

# Tackling Poverty Strategy

## Annual Review of Progress

### 2016-2017

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#### Foreword

In the thirteenth century, one political philosopher set out his vision of a fair and equal society. He wrote that every person deserved training and access to a good job which paid a fair wage, nourishing food, clean water, care when ill, a safe place to live, and protection from violence. It dismays me that eight centuries on a growing number of citizens in Sheffield do not have access to these simple indicators of a basic quality of life, and a fair share in our prosperity. One of the small but telling indicators of this worsening situation is that we found that a considerable number of children who live in poverty dread the school holidays, because they know that without school meals they will often be hungry.

However, the recent report of the Joseph Rowntree Foundation, *UK Poverty: Causes, costs, and solutions*, shows that it is still possible to make a significant impact on poverty in our communities, even in times of reducing public spending, through systematic, sustained and focussed intervention. This report uses these research-based strategies to offer what we believe to be truly effective ways of making a difference in Sheffield.

So, this year our report looks to the future. We assess how effective our work has been, and we offer a comprehensive and imaginative series of interventions which we believe will have a major impact for the good on our city. Some of our key recommendations for the future include:

A commitment to improve the provision of child care

A campaign to reduce the stigma often experienced by people living in poverty

Concerted actions by partners to ensure that skills development and progress within work are at the heart of devolution and public sector reform

Ensuring that the new Financial Inclusion Strategy is as effective as it can be

None of this can be achieved without the wholehearted commitment of partners throughout the city, including a wider movement of concerned citizens working energetically to make Sheffield the fairest city in the UK. Our work to tackle poverty is intertwined with our work to make Sheffield fairer. Our partnership has always worked closely with the Fairness Commission and our actions are designed to be mutually supportive. This year we will be taking the logical step to integrate our governance structures into one combined partnership, which will enable our collective energies to be deployed to have the highest impact and help achieve our vision. We remain determined to make real progress towards our ultimate goal: a Sheffield in which everyone has the resources to flourish and to achieve a decent standard of living.

I would like to thank all partners and colleagues from the Joseph Rowntree Foundation who have all contributed so much over the past year. Finally, as a partnership, we wish to thank Anna Brook, the officer from Sheffield City Council, who has supported our work with great skill and enthusiasm.

Peter  
The Very Reverend Peter Bradley DL  
Chair

# Summary

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Poverty has worsened over the past year. We know that continued reductions in public spending make it likely that this will continue. Despite this, we have seen some positive outcomes and improvements. These include the high numbers of young people in education, employment and training, increases in older people receiving their entitlements and the positive impact that has been had for households taking part in the Big Switch (average £300 per household saved). There has been mixed progress on eliminating social and economic disparities and promoting equality and care for the most vulnerable. The challenges faced by the city in achieving these outcomes sit within the context of the economic and social pressures posed by globalisation and national government policy.

It is difficult for us to quantify the impact of the sum total of actions being taken in pursuit of our strategy as a whole. However, we are confident that poverty is only likely to be reduced by concerted effort through a set of interventions which reinforce each other. We have, therefore, this year worked with Joseph Rowntree Foundation to review whether our combined activities are following the emerging evidence as effectively as possible. We also continue to monitor a range of indicators that help us to identify areas of potential strength and weakness.

Partners (see [appendix](#)) have assessed progress made against commitments in the strategy, reviewed work in Sheffield against recommendations from research papers and planned how we can prepare for the changes that are ahead. Together, **partners have agreed to prioritise the following pieces of work over the next year**. In some areas, we have agreed to change so that we can achieve more impact with resources available to us; in others we recommend continuation – which also requires commitment given the budget pressures across the partnership.

- **Continued focus on early years and childhood poverty** to give children and young people the best chance of not growing up to a life of poverty. Our approach is leading to improvements in attainment but we need to do more to narrow gaps in educational attainment. Evidence backs our emphasis on early years and quality teaching. We know that households with children will be entitled to less money from benefits in future and need more help. We will focus on **parental employment and childcare and a systematic and thorough approach to poverty reduction as a priority in early years programmes**. This means we will create ‘warm handover’ referrals and integration approaches for a wide range of poverty reduction services into all of our care pathways including the re-designed 0-19+ Healthy Child Programme, our proposed new Family Hubs and Early Help models. It also means that we will explore ways to increase places available for free early learning for disadvantaged two-year-olds in parts of the city where there are not enough and we will implement known effective methods to improve take-up once we have sufficient places available.
- **Maximise opportunities to reduce in-work poverty**. The number of people in work and in poverty has continued to grow. We know that people need to work more hours to achieve a minimum standard of living. There is emerging evidence about effective approaches, which now need testing robustly and at scale. We will use the significant opportunities within the city and city region and the available evidence to **change the methods we use to support people to move into work and to prevent them from slipping out of work** to make them **more focused on fair work with decent wages**. We will also develop a strong proposition for the **approach to skills and progress within work** that is focused on poverty reduction, linked to the next phases of devolution and public sector reform. In this area, the tackling poverty partnership will champion a **focus** in particular on households where people have **disabilities and/or long-term health conditions including mental health** and on those with **children**.
- Success in this area is heavily dependent on an effective **inclusive growth** agenda and we will support the work of colleagues in Sheffield City Partnership Board and at Sheffield City Region in developing this to have a strong poverty reduction focus.
- The important work developed in the new **Financial Inclusion** strategy will contribute significantly to helping people in work and in poverty and partners are committed to supporting this strategy.

- We would like to **develop a proposition for growth in housing**, including affordable housing. There is some great work happening in the city that responds to the recommendations set out by Joseph Rowntree Foundation. We will work with partners across the social and private rented sector to explore options for increasing the scale and impact of this work. There is a particular opportunity to support the increased impact and ownership of the affordable housing compact.
- We will support the **integration of more specialist services targeted at poverty reduction and mitigation**, such as employment, health and income hubs.
- We will also **encourage, seek funding for and support the integration of developments that aim to tackle the poverty premium** through offering ways to access lower cost food, energy, transport, credit, insurance and other household basics.
- Nationally, the percentage of decisions to grant refugee status in 2016 was the lowest in the past five years. There has been a steady decline in the decisions to grant discretionary leave to remain and the percentage of refusals increased.
- Partners will **continue to campaign for action to tackle the structural causes of poverty** and raise awareness of the hunger and hardship in our communities that are symptoms of lack of sufficient money. In particular, partners are keen to ensure that any voluntary support given does not lead to a lack of action to address the gap between income and the costs of essentials and this will be a focus for several partners this year.
- Work together to **nurture and support strong and resilient communities** across the city. This will mainly be through continued development of integrated working and building on community assets. We know that it is better for support to be co-ordinated and for it to address needs holistically; we know the characteristics of effective approaches from research. We also know that people prefer to access and offer support in ways that feel normal and embedded in their communities. The partnership will support neighbourhood and locality working and focus on embedding poverty reduction services within these approaches.
- Sheffield will soon launch a refreshed **Community Cohesion Framework**, which will support agencies and communities to proactively promote cohesion by identifying and implementing specific actions. The partners will support this work, recognising the links between poverty and cohesion.
- **Looking further ahead.** We will re-orient ourselves as a partnership so that we are thinking more about the future and changing context of our city so that we can get ahead of the challenges, be more prepared and less reactive. As a small way of beginning this process, we will devote at least two public workshops to this. We will work with people in the city and outside of it to think about the big changes over the next 10 to 20 years and consider them through a poverty and fairness lens. Our intention here is to consider what we can be doing now to try to ‘design out’ poor outcomes for the future.
- **Removing the Stigma of Poverty and Joblessness.** We know that people across the city are making huge contributions to this work, but don’t always feel connected to the partnership or know how to keep in touch with developments or influence decisions. We will **build on the positive developments from the Our Fair City campaign to work with the growing movement of people in Sheffield committed to Fairness and tackling stigma.**

## Next steps

The Partnership will:

1. share this report with the Sheffield City Partnership Board for discussion about the report content and recommendations and how best to connect the ongoing work of the partnership with the SCPB’s Inclusive Growth agenda
2. agree how the shared plans will fit within the new Fairness & Poverty structures so they can progress with appropriate governance in place
3. share this report with the chairs and supporting officers of the other key partnerships and boards for discussion about connections that can be made
4. review updates, at each partnership meeting, on the priority areas of work outlined above and provide support to ensure progress is being made.

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# Full report

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## Purpose

Sheffield's Tackling Poverty Strategy<sup>1</sup> was published in March 2015 and runs for three years. In order to assure themselves that delivery remains on-track as well as maintaining a focus on the overall vision, the partners agreed to review a set of key indicators and conduct an annual review of progress against the actions set out in the strategy.

This second annual review uses the combination of information on indicators and progress, as well as recent changes in context and evidence, to identify some challenges and some potential changes we could make. We have worked together as a partnership to develop plans for the next year that will respond to key issues that we identified.

## Key Indicators

It is difficult to quantify the impact of the sum total of actions being taken in pursuit of the strategy as a whole. However, we are confident that poverty is only likely to be reduced by concerted effort through a combination of interventions and have focused our attention this year on reviewing whether our combined activities are following the emerging evidence as effectively as possible. We also continue to monitor a range of indicators that help us to identify areas of potential strength and weakness.

## Local indicators

The Tackling Poverty Strategy Partnership uses a range of local indicators to understand the depth, persistence and impact of poverty in Sheffield and how it changes over time.

As stated above, Poverty has worsened over the past year. We know that continued reductions in public spending make it likely that this will continue. Despite this, we have seen some positive outcomes and improvements. There has been mixed progress on eliminating social and economic disparities and promoting equality and care for the most vulnerable. The challenges faced by the city in achieving fairness and poverty reduction outcomes sit within the context of the economic and social pressures posed by globalisation and national government policy.

In our Strategy, we set out our overarching aim: to work towards a Sheffield in which people have sufficient income and resources to meet their fundamental needs. Through consultation we also developed a shared understanding of our ultimate goals. Although we cannot achieve all these goals within the lifetime of the strategy, these are the outcomes we are working towards. Our indicators track progress and provide contextual information about each of these goals and we have summarised some key issues below.

### **Making things better for children and adults who are struggling and in poverty**

*Goal: Poverty does not affect people's chances to be safe and healthy*

- We need to do more to ensure people feel safe and respond more effectively to those who need support with substance misuse, obesity and other health issues.
- Although we still need to reduce reoffending rates, they are reducing and below target for this point in time.
- Levels of fuel poverty and excess winter deaths still need a continued focus. Of the Core Cities, Sheffield had the lowest percentage of households in fuel poverty in 2013 and was the closest to the England average of 10.4%. However, alongside other Core Cities, Sheffield has seen a significant increase in fuel poverty in the latest figures (2014), with 12.4% of households now identified as being in fuel poverty.

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<sup>1</sup> The Tackling Poverty Strategy can be found here: <https://www.sheffield.gov.uk/your-city-council/policy--performance/what-we-want-to-achieve/corporate-plan/tackling-inequalities/tackling-poverty-strategy.html>

- Of most concern in this area is the fact that numbers of new affordable homes are lower than target and there is a declining trend. We have robust plans to get back on track but this requires continued effort.

*Goal: Poverty does not prevent people from living a full life*

- Of particular concern in this area is the quality of life (average score is 7.3 out of a possible maximum of 12, lower than national, which is 7.9, and 6<sup>th</sup> out of 8 core cities) and satisfaction with services (26% satisfied) reported by carers through the Carers' Survey, which is carried out every two years across the country. The new citywide carers' service was launched in January 2017. This includes a focus on reducing financial exclusion and the partnership will continue to support this, with many partners directly involved in delivery.
- Nationally, young carers' achievement in school is, on average, 9 points less at GCSE than other young people. We don't yet have comparable data locally. Sheffield Young Carers and Learn Sheffield are working on a pilot to identify and support young carers in schools, including collecting data on attendance and attainment.

*Goal: The right systems are in place to help people to minimise their financial problems*

- The proportion of JSA and ESA sanctions per claimant has dropped significantly from Q1 2012/13 to the end 2015/16 (137.7% to 24.1%).
- Although we are close to targets on ensuring smooth processing for local assistance scheme, we still need to do more to improve here
- In 2016, Yorkshire and Humber had the third highest levels of demand for debt advice of the 12 UK regions. Locally, Sheffield Money has seen significant evidence of over-indebtedness in their enquiries. Among their main market of 24-35 year olds, 25% have defaulted debt.
- It is estimated that a higher proportion of households in Sheffield than the national average have no current account.
- Our new Financial Inclusion Strategy has been developed to respond to many of these issues and we must prioritise support for this activity.

**Tackling some of the root causes of poverty to give our children the best chance of a poverty-free future.**

*Goals: The right conditions are in place for people to escape poverty through employment, people are able to gain the skills that they need to access good jobs and barriers are reduced for people who are at greatest risk of poverty*

- Ethnic minority employment and economic activity rates are both below national averages in Sheffield.
- There is a positive trend for reducing unemployment – both for all working age and those aged 16-24.
- Although low pay is an issue in Sheffield, the average hourly pay for those in lowest 20% has been increasing slowly in line with national average.
- The proportion of 19 year olds qualified to level three is improving and the proportion of those not in employment, education or training is decreasing, but we need to continue to focus on ensuring that vulnerable groups are accessing employment, education and training.
- We have made significant progress on plans in this area and there are still more opportunities for significant and important work, which must be a focus over the next year.

*The right conditions are in place for people to have good physical and mental health*

- The gap in healthy life expectancy between the least and most deprived parts of the city are 20 years for men and 25 years for women.
- Preventable deaths are higher than the national average and inequalities persist between different areas in the city.

*Families and schools are able to give children and young people the best start in life*

- Levels of 'good' or better child-minding provision are above target, improving and above national average. Levels of 'good' or better primary school provision are improving in absolute terms and compared to national average but remain lower than national.
- Levels of exclusions remain a concern. Although the attainment of disadvantaged pupils is improving at Foundation Stage, gaps between disadvantaged and non-disadvantaged pupils are not closing fast enough.
- Take-up of free early learning for disadvantaged two-year olds is increasing but there is still room for further improvement. The nationally comparable data shows that core cities, statistical neighbours and national averages are all improving at a faster rate than Sheffield. Our locally calculated take-up rate shows a better take-up and improving trend, but is not comparable with other places.

### *Sheffield is a more equal city*

- Household income remains unequal in Sheffield: median income in the ward with lowest income levels is one third of that in the ward with the highest income levels.
- In Ecclesall ward, 3.3% of children were living in poverty, whilst in Firth Park the figure was 14 times higher at 42.9% of children.

## Headline target

The Tackling Poverty Strategy states that 'a realistic, but challenging, outcome of the firm commitments made in our action plan is that, as a minimum, we maintain our position as the core city with the second lowest level of relative child poverty.' This was our position amongst core cities in 2012, when 22.9% of children in Sheffield lived in relative poverty. In 2013, although the prevalence in Sheffield reduced, Sheffield's ranking amongst core cities fell from second lowest to third lowest, due to child poverty reducing at a faster rate in Bristol (from 23.1% to 22.1%) than in Sheffield (22.9% to 22.7%). In 2014 (latest available data and a year before our Strategy was published), Sheffield remains the core city with the third lowest prevalence of child poverty. Leeds (22.7%, 2014) and Bristol (23.0%, 2014) have lower child poverty prevalence than Sheffield; for Sheffield to equal Bristol, there would need to be 1,960 fewer children in poverty, or to equal Leeds, 2,303 fewer.

We continue to review our work against the latest evidence and to look at other similar cities with lower rates of poverty to try to learn what we can and improve what we are doing. We will also explore opportunities to compare with other cities that have wide variations in poverty rates within city.

Based on this latest data, there were 24.7% of children (28,275 children) in Sheffield living in relative poverty in 2014. This is an increase on the previous year, which is in line with national, regional and core cities trends. Sheffield's rate of increase was similar to national increase, but less than the regional and core cities increases. This city level figure masks wide variation in the extent of child poverty in different parts of the city. As stated above, in the Ecclesall Ward, just 3.3% of children were living in poverty, whilst less than 5 miles away in Firth Park ward, the rate was more than 14 times as high at 42.9%.

## National context

**Despite efforts to reduce poverty, the proportion of people living in poverty is stable and now likely to rise for particular groups.** Commentary from Joseph Rowntree Foundation says: 'While overall levels of poverty have remained fairly static over the last 25 years, risks for particular groups have changed. Income poverty among pensioners fell from 40% to 13%, while child poverty rates remain high at 29%, and poverty among working-age adults without dependent children has risen from 14% to around 20%. Child poverty is projected to rise sharply over the next four years and working-age poverty is likely to rise in the longer term unless action is taken now...Relative poverty for pensioners and working-age non-parents looks set to stay broadly unchanged over the next five years. In contrast, absolute poverty levels for pensioners should decline, while remaining static for working-age non-parents and rising for children. (The decline among pensioners is due to older people working more and private and State Pension income growing.)'

**Low wages, cuts to benefits (including in-work benefits) and high costs of essentials and accessing them continue to create a substantial gap between income and the cost of meeting needs in many households.** According to the latest Monitoring Poverty & Social Exclusion report (NPI, Monitoring Poverty & Social Exclusion, 2016) ‘Between 2008 and 2014 the cost of essentials went up three times faster than average earnings and the cost of essentials went up twice as fast as general inflation. At the same time, average earnings were stagnant and benefits that low-income households rely on (both in and out of work) were cut in real terms. Since 2015, very low inflation has brought some respite.’ [although note that CPI is showing increases again now]

**In Sheffield, low pay is a particular problem in terms of lower income levels, more of the workforce on low incomes and higher proportions of low paying sectors.** A recent report by the Resolution Foundation (Devolution & the future of living standards in Sheffield City Region, 2017) stated that ‘Sheffield City Region has some of the lowest pay levels of any city region. Gross hourly pay for residents, at £11.03, is the lowest of any city region and is £1.15 less than that received by the average worker in the UK. Pay for workers in the region is the second lowest of any city region, with only workers in the Nottingham city region paid less. Low pay undermines living standards. Average weekly household income, after housing costs, is £68 lower in the Sheffield City Region than in the UK generally.’

**Employment rates are rising but employment patterns are changing and work becoming increasingly precarious for many.** Employment in Sheffield has risen overall since the recession (7.5% more people in employment between 2007 and 2016), but the employment rate has fluctuated during that time and at the end of 2016 it stood at 68.7, which is just under 1 percentage point higher than in 2007. The national employment rate has also risen overall over this time. The gap between the Sheffield and national rate has been on a reducing trend over this time, but more recently (since September 2015) it has started to widen again as the national rate has continued to rise slowly and the Sheffield rate has dropped. Work patterns are changing with more temporary and short term contracts, which means that people are less able to depend on a regular or guaranteed level income. A working paper by the Institute for Fiscal Studies (Jan 2017) identifies increases in the proportion of low income men who are working part-time as a trend that is driving **increases in inequalities in male unemployment nationally**. The rise of part-time work among men on low hourly wages far predates the recession and is widespread. The trend has been occurring consistently for 20 years and is observed for low-wage men across the age spectrum, for single men and men in couples, and for those with and without children. **In contrast, inequality in women’s weekly pay fell.** At the 10th percentile, weekly earnings rose by 60% between 1994-95 and 2014-15; at the 90th percentile they rose by 29%. This is because the proportion of women working part-time has fallen, especially among those with low hourly wages (the opposite of the trend for men).

**Cuts to benefits have reduced household incomes and will continue to do so.** The post-2015 welfare reforms will take almost £13bn a year from claimants by 2020-21. This brings the cumulative loss since 2010 to £27bn a year – equivalent to £690 a year for every adult of working age. 83 per cent of the loss from the post-2015 reforms – £10.7bn a year by 2020-21 – can be expected to fall on families with dependent children. On average, couples with two or more dependent children lose £1,450 a year while lone parents with two or more lose £1,750 a year (this is from reforms announced post 2015 so is on top of previous losses). In Sheffield, the pre-2015 changes equate to c.£127m per year in Sheffield, with a further £125m per year in Sheffield anticipated from the post-2015 announced changes (Beatty & Fothergill March 2016)

Universal Credit is being introduced to replace six working-age benefits and tax credits and is scheduled to be fully operational by 2021. UC is intended to improve financial incentives to work through the introduction of tapering reductions in in-work benefits. In addition, the DWP intends to establish a service to promote in-work progression. This will offer support to low-paid claimants to increase their earnings to at least the equivalent of 35 hours per week at the National Living Wage (the earnings threshold). Such claimants might be encouraged to earn more through increased hours or a pay rise in their current job, taking on additional jobs or finding a completely new job. The DWP is currently trialling an in-work service led by Jobcentre Plus and will report findings in 2018. This **in-work progression pilot will test the extent to which conditionality and financial sanctions encourage claimants to**



**increase their earnings.** It is the first time that all claimants of in-work benefits below an earnings threshold will potentially be subject to sanctions. These could be imposed if a claimant fails to satisfy agreed actions such as attending an appointment, participating in a training course or applying for a job. Such actions will be set out in individual UC Claimant Commitments. The DWP said that failure to meet in-work requirements without good reason would result in reduced UC payments “as a last resort”. There is a mixed response to the idea of conditionality for in-work benefits. Some organisations are supportive but several organisations have cautioned that there is limited evidence of the particular effects of conditionality on in-work claimants and called for a full evaluation. The Government has said that UC claimants outside the pilot will continue to be subject to the current light-touch regime until there is enough evidence from the pilot.

The proportion of **people in poverty in a working family is 55% – a record high.** According to the latest National Policy Institute report on Monitoring Poverty & Social Exclusion: ‘Four-fifths of the adults in these families are themselves working, some 3.8 million workers. Those adults that are not working are predominantly looking after children.’

The report looking at ‘Devolution and Disadvantage in the Sheffield City Region’ (Etherington and Jones, 2016) identified **lack of access to affordable childcare as a restriction for employment opportunities**, citing two key factors:

- Families with younger children often cut back on work or are less likely to take on higher paid work when children are young.
- This is compounded by increased costs such as paying for childcare given that many lone parents and families are reliant on low paid work. Larger families have increased costs and lone parents are often unable to work as many hours as couple families.

Furthermore, the Social Mobility Commission highlights the complexity of the childcare funding system as a limiting factor in efforts to support parents and increase maternal employment.

- According to a Commission survey, 23% of working class parents of very young children (>3 years) and 17% of middle class parents said that they had no idea that there was any Government funding for childcare at all when they had their first child.
- By 2020, Government will be spending approx. £6bn a year on childcare through a combination of income-contingent tax credits, tax free childcare, free childcare for 3 and 4 and some 2 year-olds, and childcare voucher schemes. This complex set of funding streams leads to a position which is confusing for parents and inefficient for the taxpayer.

In 2017, working parents of 3- and 4-year-olds will be eligible for an additional 15 free hours of childcare. (bringing the total up to **30 hours of free childcare a week**). The 30 hours are available over 38 weeks or the equivalent number of hours across more weeks per year. To be eligible, both parents will need to be working (or the sole parent is working in a lone parent family); each parent will have to have a weekly minimum income equivalent to 16 hours at national minimum wage or living wage; and neither parent has an income of more than £100,000 per year.

Once account is taken of the higher costs faced by those who are disabled, **half of people living in poverty are either themselves disabled or are living with a disabled person in their household.** (NPI, Monitoring Poverty & Social Exclusion, 2016) This also has implications for the support we offer to carers.

**Public sector spending has fallen significantly and the impacts of these reductions have not been even.** Analysis by the Women’s Budget Group and Runnymede Trust shows the impact of tax, benefit and public service changes at the intersection of income, gender and ethnicity. It covers fiscal policy from 2010 up to and including the 2016 Autumn Financial Statement projected up to 2020. The analysis shows that by 2020: individuals in the poorest households

lose most from tax and benefit changes, but **in every income group women lose more than men and BME women will lose the greatest proportion of their individual income.**

**People in poverty face reduced and falling financial resilience.** For example, 69% of the poorest fifth have no savings whatsoever, an increase from 58% in 2005/06. Sheffield's new Financial Inclusion Strategy quotes the Financial Inclusion Commission snapshot of financial inclusion in the UK in 2015 showing that nearly two million adults do not have a bank account, up to 8.8 million people are over-indebted, 13 million people do not have enough savings to support them for a month if they experienced a 25% drop in income and 15 million people (31% of the population) report one or more signs of financial distress. It goes on to show further evidence of increasing indebtedness: 313,679 contacted StepChange for help between January and June 2015, up 11% from the same period last year, following notable rises since 2012, in 2016, Yorkshire and Humber has the third highest levels of demand for debt advice of the 12 UK regions, and extrapolating from the national figures above, and assuming that Sheffield is close to average within the UK, suggests that 70,000 people within the city are over-indebted. There have been significant regulatory changes for high-cost doorstep lenders (such as Provident) and payday lenders (such as Wonga) since January 2015. This has had an impact: **the amount Provident lends has reduced by 50% since the regulation took effect.**

## Review against the Strategy

This section goes through the programmes from the Strategy and highlights any new information for response, successes, challenges and potential changes we could make.

### 1. How we will do things

#### Telling the story of poverty in Sheffield – tackling the stigma

*Although individual organisations and groups continue to do some important work in this area, we need to do more over the next year to consolidate and bring together our work. We would like to work with the Our Fair City campaign to do this.*

The Frameworks Institute report (Talking about Poverty, 2016) provides some helpful context for this section:

'A corrosive narrative about people in poverty has dominated the mainstream media in the United Kingdom over the past five years. Tabloid newspapers and 'reality' television programmes portray people in poverty as 'benefit scroungers', reinforcing negative stereotypes about them. These media portrayals take place against a backdrop of austerity and fallout from the global recession, which has led to restrictions and cuts to benefits and increased sanctions for people on benefits. These changes threaten the welfare of people across the United Kingdom at a time when economic life and the labour market are increasingly insecure. And all of this is evolving in the wake of Brexit and a public conversation that too often 'others', stigmatises and excludes the least privileged members of society.'

The project they are undertaking aims to develop effective communications to 'foster an understanding of how systems and structures produce poverty, shift the ways that people think about people in poverty and increase public support for policy and practice to solve poverty.' The first stage of this project is focused on understanding how people think about poverty and this is the subject of the report they produced in November.

In Sheffield, we have had some positive developments over the past year including notably our 'Disability Confident,' campaign, which was delivered by Sheffield City Council, private and public sector employers, the voluntary and community sector, business networks and national government. The aim of the campaign was to publicise the value and achievements of disabled people in the workforce and develop new opportunities for disabled people in the city. It was delivered initially through an 8 week campaign in the Sheffield Star using individual case studies to demonstrate both the positive impact that employment has for those with disabilities and the value that disabled

people add for employers in the city. There have been a number of business events as part of the campaign including an awards ceremony that highlighted:

- the skills and achievements of disabled people in the workplace
- the benefits that employers gain from employing disabled people and
- the way that employers can support disabled people to successfully integrate them into the workforce

The campaign has used social media extensively under the #DisabilityWorks hashtag as well as video content and networking events. The campaign has been picked up extensively by local radio. This campaign has resulted in over 130 Sheffield employers of all sizes and sectors signing up to offer new opportunities for disabled people. These opportunities are being developed through the new SCC employment programmes and so far 28 disabled people have started work/work experience. The Star have now offered to extend their support for the campaign free of charge and we are currently planning how to build on the momentum generated so far to make further progress in the New Year. This is an **excellent example of partnership working across sectors and focusing on positive messages through mainstream media and we would like to build on this approach to consider how it could be applied to other similar messages of inclusion.**

We need to **engage more with citizens** from across Sheffield, many of whom are already committed to this agenda and doing important and valuable work. We need to listen to people, learn from them, celebrate their successes and support their contributions. We also need to **give people the opportunity to connect to the partnership and find out about other ways in which they could be involved.** The **Our Fair City Campaign group's approach is showing promising signs in terms of connecting a movement of people who work together on this.** We would like to work together to **broaden the campaign so it more explicitly tackles the stigma of poverty and contributes to the Tackling Poverty Strategy goals,** building on the success of local campaigns such as Disability Confident and making use of the evidence from the Frameworks Institute and others.

## Poverty proofing – putting consideration of poverty at the heart of decision-making

*Many organisations now have structures in place to consider the impact of their decisions on poverty; these should be shared and developed over time.*

As set out at the start, we expect poverty to continue to worsen, so it is increasingly important for us to be mindful of the impact of our decisions on levels of poverty in the city and on people who are struggling and in poverty. Even where the impact on poverty is being considered, organisations report that there is sometimes a tension between different approaches – for example those that reach more people with a lower impact per person compared with those that reach fewer people but have a more significant impact. This is an area where specific policy input would be helpful since it will vary depending on the issue. We also know that we could do much more to share power with experts by experience and involve people in governance, service design and commissioning. This should be considered as part of poverty proofing approaches.

There are several examples of good practice here including South Yorkshire Housing Association, which has just established Co:Create, a Department of Health funded programme to facilitate public engagement in commissioning and strategy setting across public and health sectors.

There are also opportunities to do more in this area, including developing a local giving approach, the role of building community philanthropy and volunteering. Working in collaboration and acknowledging each other's skills and resources to deliver is the way forward.

There are some **positive examples of systematic approaches to poverty proofing** within the partnership. The Clinical Commissioning Group (CCG) have included commissioning for social value as part of their commissioning

intentions. This means consideration of the impact of poverty is embedded in their commissioning systems. They developed their approach to commissioning intentions in partnership across the city. Sheffield City Council continues to include consideration of the impact of poverty in its Equality Impact Assessment process and will be reviewing how effectively this is working over the next year. LearnSheffield would like to work with young people and others to run a conference on poverty proofing the school day. The University of Sheffield has a suite of policies that enable it to operate as a fair and responsible employer and anchor organisation within the city and offer good pastoral support to its students.

All partners to the Strategy who provide services have identified **ways in which they identify and support people experiencing poverty**. Some examples follow. South Yorkshire Police have identified poverty as a potential driver of crime on their vulnerable adult and vulnerable child referral routes. Sheffield Citizens Advice continues to provide targeted priority help for groups of people that include (but are not limited to): people with mental health problems (“formal” users of mental health services), people with a cancer diagnosis, people suffering from spinal and brain injuries, food bank users, people referred from the Sheffield Carers Centre and Deaf people, people referred from Building Successful Families, and people referred from Sheffield’s Working and Building Better Opportunities. The new citywide carers’ service was launched in January 2017 includes a focus on reducing financial exclusion with a specific outcome target to reduce financial hardship. The city’s multi-agency Young Carers Action Plan (2016-2020) is based on young carers’ views and issues and the overarching theme is financial hardship and poverty of opportunity. Social Landlords in Sheffield are doing some impressive work in this area. Affinity Sutton, Equity, Great Places, Guinness, Home Group and South Yorkshire Housing Association are all working hard to contact and support tenants who are affected by benefit changes. They all have strong in-house support and referral processes and partner with advice services and credit unions. South Yorkshire Community Foundation are involved in delivering grants programmes such as new Beginnings, Building a Stronger Britain Together, Youth Social Action Programme, Social Isolation Fund which are about specifically about addressing deprivation and inequalities. Since 1986, they have awarded £26,113,888 in community grants; built up over £10m in endowment funds for the future of South Yorkshire; over 1.65m people have benefitted from grant making and they have supported 8253 groups across South Yorkshire.

We committed as a partnership to seek to **secure changes to public policies or procedures that have an adverse effect on people in poverty by capturing and recording evidence and presenting it to decision makers**. In addition to recently receiving two awards, Sheffield Citizens Advice was instrumental in adding a new clause to the personal independent payment regulations, whereby claimants of a disability living allowance who are transferred to personal independent payments due to terminal illness now receive their first payment as soon as possible (rather than having to wait up to eight weeks, as was previously possible). Evidence has also been supplied to the BEIS Select Committee on employment and workers’ rights, and there are plans to publish a commentary on the impact of personal independent payments. Sheffield City Council’s Building Successful Families programme has also been able to discuss case studies with central government relating to employment and benefits and the importance of the flexibility allowed to the Jobcentre Plus workers attached to this programme, in particular relating to mental ill-health. Sheffield Young Carers’ Action Group (young carers voice and influence group) held a Big Conversation with Paul Blomfield MP to raise the key issues that affect them and how policies need to recognise who they are and what they need, including raising the issue of carers’ allowance and how young carers are not entitled to anything similar. This resulted in a question on the subject in parliament and there are plans to do more campaigning on this.

We also **committed to using research and evidence-based approaches** and continue to welcome the significant contribution made by the University of Sheffield and Sheffield Hallam University in our own city as well as other academic institutions and think-tanks.

We made a commitment to seek to understand how **equitable access and outcomes were for that for groups most at risk of poverty**. Throughout the report below there are examples of how this is being done for specific activities. We will also develop more integrated between the Equality Hub Network Board and the new Fairness & Poverty governance structures over the next year to increase.

Approaches developed across the partnership should be made available so that we can **share learning**. This should include the shared poverty proofing tool that was previously developed by the partnership. Organisations may also wish to consider whether they could make use of the JRF report and other emerging evidence as part of their impact assessments. Partners will also wish to **consider how they could use their collective influence to promote the use of poverty impact assessments by other organisations and structures** operating in Sheffield – and in particular to consider how to **further the involvement of people with experience of poverty in decision making structures**. A further step would be to review how effective such approaches are and the impact they have with a view to improving them, if we could identify resources to do this in the future.

## 2. What we will do to make things better for children and adults who are struggling and in poverty now

**The Voluntary, Community & Faith Sector in Sheffield is incredibly diverse and, as such, individual organisations make contributions across most of the programmes within the Tackling Poverty Strategy. We have chosen to make particular mention of the sector’s overall impact in this section to highlight the importance of it as a whole.** It is estimated that the voluntary sector in Sheffield made 7.2 million interventions with clients, users or beneficiaries in the previous year (Sheffield State of the Voluntary & Community Sector, Sheffield Hallam University, 2016) The sector was supported by 89,600 volunteers and 22,700 committee/board members who combined donated 261,600 hours per week. Assuming paid staff would not be used in the absence of volunteers it is estimated that volunteers in Sheffield organisations contribute equivalent to £323 million worth of GVA to the economy per annum. The majority of ways in which those VCF organisations involved in this report made a difference in Sheffield are likely to make a contribution to the Tackling Poverty strategy. The top two ways were: improving people’s mental wellbeing (74%) and addressing the needs of disadvantaged members of the community (64%).

### Providing advice, advocacy and access to entitlements and direct financial support

*There have been some notable successes in this area over the past year and efforts have been made across the partnership to secure these for the future. These are increasingly important given the significant impact of benefit cuts and changes that have happened and are still to come. We will consider how best to integrate successful approaches with other work across several shared plans.*

Cuts to benefits have reduced household incomes and will continue to do so. In Sheffield, the pre-2015 changes equate to c.£127m per year, with a further £125m per year anticipated from the post-2015 announced changes, bringing the **total to an estimated £252m reduction in benefits per year in Sheffield** (Beatty & Fothergill March 2016). In addition to reductions in benefits, the changes to the ways in which the system operates such as sanctions, delays and appeals processes are also having an impact on people. **Advice and advocacy play a critical role in supporting people to access entitlements and navigate the system.** Direct financial support also has a crucial role to play in **alleviating the impacts of low incomes** that don’t keep pace with living costs.

Sheffield City Council working and Sheffield Citizens Advice have **continued to protect and sustain access to high quality advice services including money advice targeted at life events and debt advice.** Sheffield City Council committed grant aid for Sheffield Citizens Advice over a three-year period and Sheffield Citizens Advice has continued to apply successfully for funding to develop its services further. In 2016, Sheffield Citizens Advice helped 21,500 people, which is an increase on the previous year. In May/June 2016, a client survey was conducted receiving 1221 responses. These surveys are used to inform changes in the service. In response to the 2015 survey, improvements to advice line services and webchat have been made. In 2016, at least £6.8 million was secured for people by way of benefits and tax credits, and at least £4.3 million debts written off.

**Across the city, organisations and partnerships are focusing on ensuring people are able to take up the benefits to which they are entitled: putting money directly in people's pockets.** The People Keeping Well (PKW) programme offers poverty reduction support for many factors to people across the city. We may wish to explore whether it would be useful / possible to broaden the approach to other groups at high risk of poverty in later life – or at least compare the risk factors with the criteria for the PKW programme to see whether there are likely to be any big gaps. This programme has already had some good success with increases in take up of Carers Allowance and Attendance Allowance, bucking national trends. It would be worth exploring the potential to extend the reach to cover other financial issues, potentially also looking specifically at ethnicity breakdown to establish whether it might be beneficial to undertake targeting. People Keeping Well is commissioned by Sheffield City Council and the Clinical Commissioning group. The feedback of Sheffield people, experience of work and providers of services in Sheffield and national evidence have all informed the PKW Outcomes Framework. In 2016, Age UK Sheffield helped 559 older people to claim an extra £2.575m in benefits they weren't previously claiming. Age UK introduced a new, Lottery-funded, Benefits At Home service in October 2016. This is helping people who are unable to visit our premises to attend appointments. The first 88 Benefits at Home clients all had long-term health conditions.

The Welfare Reform Group provides oversight on **communications regarding benefit changes**. The Benefit Changes part of the SCC website, and the PDF version of the Benefit Changes booklet, will be updated in January 2017 and will be used by support workers; it will be sent to schools as information for staff, part of checking families are getting the right support. Sheffield Citizens Advice has been very active in pursuing the commitment to raise awareness of benefit changes, particularly with regard to helping with the transition from the disability living allowance to personal independent payments, which has been the subject of a large proportion of requests for help. They have given 13 briefings on this transition to approximately 150 volunteers at partner organisations, which have been extremely well-received.

Sheffield City Council continues to provide Council Tax Support, Council Tax Hardship Scheme and Discretionary Housing Payments. Universal Credit roll out is happening gradually in Sheffield and frontline staff are supporting people. A review is underway to look again at **how discretionary schemes that provide direct financial support for people can work together** (including Local Assistance Scheme). It will be informed by our approach to Financial Inclusion, as set out in the new Financial Inclusion strategy.

The city's **new Financial Inclusion strategy** includes an emphasis on ensuring people receive the right sort of information and support, in the right way and at the right time. The actions developed in this strategy will make an important contribution to the overall Tackling Poverty Strategy. Sheffield City Council, the city's social landlords, Sheffield Citizens Advice, Sheffield Money and Sheffield Credit Union are all important partners in this work.

We have identified the need to **integrate poverty reduction approaches as part of our shared plans for childhood poverty and in-work poverty** as well as identifying the need for **existing neighbourhoods, locality and integration approaches to include specialist services targeted at poverty reduction and mitigation**. Advice, advocacy, access and financial support will be a key part of these poverty reduction approaches. They also play a major role in the new Financial Inclusion Strategy.

The important work being developed in the new **Financial Inclusion strategy will contribute significantly to helping people in work and in poverty and partners are committed to supporting this strategy**. The new Financial Inclusion Strategy also emphasises the importance of the aspiration we set out in the Tackling Poverty Strategy to **explore a welfare system that provides sufficient support for people when they need it** – including reducing delays and sanctions. The Our Fair City Fairer Money campaign will also play an important role in developing the thinking and campaigning in this area.

## Reducing the costs of everyday essentials

*Many approaches are being developed in Sheffield to try to tackle the poverty premium. These should be encouraged and supported to integrate with other services so that more people can access them. They should also be evaluated so that evidence about effective approaches can be shared and any ineffective practice can be changed.*

Although use of food banks and unaffordable credit are better understood as expressions of acute and chronic poverty, rather than responses to market failure in food and credit supply, the cost of essentials remains too high for many on low incomes. The poverty premium means that people are paying more than average for these essentials and access is a part of the problem too.

Both the Joseph Rowntree Foundation report and our local analysis suggest it **may also be worth experimenting further with purchasing and providing low cost essentials as part of an overall approach to poverty reduction**. The JRF report does note the importance of evaluating such approaches given the relative lack of evidence in this area. They also draw out some characteristics of successful approaches to such cost reductions initiatives.

Sheffield's new Financial Inclusion Strategy prioritises:

- equipping people with the right financial education, access to information and advice to prevent financial exclusion as far as is possible
- supporting people to be more financial resilient over time
- providing the tools and knowledge to avoid people slipping into financial exclusion at times of crisis
- providing robust and integrated services which support those who are most at risk of significant financial vulnerability.

## Food

We said we would aim to have full postcode coverage across Sheffield for any referrer wishing to refer a client for a food parcel and that we would aim to have, **until it was no longer needed, access to a foodbank** in the city on as many days as possible to address food poverty in our communities. There are 18-20 foodbanks which participate in the foodbank network. There is full postcode coverage Monday-Friday, but not all hours in all locations, some of this is via mobile donations unit. The foodbank network have reported increased need for food aid again in 2016 compared with 2015, to meet community needs, and there is anecdotal evidence to suggest that much of the increase in demand can be attributed to benefit delays, benefit sanctions and indebtedness. Not all foodbanks are able to collect comparable data, but, for example, the Parson Cross foodbank SHARE provided 30% more parcels in 2016 compared with 2015. 42% of parcels were for children. Referrers are asked to give a primary reason for the referral. 41% of parcels were given because of benefit issues (delays, changes and sanctions), 39% were due to 'low income.' Similarly, Information from the S2 Food Bank, set up in 2013, shows that demand for food parcels in the first three months of 2016 had already reached the same level as seen across the whole of 2015. Recently published data from the Trussell Trust echoes this local evidence at a national scale, with benefit delays and increased indebtedness compounding people's financial problems.

There are many other initiatives aimed at tackling food poverty developing in the city. For example, the University of Sheffield student campaigns, projects and activities have included food poverty projects such as Real Junk Food/Foodhall and Save our Sandwiches. The Real Junk Food Project is working with LearnSheffield on Fuel for School to offer affordable accessible food in schools. Park Centre food pantry is due to open April 2017, significant resource has committed to working with local partners to ensure that the project fits and supports local services. Bells painting contractors have agreed to refurbish the shop area. The partnership includes Park Action Community, Manor and Castle Development Trust, Salvation Army, S2 food bank, representation, Citizens Advice and Great Places Housing Association. Several of the city's social landlords are exploring ways in which they can support tenants and the wider community, with initiatives ranging from collections for local food banks (Great Places), cook



and eat (Great Places and SYHA) and Great Places and Grow Sheffield working to develop a community orchard, cooking and eating space within Wybourn.

The Council has continued to invest in advice support within foodbanks, which is provided by Sheffield Citizens Advice in partnership with food banks in the city, there is also continued Big Lottery Funding which expands this offer to more food banks in the city. This pilot has been very helpful in ensuring that people using foodbanks are signposted / can access financial support services. Investment from the council has also been agreed for initiatives to reduce school holiday hunger and for additional support to food banks. Work is likely to commence during 17/18.

The Food Poverty working group, which has representatives from the Tackling Poverty Strategy Partnership and the Food Executive, including from the Foodbank Network, has developed a draft food poverty policy to guide the development of any new initiatives in the city that aim to reduce the need for foodbanks, including the developments led by organisations running foodbanks themselves. This makes use of local intelligence and local and national evidence about approaches to tackling food poverty including a focus on reducing stigma. This should be finalised and approved for use and linked to the work of the Our Fair City Fairer Food campaign.

### *Fuel*

Fuel poverty has become an increasing issue for people across the country. Of the Core Cities, Sheffield had the lowest percentage of households in fuel poverty in 2013 and was the closest to the England average of 10.4%. Fuel poverty had reduced by 0.4% in Sheffield between 2012 and 2013, suggesting interventions were having a positive impact. However, alongside other Core Cities such as Leeds, Bristol and Newcastle, Sheffield has seen a significant increase in fuel poverty in the latest figures (2014), with 12.4% of households now identified as being in fuel poverty. Through the Big Sheffield Switch programme, the city has undertaken five rounds of collective energy buying to assist local residents to save money on fuel and become more resilient to financial challenges, with the average household saving around £300 per year.

The city's **approach to fuel poverty action is being rebuilt as a result of funding changes and NICE guidance** on cold related illness (NG6). We are currently developing a new approach within Sheffield with the housing team, to create a 'cold homes hub' in line with NICE guidance.

The Council received funding for a capital project being delivered through National Energy Action for 150 full heating installs delivered for those whose health has been affected by cold property. This has been successful and managed to deliver more than expected. Referrals are received from community support worker teams, health champions and South Yorkshire energy centre.

There is still an ambition to develop a Sheffield Energy Company. Work is currently underway to establish which model will work best for Sheffield.

At the University of Sheffield, student campaigns, projects and activities have included fuel poverty projects such as ACE Project. Many Social Landlords in the city have taken a combined approach to improving insulation and supporting tenants around energy providers and bills as part of their drive to tackle fuel poverty.



## Transport

SYLTE and the other Sheffield Bus Partnership members continue to work together to provide the bus network. Working in this way provides more joined-up planning: the operators who deliver the Partnership services undertake to maintain a defined level of service and invest to maintain the network. As part of the Partnership, SYLTE uses its Tendered Services Budget (a limited pot, funded from the council levy) to support services in areas and at times of day which would otherwise be uncommercial due to low patronage, thus supporting people who would otherwise risk social isolation or economic deprivation. The Partnership has also brought about greater stability, as members have committed to making less frequent network changes, and to only having fares reviews annually.

Children and young people under 16 are entitled to a SYLTE MegaTravel Pass, which allows them to travel for 80p per bus journey and to get half price travel on trains in South Yorkshire. Additionally those in education who live more than three miles from their nearest school or are from low-income families may be entitled to a 'zero fare' pass (applied for through the Council). See <http://www.travelsouthyorkshire.com/childpasses/> for more details on passes. Individual operators have introduced their own '7 day' saver tickets for children and young people, and there are also TravelMaster multi-operator South-Yorkshire-Wide children's 7 day tickets at £7.50 for bus and tram and £12.60 for bus, tram and train. See <http://www.travelsouthyorkshire.com/childfares/> for more information.

There has also been work on reducing isolation through transport including:

- Increase of transport options: 100% of vehicles used to deliver Bus Partnership services in Sheffield are now fully wheelchair accessible.
- ENCTS Disabled Persons Pass: In addition to the national ENCTS scheme which allows people with a disabled person's pass to travel free on local buses between 0930 and 2300 weekdays and all day weekends and Bank Holidays, SYLTE extends this to offer anytime local bus travel and free local tram and train travel and free travel on Northern Rail services between South Yorkshire and West Yorkshire. It's now also possible to apply for or renew passes online. For further information, see <http://www.travelsouthyorkshire.com/disabled/>
- Community Transport: Sheffield already has a comprehensive Community Transport (CT) offer for people who cannot use conventional public transport network services. CT is funded by SYLTE and delivered through a lead operator (Sheffield Community Transport - SCT) and three smaller operators (Manor Community Transport, Transport 17 and Sheffield Dial-a-Ride). The provision includes three Door2Door options, delivered using fully wheelchair accessible minibuses: CityRide (a service between any two Sheffield locations), ShopperBus (from home to and from a supermarket, local centre or City Centre – provided twice weekly from each district of the City) or Group Travel (bookable for group outings or by lunchclubs). SCT also offer other accessible services not financially supported by SYLTE.
- Community Car Scheme and Travel Buddies: Provided by SCT using financial support from SCC until the end of March 2017.
- Travel Training: Provided by SCC
- Wheels2Work: Wheels2Work is a scooter hire project, operated by SCT and supported by SYLTE using DfT funding. Anyone over 16 who cannot access public transport due to geographic isolation, shift working, antisocial hours or long distances can participate. At the end of 2016/17 we learned that we have been successful in obtaining a further three years' funding for the project, through the City Region's Access Fund bid to DfT.

## Credit

Over indebtedness is growing both nationally and in our city. Debt charity StepChange reports significant increases in people seeking debt advice over the last year, with over 300,000 people seeking advice between January and June 2015, an 11% increase on the same period in 2014. In 2016, Yorkshire and Humber had the third highest levels of demand for debt advice of the twelve UK regions. There is also anecdotal evidence that in communities in Sheffield facing greater levels of deprivation, illegal loan sharks are gaining ground. The National Trading Standards Illegal Money Lending Team have identified S2 and S5 as two areas in Sheffield where they believe illegal money lending is

an issue, and are working with local stakeholders to increase awareness of the issue. A local food bank has reported two cases of victims of illegal loan sharks accessing emergency food supplies as a direct result of their loans.

Sheffield Money has now been trading for 12 months, and in that time it has learnt a great deal about the people it serves, such as:

- The demographic is mixed, with a 50/50 employed/unemployed split and a 50/50 male female split
- There are lots of young people engaging with Sheffield Money, with 24 to 35 the biggest age group
- Customers have significant levels of debt prior to engaging with Sheffield Money (which continues to refer people to Sheffield Citizens Advice, StepChange and PayPlan)

It has also developed its product range and access to its products, and now offers complete start-to-finish online capability. In doing so, Sheffield Money now has a responsible lending platform that more closely resembles the competition. In addition to its frontend platform, it has also developed its CRM system for capturing data. At the end of 2016, Sheffield Money launched with the South Yorkshire Housing Association, and in the first quarter of 2017 it will launch with Sheffield College. Partnership working is key to responding to the large amount of young, in-work customers by promoting financial wellbeing to staff. Furthermore, the majority of Sheffield Money's customers are from S2 and S5 and, as a result, it now works closely with the Manor and Castle Development Trust and community regeneration charity SOAR.

Sheffield Credit Union has had a positive year with its membership growing by 30%, its loan book also growing by 21%, to just under £1.3 million. They have spread services wider into the Sheffield City Region in 2015-2016 and also have grown information points out to Stocksbridge and Dinnington, to meet the needs of outlying areas, poorly served by banks. Promotion through partnership is still vitally important – and we are pleased that Rotherham Metropolitan Council have offered us a full suite of promotional opportunities to offer our services to their staff members. We would like to increase opportunities to ensure the staff members of partner organisations are able to benefit from membership. Working with DISC, NOMAD, Crisis UK, Sheffield Citizen's Advice, Great Places Housing, Learn Direct, Shelter and DePaul as well as Sheffield Council Housing have ensured that more people know what Sheffield Credit Union can do to help them – savings, loans and budgeting accounts and face to face assistance. Making it easier for members to sign up through these partners has also proved very successful.

Members who joined Sheffield Credit Union through the Local Assistance Scheme have been able to see a lasting change – moving from reliance on grants and small crisis loans, to having a credit union account they use regularly to save, sometimes access fair priced loans, and use budgeting accounts. Over 41% of those who joined via this scheme are still active members, benefiting from safe savings and affordable loans when needed.

We will **encourage developments that aim to tackle the poverty premium** through offering ways to access lower cost food, energy, transport, credit, insurance and other household basics, especially those that allow people to do so in a culturally 'normal' way, which will contribute to reducing stigma and shame. Partners have committed to seeking and supporting funding for effective approaches. Partners will also **support the integration of any effective approaches as part of the integration of overall poverty reduction approaches in our shared** plans for childhood poverty and in-work poverty, existing neighbourhoods, locality and integration approaches to include specialist services targeted at poverty reduction and mitigation.

Partners will continue to **campaign for action to tackle the structural causes of poverty and raise awareness of the hunger and hardship in our communities** that are symptoms of lack of sufficient money. In particular, partners are keen to ensure that any voluntary support given does not lead to a lack of action to address the gap between income and the costs of essentials and this will be a focus for several partners this year. The Our Fair City campaign will support this important goal.

## Supporting neighbourhoods and environments that enable people to thrive and reducing crime including domestic abuse, sexual exploitation and substance misuse

*The integrated neighbourhood and locality approaches are being developed to include responses to crime including domestic abuse, sexual exploitation and substance misuse. Some specialist services, including those for young people, will link but remain separate. The Tackling Poverty Strategy partnership should concentrate efforts on integrating poverty reduction systematically into these structures.*

At present, we know that our domestic abuse services are reaching and supporting people who are unemployed (only 50% of people answered the question, of whom 62% are unemployed / not working). We have also compared Sheffield information with national research and data. Compared to national data, Sheffield has a higher proportion of its population facing domestic abuse risk factors that are also linked to poverty. This higher prevalence of risk factors would suggest we have higher than national prevalence of Domestic Abuse.

There are **some positive approaches to partnership working which are paying off**. South Yorkshire police have done some positive work on organised criminality and how this exploits people who are vulnerable, including those vulnerable due to poverty. Police ASB teams are working closely with adult social care to protect children at risk in particular. The Youth Justice Service has positive working relationships with Sheffield Futures and other services for young people, including broader Community Youth Teams, and others at Star House. The Service has continued to **maintain a low rate of first time entrants to the criminal justice system and rates of re-offending are at their lowest in 6 years**, and continuing to drop, in line with the rest of South Yorkshire. The latest reoffending rate (31.8% in 2014-15, which is latest data available) for Sheffield is therefore below average for the Core Cities (39.0%) and the national average (37.9%).

**A Domestic Violence needs assessment is being completed to inform a consultation and subsequent strategy.** We continue to try to deepen our understanding of the local links between poverty and domestic abuse in order to ensure our services are appropriately targeted and that we are offering suitable support. There is an ongoing commitment to working towards equity of access and in 2016 the sexual abuse counselling service was re-tendered and is now a service for all genders. There continues to be a strong focus on preventative work. Learn Sheffield, the Council and the VCF sector are working together to bring a coherent offer of differing preventative approaches for children and young people to education providers. The Community Youth Teams are doing work with young people about healthy relationships. We intend to explore how best to build resilience in communities including through support via existing assets. It is likely that a focus of our new Domestic Violence strategy will be on supporting services to identify, offer brief advice and make referrals to support more people who are currently not disclosing abuse and getting support. This is an area which would **benefit from further partnership working**. We should develop 'routine enquiry' systems between services focused on poverty reduction and those focused on domestic abuse. The Domestic & Sexual Abuse Strategic Partnership should work with Sheffield Citizens Advice, Sheffield Money, Sheffield Credit Union, JCP and the Council's Revenues & Benefits team to develop these systems.

A sub regional perpetrator programme is being planned with the intention that it will be available in various locations and offer a flexible programme of courses and one to one support. This would supplement court mandated programmes and be available for people to take up on a voluntary basis, with the intention of supporting people to change their behaviour and would be a key part of the prevention agenda. Police in Sheffield continue to prioritise Domestic Abuse and Domestic Violence incidents and investigations into such offences are subject to daily management scrutiny to ensure that these matters are dealt with robustly and expediently. An effective approach is in use to identify repeat offenders and to plan interventions and disrupt offending. Police also make use of Domestic Violence Prevention Notices to prevent further offending and are well versed in putting in safeguarding measures to protect victims.

**Restorative Justice is still well-supported and well-used** by Police, particularly in the finalisation of matters involving youth offenders. South Yorkshire Police schools officers make good use of this process across the whole of the city, and a total of 1309 offenders had a Restorative Justice response during 2016 in Sheffield.

Sheffield Alcohol Strategy 2016-2020 implementation group will begin in Jan 17 and will meet quarterly and oversee the **recommendations and actions of the alcohol strategy**. This will be the formal route through which specific alcohol related strategic work will be overseen. The specific link between poverty and alcohol in national evidence and replicated locally is that people in areas of higher social deprivation experience disproportionately high health and social harms from alcohol use as those from more affluent areas, even if the amount of alcohol consumed is the same. We aim to work through effective communications and community interventions to address this and raise awareness. The **Drug misuse strategy** and direction includes an open access (can ring, walk in and will be seen same day) treatment system which removes barriers to treatment, this is the same in the Opiate, Non Opiate, and Alcohol treatment services. We also offer an arrest referral and Criminal Justice Integrated Team which works with offending drug users. We have a comprehensive harm reduction offer in the city through two specialist needle exchanges in services, and 16 pharmacy needle exchanges throughout the city. We also have a thriving recovery community which works outside of, although involving, those from the treatment services, including mutual aid groups, recovery activity, and most recently De Hood boxing gym launched a recovery drop in on Thursday evenings up at Manor Top for local community and anyone seeking recovery or support – this work is particularly accessible in the wider localities of the city.

It may be worth considering the work being done on Hate Crime and how it affects vulnerable groups including those in poverty. There is some positive work being developed with the local authority although still some challenges regarding signposting people for support if they are a victim of a hate crime.

We said we would continue to **develop pathways for offenders focused on Education, Training and Employment and Finance and Benefits** (via Reducing Reoffending Group). The police, probation companies and youth justice service as well as domestic abuse services are now engaged in more integrated locality working to support children and families as well as with specialist services for young people at Star House and with housing and neighbourhood teams to support other adults and households. This is providing support to prevent repeat offending against vulnerable groups including those vulnerable due to poverty. It would now be more sensible to **develop approaches through the integrated front door, integrated support for young people and social prescribing approaches, which will build on the existing successful approaches developed by different organisations**. It will be important to ensure that data is differentiated so it is possible to assess whether positive outcomes are being achieved for former offenders in the new approaches.

### **3. What we will do now to tackle some of the root causes of poverty and give our children the best chance of a poverty-free future**

#### **Providing skills and employability support**

*Low pay, low employment levels for some groups of people and increasing levels of in-work poverty make this a critically important programme of work. We will take the opportunities at city region level to test and roll-out evidence-based approaches at scale.*

The number of who are people in work and yet still in poverty has continued to grow and we know that people need to work more hours to achieve a minimum standard of living. There are significant barriers for disabled people and those claiming long-term sickness benefits to access both employment and vocational training. In the SCR there are above average levels of people claiming Employment Support Allowance/Incapacity Benefits (7.4% compared to 6.3% nationally) and receiving disability benefits (1.4% compared to 1.1% nationally). There is emerging evidence about effective approaches, which now need testing robustly and at scale. Devolution and changes in legislation such

as the apprenticeship levy offer us opportunities to focus skills and employability support on poverty reduction. We know too that there is much to do to join up the employment and skills systems effectively. We have reviewed our approach against the recommendations from a variety of reports including the Joseph Rowntree Foundation report and 'Devolution and Disadvantage in the Sheffield City Region' (Etherington and Jones, 2016).

Sheffield City Region continues to be at the **forefront of negotiations with national government to drive and control skills and employment programmes**. We are maximising the outcomes achieved for the most vulnerable young people and jobseekers through our pioneering approach to combine the new Apprenticeship Levy and the public sector workforce duty. In this, Sheffield City Council will act as a springboard for the careers of the most vulnerable, supporting them to move on to jobs in the wider economy. Other partners from across the partnership are also interested in taking this role in the future and this will be explored over the next year.

We have a **big opportunity through our Devolution Pilot** to test more personalised, integrated and earlier intervention for **people who would otherwise end up long-term unemployed**. This pilot will test a diagnostic tool and more personalised support for different needs as well as a more integrated system of support, all of which are recommendations from the JRF report. This also provides us with an **opportunity to influence national policy** as it pertains to Sheffield and the city region since it is intended that lessons from the pilot be woven into future development of Work & Health programme within the city region and beyond.

We have been able to influence the design of the next phase of Work & Health programme through using lessons from locally delivered programmes, including Ambition SCR, as well as the broader evidence base. We will work closely with the provider/s of this programme and it will be important to bring them into the integrated work, health and income systems we are designing.

More locally, we have made a **fundamental shift in Sheffield City Council's commissioned employability services: Sheffield's Working**. The previous focus on youth unemployment has resulted in reductions. According to the Annual Population Survey, the number of unemployed young people (age 16-24) in Sheffield has reduced by 4,400 over the past 18 months, bringing the rate down from 26.6% for the year to June 2014 to 20.7% for the year to September 2015 (the APS reports returns from survey responses over a 12 month period, data are released quarterly). The maintenance and continuation of this trend will be delivered through targeted youth services and our pre-apprenticeship and apprenticeship programmes. We have now moved the focus of this activity to other groups with low levels of employment and significant barriers to work in Sheffield and to the development of more integrated working with partners and other systems such as health, housing and income. We have used the latest evidence and worked with partners to design and commission bespoke programmes for people with learning difficulties and disabilities and for people with mental health conditions as well as other programmes. We have built requirements around equity of access and outcomes for at risk groups into the tender process and contracts for locally commissioned employability activity and into plans at city region level. These programmes are too early into implementation to provide evidence of how effective this has been, however, there are promising early signs including over 300 people already on the programme and 42 into work by the second month of delivery. All our programmes will test and develop the infrastructure required to deliver this integrated approach, the most appropriate methods of targeting and identification of the best providers for the delivery.

We have seen a continued positive trend in **reducing proportions** (from 6.6% in 13-14 to 5.2% in 15-16 and on track to be lower than this for 16-17) **and numbers** (from 1,002 in Nov '13 down to 784 in Nov '16) **of young people (Y12-14) not in employment, education or training**. Of those who are not in employment, education or training, those who are not available to the labour market due to pregnancy, parenting, illness or caring responsibilities has remained fairly stable between 2013 (2331 young people) and 2016 (234 young people). The number of young people unavailable to the labour market due to health issues has been gradually rising (75 in Nov '13 increasing to 102 in Nov '16). Information from practitioners seems to show that the increase is due predominantly to mental health issues including anxiety and depression. To monitor this we have now started to collect reasons but we can't

provide the evidence yet. It is hoped that the development of the Youth Information Advice & Counselling Service (YIACs) will help to some extent with responding to this need.

There has been a **strong focus on improving education, training and employment outcomes for care experienced young people** and some new posts in the team to support this work. We are seeing **positive indications that this may be effective**. If we compare September 2015 and September 2016 there is a definite increase in the % of Care Leavers in EET (41.5% to 54.1%) but there is also an increase in the % in NEET (30% to 36%), this is due to the % in a Not Known category decreasing so we are now more aware of where our Care Leavers are engaged or why they are not engaged. In this period there have been more young people engaged in education, employment and training. The % who are available but still not engaged has reduced whilst the % of young people 'Unavailable to the labour market' has increased.

For **young offenders**, if we consider the proportion who are in Education, Employment or Training each month, the figure has remained the same (63% in November 2015 and 63% in November 2016). However, we also measure the status of young people when they leave the service and **the proportion in Education, Employment or Training at the end of their order has been consistently high**. Figures for the first two quarters of 2016-17 show that overall engagement was 91.7%, exceeding the 85% target. Within this, 92.3% of those in school age were in education. Among over-16s, it was 90.9%. Unfortunately, the data made available for peer comparison on this measure is increasingly unreliable and, in some places, unavailable. Based on those places that do report, Sheffield is one of the best performers nationally.

Our **successful young people's service** will be the next stage in the development of targeted support for young people in Sheffield. Underpinning that will be an investment partnership that operates in an integrated way bringing more resources to the city to support our young people. We are beginning to develop a pre-apprenticeships pathway programme targeted particularly at those with the poorest outcomes. This will include traineeships where appropriate as well as other provision.

The outcome agreement which will govern the **devolved adult education budget** across city region will be more closely **targeted at the most vulnerable and at achieving positive outcomes regarding employment and poverty**. This should also support those people in-work and in poverty through the continued development of the skills escalator and pathways and careers. The next phase of development is focused on employers and links to lifelong learning and will need an integrated approach with JobcentrePlus.

We will use the significant opportunities within the city and city region and the available evidence to **change the methods we use to support people to move into work and to prevent them from slipping out of work** to make them **more focused on fair work with decent wages**. We will also develop a strong proposition for the **approach to skills and progress within work** that is focused on poverty reduction. In this area, the tackling poverty partnership will champion a **focus** in particular on households where people have **disabilities and/or long-term health conditions including mental health** and on those with **children**.

In line with the JRF report recommendations, the Employment & Skills Board is already setting its sights on **integrated work, health and income hubs**. It is hoped that this will be developed further through the Devolution pilot and Work & Health Unit Innovation bid. Many Tackling Poverty Strategy partners could play a role in the integrated services offer. Initially, this would need to be a specialist service, with good connections to neighbourhood and locality developments, for example through social prescribing and dedicated pathway approaches.

## Encouraging the creation of good quality jobs with fair terms and conditions

*There are some significant commitments and new pieces of work planned over the next year or so that will be a vital part of our response to entrenched inequalities in Sheffield and challenges such as low pay and productivity across the city region.*

Sheffield City Region has a relatively lower level of economic performance and productivity, with the city region ranking in 15th place out of 39 LEAs in England. A recent report looking at 'Devolution and Disadvantage in the Sheffield City Region' (Etherington and Jones, 2016) identified a 'lack of employment demand and 'poor jobs' growth...the recession has hit the SCR hard, impacting on an already weak labour market, with an estimated additional 70,000 jobs required to "narrow the gap" with other parts of the country (and GDP growth of almost 5%)...Under-employment is a prevalent feature of labour market inequality in SCR as many new jobs created are self-employed, temporary, part-time and comprise zero hours contracts.'

We need to shape a positive and inclusive approach that responds to the changes in the jobs market such as greater insecurity and flexibility of hours and contracts.

**Promotion of the Fair Employer Charter has continued and there are now 38 organisations signed up to it** (up from 25 this time last year). A campaign focused on fair work is being developed and planned by the Our Fair City campaign group and they hope to develop the Charter further and get more organisations signed up. Several members of the Tackling Poverty Strategy Partnership are signed up including Sheffield City Council, Sheffield Chamber of Commerce, Sheffield CCG, South Yorkshire Passenger Transport Executive, South Yorkshire Police, University of Sheffield, Sheffield Citizens Advice, South Yorkshire Fire & Rescue and lots of VCF sector organisations including VAS, MCDT, SOAR, HomeStart, Young Carers, Sheffield 50+, Disability Sheffield, South Yorkshire Community Foundation and Sheffield Cathedral. From a poverty reduction perspective, as the Charter develops, it will be important to keep a focus on the Living Wage, approaches to progress within work and on inclusive approaches to recruitment and retention, including consideration of the needs of priority groups such as childcare for working families and positive policies regarding people with disabilities and long-term health conditions and their carers. Several social landlords are committed to paying the Living Wage or above for their employees including Affinity Sutton and Guinness. South Yorkshire Community Foundation has committed to being a Living Wage Employer and is looking into becoming a Living Wage Funder and Sheffield Young Carers' pays the living wage and is in the process of being recognised as a Living Wage Employer.

Many social landlords as well as Sheffield Council Housing service and others are focusing on offering apprenticeships and traineeships and having success in supporting people to progress into permanent jobs. These include Affinity Sutton, Guinness, Home Group and SYHA.

**Sheffield City Partnership Board have confirmed that they will take a lead on developing an Inclusive Growth Strategy for the city.** In doing this, they will work to join-up with relevant organisations working on this agenda within the city, as well as linking and co-ordinating with colleagues in Sheffield City Region combined authority who are also considering their approach to Inclusive Growth. Sheffield City Partnership Board are planning a series of meetings and workshops with these partners, to develop a strong evidence base for the strategy and seek to align research and policy development in this area.

There are clear interdependencies between the other strands of work in the Tackling Poverty Strategy and the **Inclusive Growth** agenda and **we will support the work of colleagues in Sheffield City Partnership Board and at Sheffield City Region in developing approaches with a strong poverty reduction focus.**



## **Maximising entitlements for those who cannot work**

As outlined above, access to entitlements and support, advice services in the city have been protected and have been able to generate additional funding to support those in need. We have also sought ways to reduce the cost of everyday essentials through schemes such as the Big Switch. This year will continue to be particularly important in supporting people in the transition from Disability Living Allowance to Personal Independence Payment and Sheffield Citizens Advice has identified this as a priority area for campaigning.

## **Improving the affordability, availability and accessibility of flexible and good quality childcare – moving towards a point at which it is available where and when people need it**

and

## **Giving children the education and enriching experiences and raising expectations to improve achievement and future life-chances**

*The attainment of disadvantaged pupils is improving but the gaps in educational attainment between disadvantaged and non-disadvantaged children are not narrowing quickly enough. Evidence backs our strategy to focus on early years and quality teaching. We know that households with children will be entitled to less money from benefits in future and need more help. We will focus on parental employment and childcare and the possible contribution of poverty reduction to early year's development through extending the reach of promising trials and ensuring that integrated working on employment, health and income is systematic across the city.*

The report looking at 'Devolution and Disadvantage in the Sheffield City Region' (Etherington and Jones, 2016) identified lack of access to affordable childcare as a restriction for employment opportunities, citing two key factors:

- Families with younger children often cut back on work or are less likely to take on higher paid work when children are young.
- This is compounded by increased costs such as paying for childcare given that many lone parents and families are reliant on low paid work. Larger families have increased costs and lone parents are often unable to work as many hours as couple families.

We know that poverty is itself a major component cause in poor attainment among children from disadvantaged backgrounds, acting mainly through 'scarcity mindset.' (Research suggests that cognitive capacity is a finite resource and that trying to do too much at once results in a loss of concentration and poorer decision-making. There is emerging evidence that dealing with poverty overloads cognitive capacity. Researchers found that people on low incomes who had been asked to think about financial problems then performed worse on a series of tests. Thinking about financial problems had an impact similar to losing a night's sleep, leading to a reduction in measured IQ of 13 points). There is some evidence that it also acts to a lesser extent through the lack of access to resources that support development.

Households with children are among those hardest hit by the benefit reductions along with lone parents, those from BME backgrounds and households including someone with a disability or long-term health condition. The further reduction of the benefit cap is expected to affect a further 566 households, who will see a reduction in their Housing Benefit. In total, those households who will be affected by the reduced benefit cap contain 1,780 children.

Our Best Start approach has been embedded in mainstream services and continues to be developed and reviewed in line with emerging evidence, such as the Early Intervention Foundation's recent report (Foundations for Life, 2016) and the Joseph Rowntree Foundation report. As mentioned below under tackling health inequalities, there is an opportunity to review the integration of poverty reduction approaches into this and other child health programmes.



High quality early learning plays an important role in improving the life chances of children especially those growing up in poverty. Only 10% of children taking up Free Early Learning (aged 2, 3 and 4) are attending a setting that is rated below good or outstanding. For children taking up the free early learning for disadvantaged two year olds this figure is 8.4%. We have an improving trend in terms of the proportion of settings that are rated good or outstanding and so we are confident that our improvement strategy is working. We are now focusing on settings that are rated 'requires improvement' as well as on helping those rated 'good' to ensure these are maintained.

**The 30 hours of funded childcare for working families will be available in Sheffield from 1st September 2017.** This will require providers to be more flexible in order to meet the needs of working families who might require care all year round. The current minimum session length of 2.5 hours for funded childcare is also being scrapped which will allow before and after school care which are often much shorter sessions to qualify for funding which should also help working families. The last of the capital funded places for 2 year old FEL children has recently come on stream and Sheffield City Council is now looking at ways to boost take up for 2 year olds from its current 67%. Research has been commissioned to allow us to understand the reasons for families not taking up this entitlement and this will inform our new approaches. Families are now able to go to their chosen nursery to apply and check their eligibility. This means that there are effectively over 200 places across the city where they can apply as well as through the existing online facility. Twice termly mail outs to families who may be eligible are being undertaken based on information provided by the DWP and in some areas children centre staff will follow up the mail outs to further encourage take up.

There are ongoing discussions with potential providers about how further flexible opportunities could be developed and this is an area for further development. Although the increase in free hours could support this, it has been argued (see for example: Double Dutch, IPPR, 2012) that the way in which funding is provided for childcare in the UK (largely demand-led) limits the risks that providers are willing to take in creating more flexibility.

**The attainment of disadvantaged pupils is improving across all key stages but the gaps between disadvantaged and non-disadvantaged pupils are not closing fast enough. Disadvantaged pupils with low prior attainment make better progress in KS2 than non-disadvantaged pupils with similar starting points; however, in general disadvantaged pupils make less progress than non-disadvantaged pupils.**

- There is an improving trend for both disadvantaged and non-disadvantaged pupils at Foundation Stage and Phonics but gaps have remained the same.
- At Key Stage 1 and Key Stage 2 the new assessment framework means that there is no trend data. However, as in previous years, pupils in Sheffield have the same or higher levels of attainment compared to pupils with the same level of prior attainment nationally.
- Attainment and progress in reading at KS2 remains a concern, particularly for disadvantaged pupils.
- At KS4, as at KS2, pupils in Sheffield achieve similar or higher levels of attainment compared to pupils with the same level of prior attainment nationally but there are still gaps between disadvantaged and non-disadvantaged groups: 36% of disadvantaged pupils in Sheffield achieved an A\*-C grade in both English and maths, this compares to 69% of non-disadvantaged pupils.
- Disadvantaged pupils also make less progress across all attainment groups. Disadvantaged pupils make on average around a third of a grade less progress than the Sheffield average.

There are several strategies in place that are being used to address this, along with some new work being planned to support improvement:

- Self-evaluation training and support which has had a positive impact on outcomes for children as well as on the robustness and consistency of the understanding of best practice in the early years foundation stage
- The REAL programme (raising early achievement in literacy) has helped teachers develop ways of engaging parents in children's learning. Sixty schools have engaged in the REAL programme and schools continue to engage with parents using strategies developed using the REAL approach. The LA has also introduced

schools to the REAM programme (raising early achievement in mathematics). REAM works on the same principles as REAL but engages parents in early mathematical development. We will continue to work with schools on both REAL and REAM throughout 2016/17.

- Achievement for All has been commissioned to deliver an early transition in two localities in the city. The programme is designed to improve transition between the maintained and non-maintained sector with a particular focus on children leaving nursery to start YR. When this work is complete the findings will be used to support other areas of the city.
- A programme designed to support vulnerable children by introducing teachers to strategies to help children develop resilience and effective executive functioning skills is being offered; 30 schools have received training so far and there are plans to roll out across all schools. This will be evaluated.
- Pupil premium is one of the top three priorities for secondary schools in Sheffield this year and work is being developed jointly with the National Education Trust as part of the vulnerable learners approach. Young carers are also a priority for LearnSheffield.

**Learn Sheffield's priorities largely reflect the recommendations of the Joseph Rowntree Foundation report, as follows:**

- The importance of effective leadership and quality teaching is well understood and reflected in the priorities for School Improvement and Workforce, although this is very difficult to judge effectively. Learn Sheffield and Sheffield Hallam University are exploring approaches.
- The importance of taking an evidence based approach and sharing learning between schools is well understood and reflected in the Learn Sheffield System Culture priority.
- The importance of focus on SEND and other vulnerabilities is well understood and reflected in the Learn Sheffield Inclusion priority. The new approach to inclusion is for all vulnerable groups and mirrors the approach to school improvement being focused on early support for families with additional needs and a locality based delivery model.
- Sheffield has done a lot of positive work to support Gypsy, Traveller and Roma children and families
- Many schools have school councils and effective approaches to enabling 'pupil voice,' many schools have good practice they can share with others. LearnSheffield would like to work with other members of the Tackling Poverty Strategy Partnership to develop a conference to co-design with young people an approach to poverty reduction in school and family services. This would be aimed at school leaders and pastoral staff as well as other family support services involved in locality delivery.

LearnSheffield has set a priority focused on early years and will be developing an education-based early years strategy later in 2017. This will need to consider which kinds of settings disproportionately positively affect cognitive skills and executive functioning for children in poverty.

**A successful pilot event was held in summer 2016 that was developed in partnership between the Children's Centre, JCP, Local Work Club and the SCC Income Management Unit, which engaged families, received positive feedback and has had promising outcomes.** The purpose of the event was to engage with families living in the local area, to offer recently registered families who are out of work, in part time employment or have not stated their employment status, the opportunity to come and meet Children's Centre team and find out more about services available, including volunteering and employment support and to offer families who will be affected by the benefit cap changes the opportunity to come and find out the financial impact of the changes and the chance to discuss this with the Income Management Unit and get advice on searching for employment. It is proposed that every Children's Centre will run a regular event (possibly quarterly) to ensure that families who have registered get the opportunity to find out more about services available to them (including Free Early Learning) and families living with low incomes or unemployment, have the opportunity to get local employment support and link in with JCP and local work clubs effectively in their community.

The University of Sheffield is committed to widening participation and outreach and fair access and has a scheme in place to support this: <https://www.sheffield.ac.uk/als/wp> along with Student finance and bursaries support: <https://www.sheffield.ac.uk/undergraduate/finance/help>

The Our Fair City Fairer Futures campaign will support young people across Sheffield to develop a manifesto for a Fairer Future. This will make an important contribution to strategy in the city.

We will **continue to prioritise prevention and early help** approaches including our Best Start approach and work identified in LearnSheffield's priorities to support a continued improvement in attainment and focus on narrowing of the gap between disadvantaged and non-disadvantaged children. We would also like to hold a conference with LearnSheffield to co-design with young people an approach to poverty reduction in school and family services.

We will **focus on parental employment and childcare and the possible contribution of poverty reduction to early year's development** through **extending the reach of promising trials** and ensuring that **integrated working on employment, health and income is systematic across the city**.

### **Reducing health inequalities and improving health and access to health services**

*There is a good understanding amongst key groups about the relationship between poverty and health and the importance of tackling poverty as one of the major determinants of health. There is a strong commitment in place to connect initiatives focused on health and work. There are also some positive examples of developments to link poverty reduction into emerging health-based neighbourhood structures and transformation programmes. We would like to develop these into a more systematic approach over time.*

The **commitments within this part of the Strategy are a led by the Health & Wellbeing Board and the Children's Health & Wellbeing Transformation Board**. The Health & Wellbeing Board's partners include Sheffield City Council, the Clinical Commissioning Group, NHS England and Healthwatch Sheffield. The Board has a joint Health & Wellbeing Strategy and receives regular reports on progress against the strategy. The most recent Director of Public Health report (2016) highlights the continuing gap in healthy life expectancy between the most and least deprived areas of the city (20 years for men and 25 for women) as a cause for concern and one that could worsen given continued austerity and cuts to public sector spending. The report also identifies socio-economic factors as the biggest contributor to ill-health, early death and health inequalities. **Tackling Health Inequalities is a key priority and new approaches are being developed**.

**Health and other community services are being developed through 16 neighbourhoods**. Co-ordinators have been appointed (hosted by Voluntary Action Sheffield) to support social prescribing and a maturity index is being developed to identify what a good social prescribing approach looks like and what is needed to help improve the approach in each area, based on area needs and flexibility to meet these. The People Keeping Well programme is a key part of this neighbourhoods development and offers support for many of the factors identified in the JRF report that are unrelated to income but can help to alleviate deprivation (or create and worsen it). At present, support is targeted at people who are at risk of high needs / high cost healthcare. The CCG have committed to considering how to address disproportionate investment. Initially, the plan is to think about how we could use the developing neighbourhood model to target investment in areas where it is most needed and to ensure that the right support is in place.

The Children's Health and Wellbeing Transformation Board is sponsoring a **major Community Health re-design programme**. Core workstreams are: 0-19 Healthy Child Programme, integrated delivery, Urgent Care and Sexual Health. Other programme priorities for Board include Best Start Early Years and Maternity, Complex Child (including SEND), and Emotional Health Wellbeing.

We wish to explore whether it would be useful and possible to **broaden the People Keeping Well and social prescribing approaches to other groups at high risk of poverty**, but we need to consider the phasing and prioritisation of our efforts and resources carefully. There are already discussions about how social prescribing could be used for employment support and these could be broadened to link with other poverty reduction programmes over time.

The Children's Community Health review offers **an opportunity to include preventing poverty as a commissioning priority, to re-consider training and educational provision for teenage parents** and identify improvements and to consider **how joint child development reviews could be used to identify poverty reducing interventions** to address needs of the most vulnerable families.

## **Strengthening community resilience and tackling loneliness and isolation & Reducing barriers for those with multiple and complex needs**

*We know that it is better for support to be co-ordinated and for it to address needs holistically; we know the characteristics of effective approaches from research. We also know that people prefer to access and offer support in ways that feel normal and embedded in their communities. The Partnership will support the integration of poverty reduction into these approaches.*

The Council has worked with other partners to focus more on neighbourhood approaches to improve community resilience. The intention of this work is to support the city to build healthy, open, strong and resilient neighbourhoods, by empowering communities and front-line staff. This means work to facilitate and support effective neighbourhood working, grounded in community needs and interests, make the most of relationships and enhance networks across communities and partnerships; link with and build on, not replicate, existing work and activities in neighbourhoods and enable communities to maximise their neighbourhood resources (social, physical and financial).

The Council, the CCG and partners remain committed to supporting social prescribing measures.

- “Repairs on Prescription” service
- “People Keeping Well”
- Handyperson scheme for council tenants

Community support workers help people to look at all their potential benefits and have had some success around attendance allowance. The service is considering an information campaign that targets older people to encourage them to check whether they are entitled to e.g. an attendance allowance (main problem being that people often don't know when they are entitled to a particular benefit). Voluntary Action Sheffield (VAS), which has groups around auto-enrolment and community accountancy support the Council and its partners in the Voluntary & Community Sector.

Many of the city's Social Landlords (Affinity Sutton, Great Places, SYHA) as well as Sheffield Council housing service provide neighbourhood and community services, such as youth clubs, family groups, community grants and opportunities for people to get together to tackle loneliness and isolation and improve community cohesion.

The Council continues to work with Jobcentre Plus, Sheffield Citizens Advice and others to deliver **Building Successful Families**. The partnership with Jobcentre Plus sees employment advisors attached to the Building Successful Families programme and these advisors are supporting the team to help them move families towards and into work. Sheffield Citizens Advice are commissioned through the programme to support families. We are currently rolling out the learning from the early help locality model that was developed with schools in 2016. Key partners including Sheffield City Council, the CCG, police, housing, schools and SEND teams to ensure we are working together in a multi-agency

way. It has been identified that some staff in universal services are finding it harder to discuss financial hardship with families than some other issues. Some training has been done but there are opportunities for joint workshops to support better identification and referral for families in poverty.

Neighbourhood and locality working will continue and the partnership will support this and make two important contributions. We will support the **integration of more specialist services targeted at poverty reduction and mitigation**, such as employment, health and income hubs. We will also encourage, seek funding for and support the **integration into neighbourhood and locality working of developments that aim to tackle the poverty premium** through offering ways to access lower cost food, energy, transport, credit, insurance and other household basics.

### Increasing access to jobs, services and leisure activities

We committed to **focus our physical activity outreach work in the areas of greatest health needs**, to work with our contracted providers in **sports and the arts to engage disadvantaged communities** and customer groups and to work to ensure that **our standards of play and parks provision in disadvantaged areas are at least equal to the city average**. Sheffield City Council is reviewing the balance of spend on green spaces in areas of health inequality. We introduced a citywide leisure discount scheme for those on income related benefits and people with disability and have built and renewed 5 leisure facilities (indoor and football) to service areas of deprivation.

Sheffield City Council and Disability Sheffield are working towards carers having an access card similar to that available for disabled people. Sheffield Young Carers have worked with them to ensure that some of the discounts were things wanted by young carers and young carers have started to sign up for the card.

Some Registered Providers of social housing are helping to fund community transport to serve their areas. Registered Providers of social housing and Voluntary Community & Faith Sector organisations **often provide and fund activities in their local areas such as family days, sports and craft activities**.

There continues to be some strong activity happening to support digital inclusion across Sheffield including by Registered Providers of social housing, the Voluntary, Community & Faith Sector and education providers. One of the priorities from last year's review **was to build on the mapping and analysis work** to help us to try to secure funding for Digital Inclusion work and the development of a more coherent approach. We have not managed to do this and it would be helpful to identify a champion and working group to take this forward.

One of the priorities from last year's review **was to build on the mapping and analysis work** to help us to try to secure funding for Digital Inclusion work and the development of a more coherent approach. We have not managed to do this and it would be helpful to identify a champion and working group to take this forward.

### Increasing the supply of affordable decent homes

*At City Region level, we will need large numbers of affordable homes (as well as executive housing) to support economic growth which will include some lower paid, lower skilled jobs as well as opportunities for progression (in work and housing). We need to meet the housing (and skills) needs of our lower skilled, just-about-managing population to support growth. We will develop a strong proposition to link housing and inclusive growth.*

We will consider the future housing needs of our population in relation to anticipated economic growth, movement of people in and out of the city and changing population dynamics. It may also be helpful to explore flexibilities that would allow us to consider different regulatory approaches, security of tenure and the role of institutional investment.

The Council's **new housing strategy and new housing growth programme** are being taken to Cabinet in March 2017. In line with the local plan, 2150 new homes are hoped to be built each year for the next ten years — increasing not only the number of houses in each area, but also the different types of housing (either for sale, rented or specialist). This aim involves both the Council and private sector developers, as well as stimulation through housing associations.

The Local Plan has a focus on growth including economic and housing and has Inclusion and Opportunities as one of its aims including:

- Investment and renewal directed to neighbourhoods that lack adequate facilities and services, or those that suffer from an unsatisfactory environment, particularly in the north and east of the city.
- New development designed and located to benefit those who are currently excluded and vulnerable.
- A wider choice of housing provided through more mixing of house types and tenures, to meet the needs of the whole community, including older people and disabled people.
- Workplaces located where they are accessible to all by a range of transport options, particularly from areas of high unemployment.
- Services and facilities, and the spaces around and between them, located and designed to be safe and accessible to all.

The council's **main priority is affordable rented accommodation**. In light of this, the Council is working towards accreditation in the private rented sector, and is stepping up enforcement — both to create good-quality housing and to deal with landlords as necessary. Nationally, Sheffield has one of the best records for taking landlords to court over housing issues. The service also helps tenants who struggle to get deposits back.

Starter Homes Funding was recently won by the Council, which will be used to offer a 20% discount on the price of homes for young families looking to buy their first property.

Sheffield City Region has developed a **Social & Affordable Housing Compact**. The key aims of this are increasing supply of housing (especially affordable) and protecting the needs of vulnerable. Many Social Landlords as well as Sheffield City Council have signed up to the Compact. It sets out how impact will be measured and has resulted in the production of a programme bid to the HCA entitled 'More New Homes,' led by SYHA in partnership with others. This seeks to double housing supply by the sector through a ring-fenced fund of £23m pa for the next 5 years. The Combined Authority, the Local Enterprise Partnership (LEP), local MPs and councillors have put their weight behind it. The HCA has welcomed it and suggested it could form the centrepiece of a housing devolution deal.

With regard to homelessness, Sheffield has not yet seen the significant rise in the amount of homeless people in the city that has been evidenced in other parts of the country, but this is expected to rise in line with the national picture. At the same time, the Council has new duties as part of the Homelessness Reduction Bill.

The Council Housing Service also offers debt support through its own financial inclusion team, and also works on tackling illegal lending, stamping out exploitation and improving debt management/providing debt advice. The service has a traineeship through housing and repairs, targeting those furthest away from the property ladder and creating a link with people in debt through employment opportunities. The service continues to work in conjunction with the Credit Union and Sheffield Money, as well as housing associations in order to make rents affordable.

The Council's Private Sector Housing team continues to make **homes healthier and safer**. By using a tailored and targeted method, the team has succeeded in bringing landlords to better property and management standards: with high levels of co-operation with the scheme and compliance with the property and management standards. They have received national recognition for work on the letting agents' redress scheme. We are promoting and enforcing energy efficiency measures to ensure that tenants are not paying unnecessarily high fuel bills. We are also setting EPC ratings in specific areas such as licensing, at higher than legislative standards.

We will **develop a proposition for growth in housing**, including affordable housing. There is some great work happening in the city that responds to the recommendations set out by Joseph Rowntree Foundation in relation to affordable housing and privately rented housing. We will work in particular with partners across the social and private rented sector **to explore options for increasing the scale and impact of this work**.

## Our shared plans for the next year

Partners worked with the Joseph Rowntree Foundation to develop plans for the next year, based on local information and reviewing our plans against the latest evidence about effective approaches. The outlines of these plans are shown below and they will be built on over the next year with progress reported to the partnership.

### Childhood poverty

Summary of issues (many explored in more depth throughout this report) relevant to this area:

- Levels of 'good' or better child-minding provision are above target, improving and above national average. Levels of 'good' or better primary school provision are improving in absolute terms and compared to national average but remain lower than national.
- Although the attainment of disadvantaged pupils is improving at Foundation Stage, gaps between disadvantaged and non-disadvantaged pupils are not closing fast enough.
- Take-up of free early learning for disadvantaged two-year olds is increasing but there is still room for further improvement. The nationally comparable data shows that core cities, statistical neighbours and national averages are all improving at a faster rate than Sheffield. Our locally calculated take-up rate shows a better take-up and improving trend, but is not comparable with other places.
- Evidence backs our strategy to focus on early years and quality teaching but also highlights the importance of low income and financial distress, which are harder to influence locally.
- Households with children will be entitled to less money from benefits in future and need more help.
- Changes to working patterns and benefits systems mean we need to consider the ways in which we offer support.
- Low wages, cuts to benefits (including in-work benefits) and high costs of essentials and accessing them continue to create a substantial gap between income and the cost of meeting needs in many households. This links to the impact of lower income on children's outcomes.
- Households with children are among those hardest hit by benefit reductions along with lone parents, those from BME backgrounds and households including someone with a disability or long-term health condition.
- Changes to conditionality will affect families with children, especially the continued reduction of the age of youngest child as a trigger for parents being required to seek work and in-work progressions requirements.
- Lack of access to affordable childcare may be a restriction for employment opportunities for families in terms of hours worked and progress within work. The complexity of the system has been highlighted as a particular issue.
- 30-hour childcare begins in Sheffield in September 2017 bringing some flexibilities and opportunities.

Summary of agreed actions:

**A systematic and thorough approach to poverty reduction will be a priority in early years programmes.** Actions agreed include:

- We will include preventing poverty as a priority for commissioning. This means as part of our re-designed 0-19 Healthy Child Programme, we will integrate identification of and response to poverty via the vulnerable care pathway. The assessment process will provide the opportunity to take a whole family approach to the identification of needs and link families into wider, practical support to help reduce poverty related risks (including income/benefits advice, housing, accessing healthy food etc).



- For all our care pathways, we will create systematic and thorough referral and integration approaches to poverty reduction services. This means we will design a ‘warm handover’ approach to a wide range of poverty reduction services (and ultimately our emerging integrated employment and income support service model) into our proposed new Family Hubs. In our Early Help model, we will continue to prioritise training for staff, identification of poverty as a theme in assessment, action planning and support and outcomes. We will create systematic referral criteria and pathways which enable ‘warm handovers’ to our emerging integrated employment and income support service model.
- We will review our parenting programmes against the evidence about couple relationships when it comes out.
- We will use the findings on maternal wellbeing as part of the early years element of our city-wide investment and outcomes fund.
- We need to identify ways to offer healthy affordable accessible food to children in low income households.

**Childcare will be a priority.** Actions agreed include:

We need more places for free early learning for disadvantaged two year olds in some parts of the city. The Partnership would like to seek funding to develop a childminding co-operative. This would provide further flexibility and a culturally appropriate offer for parents. It would be supported by our existing quality offer which has proved successful in supporting high quality childcare in Sheffield. The intention would be for local parents to train and support one another to operate as childminders. There would also be the possibility for any co-operative to register with any existing childminding agency, which would provide administrative and quality support.

The Partnership will explore ways to increase places available. This could include some of the following (much of which already happens but will continue or increase):

- Working with the school planning team to ensure that any new school in Sheffield has the ability to take 2 year olds once the school is open
- Any enquiries about developing childcare provision are encouraged to consider 2 year places
- Actively encouraging current term-time-only providers to expand to an all-year offer, which again should increase the availability of places for 2 year olds
- Where schools have 3 and 4 year old places they are being encouraged to take ‘rising 3’s’ (children in the last term of the 2 year offer). This is increasing engagement of 2 year olds not previously captured.
- The childcare sufficiency assessment is used to communicate with the market providers on the supply and demand so that they can develop places accordingly.
- If additional funding were available, more support and development work could be undertaken

We need to improve take up of free early learning for disadvantaged two year olds. We know that many parents are unaware of their eligibility. We know some ways to improve access, but we first need an increase in the number of available places. We will explore the option of piloting a ‘golden ticket’ scheme once we have more places available. This has worked well to increase take up substantially in other parts of the country.

## **In-work Poverty**

Summary of issues (many explored in more depth throughout this report) relevant to this area:

- The number of people experiencing in-work poverty has continued to grow. This is a symptom of a low wage economy.
- We know that people in low paid jobs need to work more hours or secure better quality work to achieve a minimum standard of living. There is emerging evidence about effective approaches to support progress within work, which now need testing robustly and at scale.
- Ethnic minority employment rate and economic activity rates are both below national averages in Sheffield.
- There is a positive trend for reducing unemployment – both for all working age and those aged 16-24.



- Although low pay is an issue in Sheffield, the average hourly pay for those in lowest 20% has been increasing slowly in line with national average.
- Levels of exclusions remain a concern and although the attainment of disadvantaged pupils is improving at Foundation Stage, the gaps between disadvantaged and non-disadvantaged pupils are not closing fast enough.
- The proportions of 19 year olds qualified to level three are improving and those not in employment, education or training are decreasing, but we need to continue to focus on ensuring that vulnerable groups are accessing employment, education and training.
- Benefit changes do too little to address the substantial gap between income and the cost of meeting needs in many households. The proportion of people in poverty in a working family is 55% – a record high.
- Benefit reductions: particularly affecting those under 21, lone parents and claimants with a disability or long-term health condition - once account is taken of the higher costs faced by those who are disabled, half of people living in poverty are either themselves disabled or are living with a disabled person in their household.
- Changes to work patterns with more temporary and short term contracts, which mean that people are less able to depend on a regular or guaranteed level income.
- Changes to conditionality require consideration, especially the requirements for progress within work.

Summary of agreed actions:

We will develop **more systematically constructed support for employers, focused on poverty reduction**, with an emphasis on:

- Low-Pay Sectors
- Improving Line Management
- Small Employers
- Preventing people from dropping out of Work
- Consideration of particular approaches for at-risk groups e.g. lone parents, people from BME backgrounds

We have agreed a set of shorter- and longer-term actions in support of this, including

- Work to understand the issues and potential solutions from the employer perspective
- Review existing approaches and support available
- Connect with Trade Unions and any other employee representatives
- Restructure and re-focus support, where necessary, to make the support for employers effective in making the labour market work for those on low-incomes and articulate the offer in one place
- Support development of Skills Escalator and ensure Adult Education Budget (AEB) outcomes framework reinforces progression within work

We will develop **support for skills development and progression within work focused on poverty reduction**, with an emphasis on

- Increasing Pay, including Living Wage
- Training Offers by employers
- Apprenticeships
- Quality Part-Time Work
- Progression Support
- Consideration of particular approaches for at-risk groups e.g. lone parents, people from BME backgrounds

We have agreed a set of shorter- and longer-term actions in support of this, including

- Support the review of Fair Employer Campaign to include the above themes
- Link with LEP and SCR through SCPB and with Core Cities (who commissioned Inclusive Growth report) to connect with Inclusive Growth agenda

- Continue with restructuring employment support across city and city region through PSR, SCR pilots and own commissioning and influence
- Trial apprentice progression routes from the council to private sector to support most vulnerable groups, then move to other public sector and willing private sector partners to grow
- JCP trial focused on SMEs (staff retention, progress within work), then consider scaling up
- Press for progress within work to be considered more broadly
- Anchor Organisations including activities to develop skills and support progression within work (with a specific poverty reduction focus) as part of procurement, partnership and direct delivery
- Develop a strong proposition for the delivery of Inclusive Growth, incorporating poverty reduction and progression in work as the next phase of Devolution for the major cities and to inform public sector reform in Sheffield
- Focus the AEB on poverty reduction, considering how we support productivity gain (and what employers really want from this), infrastructure (skills and training providers), ensuring there is a clear and shared understanding of what good progression support looks like (and link this to business support service delivery), making better connections between local opportunities (e.g. excellence sector) and JCP and that funding pays for progression
- Establish a clear labour market analysis that allows the city to differentiate its response by sector and circumstance e.g. the specific interventions needed to open opportunity to the workless, address the low skill, low productivity, low pay dilemma that characterises too much of the local economy (including those in fragile, casual and part-time work) and to significantly improve graduate utilisation in the local labour market in jobs commensurate with their skills levels.

## Financial Inclusion

The new Financial Inclusion Strategy sets out the issues clearly:

- People's financial position has profound implications for their wellbeing.
- There is an increasing issue with over-indebtedness
- New regulation has impacted on high-cost doorstep and payday lenders
- National changes to the welfare system are having a significant impact on Sheffield
- The city's housing market is changing with more people living in private rented accommodation
- The type of jobs and the way people work has changed dramatically
- People are not seeking support early enough
- A lack of savings means that people are more exposed to financial shocks
- Life costs more for people with less money – a 'poverty premium'

The overarching approach is to:

- equip people with the right financial education, access to information and advice to prevent financial exclusion as far as is possible
- support people to be more financial resilient over time
- provide the tools and knowledge to avoid people slipping into financial exclusion at times of crisis
- provide robust and integrated services which support those who are most at risk of significant financial vulnerability

Key partners to the Strategy include: Sheffield City Council, Sheffield Citizens Advice, Sheffield Credit Union, Social landlords and Council Housing Service and the many voluntary and community sector organisations in the city that help people with financial issues.

Summary of agreed actions:

- The important work developed through this new Financial Inclusion strategy will contribute significantly to helping people in work and in poverty and the **Tackling Poverty Partnership is committed to supporting this strategy.**
- The Food Bank Network, Sheffield Citizens Advice, representatives from the VCF sector and Social Landlords will work together on a **proposal for how we could improve advocacy and support for people re DLA / PIP / ESA** and target resources at supporting people through appeals. (Attendees discussed a combination of volunteers and training). They will bring this to the Partnership for consideration and the Council will see whether resources could be identified.
- **Sheffield Citizens Advice will provide a 2 hour briefing for Cllrs on benefit changes** so they may support their constituents effectively.
- Council staff will consider how our **Financial Inclusion actions can support lone parents** (considering gender and socio-economic issues) and bring this information to the Partnership.
- We will **prioritise pursuing the activities in connection with financial sector** identified in the FI Strategy through LEP partners.
- We will explore how we could **work with local JCP** who are now more able to put their own business cases forward to DWP.
- We will **develop pathways to FI and poverty reduction services based on key trigger events.** We will consider how we can avoid ‘forming a queue’ but rather make direct referrals. This needs to involve teaching hospitals and GPs and HVs as well as CCG. We need to consider which other services, apart from advice, would form part of that FI / poverty reduction offer.
- We will **prioritise opt-out, or very easy opt-in, schemes** for employees (and via contracting, procurement, grant-aid and partnership). We will also explore how we could ramp this up with low pay sectors and SMEs (NOTE: this can link with actions from the In-Work Poverty workshop). We would need to think about a simple package for SMEs and others. This will focus on savings initially. Other options include pensions, home-contents insurance, dependent on people’s circumstances
- We will work on **involvement of Trade Unions** who can support employees to organise.

## Other priorities

- We will support the work of colleagues in Sheffield City Partnership Board and at Sheffield City Region in developing an effective **inclusive growth** strategy to have a strong poverty reduction focus.
- We would like to **develop a proposition for growth in housing**, including affordable housing. There is some great work happening in the city that responds to the recommendations set out by Joseph Rowntree Foundation. We will work with partners across the social and private rented sector to explore options for increasing the scale and impact of this work. There is a particular opportunity to support the increased impact and ownership of the affordable housing compact.
- We will support the **integration of more specialist services targeted at poverty reduction and mitigation**, such as employment, health and income hubs.
- We will also **encourage, seek funding for and support the integration of developments that aim to tackle the poverty premium** through offering ways to access lower cost food, energy, transport, credit, insurance and other household basics.
- Nationally, the percentage of decisions to grant refugee status in 2016 was the lowest in the past five years. There has been a steady decline in the decisions to grant discretionary leave to remain and the percentage of refusals increased.
- Partners will **continue to campaign for action to tackle the structural causes of poverty** and raise awareness of the hunger and hardship in our communities that are symptoms of lack of sufficient money. In particular, partners are keen to ensure that any voluntary support given does not lead to a lack of action to address the gap between income and the costs of essentials and this will be a focus for several partners this year.

- Work together to **nurture and support strong and resilient communities** across the city. This will mainly be through continued development of integrated working and building on community assets. We know that it is better for support to be co-ordinated and for it to address needs holistically; we know the characteristics of effective approaches from research. We also know that people prefer to access and offer support in ways that feel normal and embedded in their communities. The partnership will support neighbourhood and locality working and focus on embedding poverty reduction services within these approaches.
- Sheffield will soon launch a refreshed **Community Cohesion Framework**, which will support agencies and communities to proactively promote cohesion by identifying and implementing specific actions. The partners will support this work, recognising the links between poverty and cohesion.
- **Looking further ahead.** We will re-orient ourselves as a partnership so that we are thinking more about the future and changing context of our city so that we can get ahead of the challenges, be more prepared and less reactive. As a small way of beginning this process, we will devote at least two public workshops to this. We will work with people in the city and outside of it to think about the big changes over the next 10 to 20 years and consider them through a poverty and fairness lens. Our intention here is to consider what we can be doing now to try to ‘design out’ poor outcomes for the future.
- **Removing the Stigma of Poverty and Joblessness.** We know that people across the city are making huge contributions to this work, but don’t always feel connected to the partnership or know how to keep in touch with developments or influence decisions. We will **build on the positive developments from the Our Fair City campaign to work with the growing movement of people in Sheffield committed to Fairness and tackling stigma.**

## Next steps

The Partnership will:

1. share this report with the Sheffield City Partnership Board for discussion about the report content and recommendations and how best to connect the ongoing work of the partnership with the SCPB’s Inclusive Growth agenda
2. agree how the shared plans will fit within the new Fairness & Poverty structures so they can progress with appropriate governance in place
3. share this report with the chairs and supporting officers of the other key partnerships and boards for discussion about connections that can be made
4. review updates, at each partnership meeting, on the priority areas of work outlined above and provide support to ensure progress is being made.

## Appendix 1: Partners to the Strategy

The Tackling Poverty Strategy Partnership Group has continued to work together to oversee the implementation of the Strategy over the past year.

Peter Bradley, as the Sheffield City Partnership Board's lead on inclusion and poverty, chairs the group. Members include:

- Cabinet members and officers from Sheffield City Council
- Chamber of Commerce
- Clinical Commissioning Group officers and GP Commissioners
- Early Years provider representative
- Fairness Commissioners
- Foodbank Network representatives
- Jobcentre Plus
- LearnSheffield
- Sheffield Children's Hospital
- Sheffield Citizens Advice
- Sheffield College
- Sheffield Credit Union
- Sheffield Hallam University
- Sheffield Health & Social Care NHS Trust
- Sheffield Money
- Social & Private Sector Landlords' Forum representatives
- South Yorkshire Fire & Rescue Service
- South Yorkshire Passenger Transport Executive
- South Yorkshire Police
- University of Sheffield
- Voluntary Community & Faith Sector representatives
- Youth Justice Service

## Appendix 2: Key data sources

Key data sources used in compiling this report include:

- Adult Social Care Outcomes Framework: <http://content.digital.nhs.uk/article/3695/Adult-Social-Care-Outcomes-Framework-ASCOF>
- Every Child Matters survey: <https://www.sheffield.gov.uk/content/sheffield/home/schools-childcare/every-child-matters-survey.html>
- Experian
- HMRC personal tax credit statistics <https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/personal-tax-credits-children-in-low-income-families-local-measure-2014-snapshot-as-at-31-august-2014-30-september-2016>
- Households Below Average Income data: <https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/households-below-average-income-hbai--2>
- Joseph Rowntree Foundation: [www.jrf.org.uk](http://www.jrf.org.uk)
- National Highways & Transport survey <https://nhtsurvey.econtrack.com/>
- NOMIS: <https://www.nomisweb.co.uk/>
- Office for National Statistics: <https://www.ons.gov.uk/>
- Public Health Outcomes Framework: <http://www.phoutcomes.info/>
- Refugee Council [https://www.refugeecouncil.org.uk/policy\\_research/policy\\_work](https://www.refugeecouncil.org.uk/policy_research/policy_work)

- Sheffield City Council
- State of Sheffield reports <https://www.sheffieldcitypartnership.org/scp-reports>