health & Wellbeing Board to look in detail at the issue of why Tameside residents hold relatively high levels of debt, have high rates of insolvency and low credit scores to identify some preventative solutions.

### Case Study

Using a “Low Income Family Tracker” dashboard for Housing and Council Tax debt Haringey Council are able to identify household poverty trends to proactively target debt advice and inform their Debt Strategy.

- Improve access to, and promote the use of, Cash Box Credit Union services, including savings accounts and sustainable and ethical credit.

- Implement the national breathing space debt respite scheme within the local authority, enabling TMBC Debt advisors to utilise the portal and raise awareness within the borough.
- Explore the possibility of increasing the capacity of co-located advisors specialising in debt and housing advice for tenants living in the private rented sector.
- Work across the partnership to proactively tackle illegal money lending by promoting awareness through training and campaigns, and developing procedures to better support affected residents.

## 5. “Breaking the cycle” – specific focus on providing the best start in childhood and education

- Work with schools and colleges in the borough to agree a good practice model for financial education for pupils across all age group.

### Case Study

A ‘financial champion’ award-winning school in Yorkshire undertook an audit of its subjects, identifying opportunities to strengthen the delivery of financial education and make links across the curriculum.

It also undertook student voice activities to hear directly from the young people about the financial topics they were keen to learn about. The school now has a planned approach to the delivery of financial education. Financial education is overseen by a senior member of staff who also ensures the delivery is quality assured.

An element of financial education is included in PSHE education for years 7 to 13, and students can access level 2 and 3 finance qualifications. The school has also worked with local feeder primary schools.



- Establish a working group with school leaders to develop a mechanism to enable schools to better identify and overcome the barriers to learning that children and young people from families with less financial resources face.

## Case study

### Poverty Proofing© the School Day - Children North East ([children-ne.org.uk](http://children-ne.org.uk))

Poverty Proofing© the School Day is a tool developed by Children North-East for identifying the barriers children living in poverty face when engaging fully with school life and its opportunities. Focused on listening to the voices and experiences of young people and their families, it offers a pathway for schools to address often unseen inequalities within their activities, helping them reduce stigma, break the link between educational attainment and financial background, and supports schools to explore the most effective way to spend Pupil Premium.

## Case study

### Cost of the School Day Calendar

The “Cost of the School Day” calendar breaks down on a month-by-month basis common barriers to education for disadvantaged children and offers alternatives and other suggestions. This includes highlighting common annual celebration days in schools and how we can avoid making these inaccessible for disadvantaged children.

There is also general advice about issues such as uniforms, trips, school lunches, gym kits, pencils and pens, dress down days and other school costs that can be difficult to afford for low-income families.

Throughout the calendar, there are ideas and good practice examples from schools across England, Scotland and Wales who have taken part in the Cost of the School Day project.

- Work with relevant partners such as Tameside Hospital, GPs and other health community settings to increase take up of Healthy Start vouchers by signposting and encouraging eligible service users to apply.
- Increase the uptake of Healthy Start vouchers, using public campaigns and assets (such as Community Champions) to ensure that all eligible families are aware of and can access the scheme.
- Investigate options of working with DWP to auto enrol or send personalised invitation letters to families eligible for Healthy Start vouchers through flagging of Universal Credit accounts.

## Case Study

### Feeding Britain: A Policy for Improving Child Nutrition – Securing Full Take-Up of Healthy Start Vouchers and Free School Meals in England

Research from charity Feeding Britain has shown that, despite investment in time, effort, and resources, 44% of potentially eligible families are not registered for Healthy Start and, as a result, £1 million worth of vouchers go unclaimed each week. Of particular concern is the finding that some families are having to rely on food banks because they are not registered for their Healthy Start entitlement.

It was suggested that, in order to address this, the basis for Healthy Start and free school meal registration should shift from 'opt in' to 'opt out' through an automated process. While the primary drive for this could only come from national government, it has been identified that local authorities could facilitate this in their own area by amending the Council Tax Support application form, and other forms where appropriate, so that applicants are given the option of ticking a box to consent to their data being used automatically to register eligible children in their household for free school meals and/or Healthy Start vouchers.

- Explore opportunities to enable auto-enrolment for Free School Meals for eligible families. Improve systems and processes around monitoring of Free School Meals to encourage uptake among eligible families through awareness-raising and improving school catering offers.

## Case Study

### Sheffield City Council Auto-Enrolment

Sheffield City Council has analysed Housing Benefit and Council Tax support information they already hold, and have found that a significant number of households may meet the criteria for Free School Meals but have not yet made an application.

In an effort to make sure that all school pupils receive the support they are entitled to, as well as to increasing the Pupil Premium funding for all academies and locally maintained schools in Sheffield, the council used Housing Benefit data to automatically award Free School Meals during the months of August-September 2022.

Those families who appear to qualify for Free School Meals, but haven't applied yet were contacted by letter to explain how the automatic award works.

An information sheet giving more background to the scheme is attached [here](#).

- Encourage employers to signpost eligible women about to go on maternity leave to the availability of Healthy Start vouchers and other benefits.
- Explore the option of working with schools to coordinate school uniform collections and distribution to assist families on low incomes.
- Continue to drive supply of Further Education opportunities in the borough and increase demand through improved communication and celebrating success.
- Improve uptake and awareness of free early education and childcare entitlements for two, three and four-year-olds.
- Redesign the Family Help offer across Childrens Services to bring a greater emphasis on direct help for improved parenting, including management of family plans, empowering independence and promoting structure and achievable goals. This will maximise access to work, childcare, education and training, household budgetary management, reduce parental conflict and neglect to create stronger, resilient homes built on love and care.

## 6. “Laying the foundations” – ensuring residents have access to what they need in order to live in comfort and dignity, including food, housing, warmth etc.

- Encourage people to seek Housing Advice through campaigns and other communications to raise awareness and prevent homelessness.
- Increase the volume of nominations to the Housing Waiting List from Registered Providers in Tameside, for example through development of Choice-Based Lettings and/or a Common Housing Register.
- Cultivate relationships with Private Rented Sector landlords to increase housing options for homeless households, recognise signs of poverty and motivate their tenants to seek support early to avoid eviction.

## Case Study

### Salford City Council and Irwell Valley Homes – Private Landlord Training

Salford City Council and Irwell Valley Homes have teamed up to launch the first training course in the country for private landlords whose tenants may be experiencing or causing problems. The aim is to sustain tenancies by helping landlords to draw up a clear action plan.



- Develop a Social Lettings Agency model to increase housing options in the Private Rented Sector.
- Encourage the take up of free fire safety home assessments to support vulnerable residents to stay safe and access appropriate support.
- Gain a better understanding of food poverty in Tameside through surveying, data collection and other engagement and consultation.

## Case Study

### Food Insecurity in the Lancaster District: Beyond Imagination Life Survey

Commissioned by Lancaster University and undertaken by BMG Research, this research survey collected 3,000 resident's views and combined it with a number of bespoke and national-level datasets to gather a representative picture of views, attitudes and experiences of Food Insecurity in the Lancaster District.

The conclusions from the survey, which were released in June 2022, will be used inform strategy, activities and further research opportunities for Imagination Lancaster - Lancaster University's cross-disciplinary design research lab, relevant local authorities and other partners.

- Work with food banks/pantries and partner organisations in Tameside to identify supply and capacity pressures and unlock funding and support to alleviate such issues.

## Case Study

### London Borough of Lewisham: Working with partners to address food poverty

The London Borough of Lewisham is making tackling food poverty a priority in the recovery from the Covid-19 pandemic. Partners from across the system are working with local groups to create social supermarkets, which differ from food banks in that residents pay for products albeit, at a significant reduced price, from the networks that sprang up during the pandemic.

It is now focussing on building on this work. A food poverty summit was held in early 2022, and there is now a dedicated working group on food poverty, with a new service to promote awareness, support food chains and the local food economy set to be launched.

- Support the expansion of food pantries and community gardens (including opportunities for new and existing allotments) to increase access to healthy food for residents who are experiencing, or at risk of, food insecurity.
- Map and publicise all community cooking sessions and classes taking place in Tameside.



- Work with residents and partners to investigate and implement effective ways of reducing food waste.

## Case Study

### Oldham Community Fridges (1) (2)

The Community Fridge Network, which is run by environmental charity Hubbub, collects and shares food from businesses and individuals which would have otherwise been thrown away.

Community fridges are open to everyone – with fresh food donated by businesses and residents themselves. As well as improving access to food, the fridges go beyond this by “empowering communities to connect with each other” and learn new skills through activities such as cookery sessions and workshops on how to grow your own fruit and veg.

Community Fridges accept donations of unopened, packaged foods within their use-by date and raw fruit or vegetables, which will then be available to anyone in the community.

To date a number of Community Fridges, operated by various charitable organisations and supported by the Co-Operative Group, have been opened in Manchester and Oldham. Research from US community network ChangeX has shown that, over 3 months, it is estimated that one Community Fridge can:

- Redistribute 12 tons of food waste,
- Save households and community groups over £10,000 worth of food
- Provide local employment opportunities.



- Collaborate with partners to draft an action plan and framework for delivery to ensure that the number of people living in homes below Energy Rating C decreases over time.
- Enhance approaches to address fuel poverty including ongoing work with the Local Energy Advice Partnership (LEAP) and work with GMCA around a statement of intent for energy company obligation funded measures to be installed.
- Support Registered Provider partners to deliver new homes, affordable housing and specialist accommodation.
- Explore the feasibility of expanding subsidised access to Active Tameside facilities, ensuring that residents experiencing poverty are not disadvantaged or excluded from activities that may be beneficial to their physical and mental health.

## Case Study

### Birmingham City Council “Gym for Free Scheme” [\(1\)](#) [\(2\)](#)

Local professionals in Birmingham City Council working in public health believed that cost could be a barrier to the uptake of leisure facilities. To test this perception, the Heart of Birmingham Primary Care Trust transferred £500,000 towards free access to leisure facilities for adults in one economically deprived constituency in the city for 6 months. Access remained free if adults used this service a minimum of four times per month.

Following this 6 month period, surveys and focus groups were set up to gauge the success of the scheme. These found that it was successful in increasing the uptake of the exercise facilities among study participants from 25% to 64% either every day or most days, and a reduction among those who never used these facilities from 28% to 0%. This was particularly the case among women, ethnic minorities and the most economically disadvantaged.

## 7. “Putting people first” – making sure that all service’s working practices (both customer-facing and internal) are best placed to identify and support those in poverty

- Accept the recommendations of the Tameside Poverty Truth Commission and work with Partners to formulate a delivery response alongside this Strategy.
- Facilitate the collective and proactive identification and support of people vulnerable to socio-economic disadvantage by addressing data-sharing hurdles between services and creating a forum to facilitate this work.
- Develop a bespoke Poverty Monitor to gather and warehouse comprehensive, relevant and up-to-date data and information about poverty in Tameside.

## Case Study

### Calderdale Data Works Poverty Index

This is a collection of dashboards showing selected statistics on poverty in Calderdale which has been developed alongside the Calderdale Anti-Poverty Action Plan. The plan has been produced in consultation with local partner agencies.

### Greater Manchester Poverty Monitor 2022

The aim of the Monitor is to equip stakeholders with relevant knowledge to tackle socio-economic disadvantage in their own activities, from policy development to service design, advocacy and campaigning.

- Review council tax collection practices and Council Tax Support Policy to support those with vulnerabilities including people on low income. Explore adopting the Citizens Advice Council Tax Arrears Good Practice Protocol.

## Case Study

### London Borough of Tower Hamlets

“Tower Hamlets is one of 74 authorities in 2020/21 to have no minimum payment. This means that working age adults on the lowest incomes pay no council tax. Tower Hamlets has the second largest number of people receiving Council Tax Support in London in 2021.

Since 2017, Tower Hamlets care leavers under 25 have been exempt from council tax. An additional fund provides further discretionary reductions in Council Tax for residents in exceptional hardship: this provided £45,000 to 109 households in 2018/19.

As well as benefiting low-income residents, more generous council tax reduction schemes can also improve collection rates. Tower Hamlets’ collection rates for 2020/21 were 97.5%, compared to an average collection rate of 96.8% across England and 95.6% for Inner London. Tower Hamlets council is one of eight London boroughs to have adopted the Citizens Advice/Local Government Council Tax Protocol.”

- Provide enhanced support to residents seeking advice about council tax and housing benefit, and explore the option of establishing regular and clearly advertised drop-in sessions.



## Case Study

### Greater London Authority and Policy in Practice “Council Tax Debt Collection and Low-Income Londoners” 2020

The Greater London Authority commissioned Policy in Practice to undertake an evaluation of flexible, customer-centric debt collection practices for low-income Londoners. The project focused on deepening understanding of the business case for council tax collection practices that more effectively support low-income households.

The research concluded that no clear relationship was found between stricter council tax collection policies and higher council tax collection rates, and that higher council tax collection rates were associated with the generosity of a borough’s Council Tax Reduction Scheme and lower collection with the level of poverty in the borough.

Other recommendations included overcoming the relative rigidity of the regulations and limitations to IT systems, enabling councils to pause recovery action for Council Tax Reduction recipients before the summons stage, and more data-sharing to help move towards a more rounded, single view of household debt as well as identifying the households who need the most help, both now and in the future.

- Where possible, facilitate the principle of a Single Point of Contact for customer-facing services to address the issue of vulnerable people re-telling their stories.
- Streamline the application process for all Council discretionary support, including s.13a, DHP, TRS and HSF.
- Improve the process for applying for s13.A Discretionary Council Tax Reduction by creating an online application form based around the discretionary housing payment portal.
- Ensure appropriate resources are being allocated to S.13A Discretionary Council Tax reduction to enable residents to receive financial assistance towards their council tax liability when they need it.
- Roll out automatic claims for council tax support upon a claim being submitted for Universal Credit.
- Continue to expand of the range of face-to-face services available from Tameside One, and clearly communicate the offer.

- Work with STAR Procurement, internal contract managers and suppliers to embed and expand social value and community wealth building in local procurement processes, and encourage a similar approach in relevant partner organisations.

## Case Study

### Birmingham City Council – Match my Project

Many grassroots organisations fail to access funding and resources from mainstream funders – including local authorities themselves.

To tackle this problem, Birmingham City Council developed MatchMyProject – an online platform that matches community organisations in need of resources for the delivery of their projects and businesses working directly for Birmingham City Council or in the area.

Using this tool, community organisations can post requests for support on specific projects, with businesses able to browse a curated directory of projects and make offers of support directly.

- Implement the socioeconomic duty in Tameside to ensure that socioeconomic disadvantage is considered and relevant organisations and people with lived experiences of poverty consulted in the development of all relevant council policies.
- Review resourcing within Tameside Housing Options to maximise its potential for homeless prevention, including exploring opportunities to expand capacity within the service to meet increasing demand.
- Establish channels for continuing engagement with people with lived experience of poverty to enable enhanced collaboration and co-design of council processes, strategies and action plans. Coordinate a public directory of these opportunities through Action Together.

## 8. “No one left behind digitally” – specific focus on digital inclusion

- Register for the “Good Things Foundation National Data Bank Centre”, enabling us to “gift” data and free SIMS to eligible residents. Explore delivery through libraries and warm spaces.
- Investigate possibility of recruiting Digital Assistants (either through a paid role or volunteers) to provide capacity in Library Services to deliver digital and IT support to residents.
- Promote and raise awareness of programmes to improve digital literacy among residents, including TechKnow Buddies, Learn My Way, Online Job Search and Idea.

- Unlock funding and support to allow people in poverty to access technology and the internet using programmes such as the Device Gifting Scheme.

## Case Study

### Hubbub/O2 – Community Calling

London-based environmental charity Hubbub and O2 have partnered to create and deliver the Community Calling programme - a scheme that re-homes old smartphones.

Community Calling receives donations of used smartphones (as long as they hold a charge and the screen isn't cracked) from members of the public, as well as corporate and public sector organisations. They've partnered with Reconome, a device upcycling expert, to clean, data wipe, and refurbish the donated smartphones, before packaging them up and redistributing the devices to someone in need. Each recipient also receives 12-months' free data provided by O2 and access to free digital skills training.

Community Calling adopts a hyperlocal approach by partnering with small, community based grassroots organisations in order to reach digitally excluded people, which have been identified by the community partners. So far, they've re-homed over 5,000 smartphones, but have a target of reaching 10,000 digitally excluded people across the UK.

- Liaise with local VCSE organisations such as Age UK to proactively reach out to groups identified as being particularly vulnerable to digital inclusion (low income, older people etc) to encourage them to develop digital skills.
- Review current public Wi Fi provision with the aim of delivering the service in a way that is more appropriate to residents' needs.
- Investigate the possibility of working with broadband and housing providers – including social housing and new developments - to deliver internet access to residents at a reduced cost.
- Review processes for accessing support to ensure there is always an online and offline method available.

## 9. “One size doesn’t fit all” – additional support for residents identified as being at particular risk of poverty (disabled, carers, ethnic minorities, mental health etc)

- Increase targeted employability support for groups which have been identified as under-served in regards to mental health provision and/or vulnerable to falling into poor-quality employment, particularly ethnic minorities, young people and residents over 50.
- Increase availability and promotion of domestic abuse services for victims, and targeted perpetrator programmes to break the cycle of abuse.
- Explore the possibility of developing Mental Health Awareness Training for staff and volunteers, working with residents experiencing poverty to help address the known impacts of poverty on mental health and signpost them to further support (income maximisation, welfare rights, food security etc).
- Encourage uptake of community-centred approaches to people in poverty suffering with mental health issues, such as peer support groups to challenge isolation and provide lasting support beyond the scope of commissioned services.

## Case Studies:

### Shropshire: Training hairdressers, personal trainers and hospitality staff to become champions

Shropshire Council has been working in partnership with the Samaritans to train local business staff to support their customers with their mental health.

### North East Derbyshire and Chesterfield: Connecting communities and nurturing neighbourliness

A project to connect local communities has been launched in North East Derbyshire and Chesterfield by Derbyshire Voluntary Action to provide funding and support aimed at tackling social isolation

- Develop measures to ensure that carers, particularly from seldom heard groups, are identified as early as possible and are assessed, informed, empowered and supported as needed.
- Expand income maximisation and money advice services to carers (both working and non-working) to ensure that they are receiving all appropriate guidance around carer's allowances and other benefits.
- Facilitate focus groups with carers to improve and build on our offer for working carers, recognising and respecting their views and opinions as expert partners.
- Promote and encourage support for working carers in Tameside from employers in the borough, linking in with the GM Carer's Charter/Employer's Forum and covering issues such as flexible working policies, guaranteed assessment schemes and emergency time off.
- Provide comprehensive and wrap-around support to help carers get into employment if they want to, ensuring that they are informed of and are supported to achieve their rights, opportunities and responsibilities as both carers and employees.

## Case Study

Tameside Council and Tameside & Glossop Integrated Care Foundation Trust (ICFT): Collaborative work undertaken in relation to supporting young carers into a career in health and social care in the future

A group comprised of Human Resources professionals from Tameside Council and Tameside & Glossop ICFT determined that they wanted to support young carers with an information session on how their transferable skills could make them suited to embark on a further education or employment in Health and Social Care.

Colleagues from the Tameside Council Young Carer's Team, ICT, local education institutions and charities came together to create and deliver a 3 hour interactive session. This included a health and wellbeing talk, volunteering information, group discussions, talks from higher education providers and "A Day in the Life" examples of actual job roles.

Participants were asked to complete an evaluation at the end of the session, and the feedback obtained showed that they felt the session was very informative and gave them an increased awareness of the employment and education pathways open to them.

- Conduct audits on public buildings and websites to gauge accessibility for residents in poverty (particularly those with physical/learning disabilities or for whom English is not a first language) and take action to improve if necessary.
- Review existing offers for foster carers and care leavers to take into account new cost of living pressures.
- Commit to ensuring that all services can access relevant communication and interpretation services.
- Work with Action Together to develop and improve links with community organisations supporting ethnic minority residents and those for whom English is not a first language to improve access to and understanding of information related to poverty.

## Case Study

### Bournemouth, Christchurch and Poole CP Council Equality Action Commission Group

An example of a council-led cross party and joint community stakeholder group aimed at improving the way the council works with and supports ethnic minority individuals and communities in its area.

In particular, the commission aims to:

- Review current practices and what it could do to improve it's understanding of the needs and vulnerabilities of ethnic minority communities and individuals
- Review and understand the impact of the council's public profile and how it can encourage ethnic minority communities and their representatives to engage with the council
- Understand the experiences of ethnic minority communities to enable the council to take appropriate actions which increase participation and representation, and reduce marginalisation.

- Carry out work to understand whether local support to residents with refugee status, (including those seeking asylum, facing financial hardship, or subject to No Recourse to Public Funds restrictions) could be improved, and to understand how best to support EEA+ nationals with pre-settled status.
- Provide free period products within libraries and explore opportunities to expand this to all publically accessible council buildings and partner organisations.

## 10. “Advocating for change” – highlighting the need for action on poverty-related issues where responsibility lies with national government

Though there is much that can be achieved locally to address poverty, many of the drivers of poverty can only be addressed by national government. Recognising this, we commit to working with partners to campaign on the following issues as identified in the Needs Assessment, including:

### Benefits

- Increase the levels of Universal Credit, Discretionary Housing Payment allocations and Local Housing Allowance rates.
- Abolish the bedroom tax, the two child limit and the benefit cap.
- Abolish punitive benefits sanctions.
- Abolish the ‘No recourse to public funds’ condition for those who are habitually resident in the UK and to increase the payments under Asylum Support.

### Local Government Funding

- Deliver a fairer local government settlement based on the needs and deprivation of local areas.
- Deliver fairer funding to local social care services.

### National Policy

- Develop a national strategy for tackling poverty (particularly child poverty) and inequality.
- Support the Right to Food campaign which aims to make access to sufficient and nutritious food for everyone a legal right, embedded within the National Food Strategy.
- Address prohibitive childcare costs for families, the shortage of childcare places and improve conditions for childcare professionals.

### Debt

- Improve debt collection practices in line with Citizen Advice’s Fairness in Government Debt Management Report, including the introduction of regulation of bailiffs and a shared approach to affordability assessments.
- End no fault evictions and, in the interim, reinstate the ban on evictions for the duration the cost of living crisis.




# Governance

## **Tackling poverty cannot be done in isolation but instead requires a coordinated approach with commitment from all stakeholders.**

As a statutory function where political, clinical and professional community leaders come together to improve health and tackle inequalities Tameside's Health and Wellbeing Board (HWBB) is well-placed to oversee the implementation of the Strategy. This will involve the creation of a sub-group where an Action Plan can sit and will be accountable to the Board for delivery.

Implementing an Action Plan of this scope will require a whole system approach and buy-in to ensure successful delivery. This should include incorporating the views of the Poverty Action Group, those with lived experience of poverty and key partners through a two-way mechanism.

Leaders must be aware and well informed of what causes poverty so that decision-makers can implement remedial actions swiftly and effectively. All partners should also pay due regard to the Building Resilience: Tackling Poverty in Tameside Strategy when planning and implementing any relevant work going forward.



**Appendix 1 –  
Tameside  
Poverty Needs  
Assessment**

[Poverty-Needs-Assessment-Final.pdf \(tameside.gov.uk\)](#)

