

<b>Item No.</b> 10	<b>Classification:</b> Open	<b>Date:</b> 14 March 2024	<b>Meeting Name:</b> Health and Wellbeing Board
<b>Report title:</b>		Development of a Southwark Anti-Poverty Action Plan	
<b>Ward(s) or groups affected:</b>		All	
<b>From:</b>		Councillor Evelyn Akoto Cabinet Member for Health and Wellbeing, and Chair of the Health and Wellbeing Board	

## RECOMMENDATION(S)

That the Southwark Health and Wellbeing Board;

1. Note the work already established across the borough to tackle poverty and its far-reaching impacts for residents.
2. Agree to establish a Southwark Anti-Poverty Action Plan (the Plan) as part of our joint response to the ambitions being developed through Southwark 2030, and to review the Plan as part of a new annual cycle.
3. Establish a task-and-finish group to develop the first iteration of the Plan. Also, identify representatives to join the group, which will present back to the Board in November 2024.

## BACKGROUND INFORMATION

4. Southwark's Joint Health and Wellbeing Strategy 2022-2027 identifies that around 1 in 7 households in the borough have an income of less than £15,000 per year. Poverty thresholds as set out in the recent UK Poverty 2024 report from the Joseph Rowntree Foundation indicate that for many households this annual income would result in poverty, deep poverty or even destitution (UK Poverty 2024, JRF).
5. The Joint Southwark Needs Assessment (JSNA) Annual Report 2023 highlights the multiple impacts of poverty and the now enduring cost of living pressures on health and wellbeing, stating that *"Only by improving the social and economic conditions in which our residents live can we make meaningful and sustainable improvements in health and reduce inequalities"*.

6. The Southwark Economic Strategy 2022-2030 paints a picture of current circumstances for many residents, highlighting that significant increases to the cost of living threatened to bring more people into poverty and further impact those already in poverty.
7. The UK is now emerging from a second year of cost of living crisis measures. The Council is considering our response to what we expect to be enduring financial pressures which will continue to impact residents' lives in multiple ways. In light of anticipated reductions to financial support for the cost of living crisis from central government expected in the coming months, it is even more important to act now to develop a sustainable plan for a systems level response to poverty as one of the greatest of our shared challenges.
8. Southwark Council and our partners are already working together with communities and partners to develop Southwark 2030 - a shared vision for the borough. That vision will build on our shared commitment to tackle poverty, racism and discrimination, as well as inequalities in health, education, housing, and employment. In support of that, and recognising growing pressures across the system to do more with less, the Council is inviting partners to join us to develop a borough-wide plan around tackling poverty.

## **KEY ISSUES FOR CONSIDERATION**

### **Ambitions for the Southwark Anti-Poverty Action Plan**

9. The Southwark Joint Health and Wellbeing Strategy 2022-2027 sets out the strategic priorities for the Board, with a clear focus on wider determinants of health.
10. The Southwark Anti-Poverty Action Plan (the Plan) will provide a framework to enable the Board to consider our contribution to tackling poverty as both a wider determinant of - and causal factor in - poor health. The Plan will provide a clear point of focus for the Board to ensure the best efforts of colleagues from across our organisations are focused where they are needed most.
11. Once developed, the Plan will become a mechanism for assuring the Borough's response to ongoing cost of living pressures for residents, facilitating a joined-up approach as a tool for discussion at a strategic level. It will enable prioritisation based on shared vision, objectives, outcomes and measures of success.
12. Existing measures could be included, for example outcome frameworks and activities around healthy employment from Southwark's Joint Health and Wellbeing Strategy could be linked to the Plan and reviewed against other relevant outcome measures such as those tracked by Southwark Works, Southwark Stands Together and employment schemes.

13. A wide range of strategies and initiatives to tackle poverty are already in place across Southwark. Examples of some of the many activities identified in the mapping exercise are included below, grouped by type of activity with examples of each type:
  - Support for residents who face the most barriers to employment
    - Work with employers for increased inclusive recruitment (Jobcentre Plus, Southwark Works)
    - Paid internships created; Council internships supporting young people from disadvantaged backgrounds
  - Support for residents hit hardest by the cost of living crisis
    - Direct support to low income and vulnerable households
    - One-off cash support for Southwark care leavers and those receiving domiciliary care, housing benefits and for school uniform grant top-up
    - Cost of living roadshows with Citizens Advice Southwark
    - Warm Hubs or Warm Spaces
  - Right to Food
    - Food vouchers (Council and partners)
    - Uptake of Healthy Start In Southwark (national scheme)
  - Sustainable food strategy
    - Food growing plots
    - Convenience stores signing up to stock healthier food
    - Dignity champions
  - Grow Southwark's health and care industries and jobs
    - SC1 Partnerships
    - Healthcare Sector-based Work Academy Programme (SWAP) at Southwark College in partnership with Guys and St Thomas' NHS Foundation Trust and Southwark Works
  - Childrens' services tackling future poverty
    - Family Hubs
    - SEN programmes
    - Leaving care services
    - Youth Justice services
    - Youth Carers Service
  - Local Welfare provisions such as Council Tax Reduction, Southwark's Local Welfare Assistance scheme and Discretionary Housing Payments.
14. Further work is required to more fully map and reflect the work of all partners and ensure a truly holistic picture of activity in the borough.
15. The Southwark Health and Wellbeing Board will have a key role in the identification, review and monitoring of outcomes from the Plan. The Plan will support existing strategies, providing a broader context for the work of individual teams and partners and linking existing strategies and activities such as the Southwark Joint Health and Wellbeing Strategy 2022-2027, the Southwark Council Cost of Living Fund, and the Southwark Economic Strategy 2022-2030.

16. The role of the Southwark Health and Wellbeing Board in overseeing the Plan could take a similar three-tiered approach to the Southwark Joint Health and Wellbeing Strategy in that there will be areas where the Board will drive and strengthen activities, areas where the Board will monitor progress on existing strategies and highlight when further detail is required, and areas where decision-making sits outside of the Board and therefore the Board's role will be to observe and influence.

## NEXT STEPS

### Developing the Plan

17. It is proposed that a task and finish group be set up to develop the Anti-Poverty Action Plan, building upon the initial mapping exercise and information gathered to ensure that all relevant stakeholders are identified and included in the process. A proposed timeline for this is outlined below:

Milestone	Timeline
Establish task and finish group to develop the first iteration of the Plan	March to June 2024
Review the Plan and align to Southwark 2030	June to July 2024
First review of the Plan by the Board	November 2024

### Annual review – what could it look like?

18. It is suggested that the review be undertaken by the Board periodically and ahead of increased winter pressures.
19. An annual review of the Plan by the Southwark Health and Wellbeing Board could include:
  - Reviewing the Plan against agreed shared vision and outcomes;
  - Identifying any gaps in provision, providing direction, guidance or suggestions on how any gaps might be closed;
  - Identifying any relevant strategies or services not included in the Plan;
  - Identifying potential or actual duplication of effort across activities within the Plan, providing direction, guidance or suggestions on ways to reconcile duplication;
  - Identifying opportunities where teams or partners might work together to enhance existing provision.

## **Policy framework implications**

20. The Southwark Anti-Poverty Action Plan will draw together existing strategies and activities to enable a sustainable and joined-up approach, bringing together the numerous activities already taking place across the borough to address poverty thereby allowing for strategic oversight for our shared vision and outcomes.
21. A review cycle will provide an opportunity to enhance existing provision across a range of services. This will in turn support existing strategies such as the Southwark Joint Health and Wellbeing Strategy 2022-2027.
22. The shared vision and outcomes for the Plan will be aligned with the goals we will agree under Southwark 2030, and the Plan will form part of our shared response to those Southwark 2030 ambitions.

## **Community, equalities (including socio-economic) and health impacts**

23. Members of the Board have worked with partners from across the borough to establish our shared Southwark 2030 vision and strategy, and Southwark and our strategic partners and leads are working together to tackle poverty, racism and discrimination, as well as inequalities in health, education, housing, and employment.
24. The Plan will contribute to that work, providing a framework to enable the Board to consider our contribution to tackling poverty as one of the wider determinants of health and a key element of Southwark's goal of closing the gap in life chances.

### **Community impact statement**

25. The recommendations in this report aim to help the work across Southwark relating to tackling poverty to be as effective as possible, supporting a coordinated and comprehensive approach which can only be of benefit to residents and communities.
26. The Plan provides an opportunity to enhance existing provision across a range of services with a focus on tackling poverty as one of the greatest of our shared challenges as a borough.

### **Equalities (including socio-economic) impact statement**

27. Southwark's Joint Health and Wellbeing Strategy 2022-2027 sets out our commitment to improving the health and wellbeing of all residents in Southwark, with a focus on reducing inequalities which are recognised to have been exacerbated by the cost of living crisis. The JSNA Annual Report 2023 highlighted how the cost of living crisis has disproportionality impacted low-income households.

28. The Plan will provide a framework to enable the Board to consider our contribution to tackling poverty as one of the wider determinants of health, to ensure the best efforts of colleagues from across our organisations are focused where they are needed most and ensuring that closing the gap in life chances is at the heart of all we are doing together.

### **Health impact statement**

29. Southwark's Joint Health and Wellbeing Strategy 2022-2027 references poverty, low incomes and the wider determinants of health as having a significant influence on health outcomes.
30. Taking forward the recommendations in this report should help the work across Southwark around tackling poverty be as effective as possible. The Plan will provide a framework to enable the Board to consider our contribution to tackling poverty as one of the wider determinants of health to ensure the best efforts of colleagues from across our organisations are focused where they are needed most.

### **Climate change implications**

31. There are no immediate climate change implications.

### **Resource implications**

32. There are no resource implications as a direct result of this report.

### **Legal implications**

33. There are no legal implications as a direct result of this report.

### **Financial implications**

34. There are no immediate financial implications as a direct result of this report.

### **Consultation**

35. This report follows a mapping exercise which was developed through engagement work across a range of departments and conversation with the Partnership Southwark leadership group.

## BACKGROUND DOCUMENTS

Background Papers	Held At	Contact
None		

## APPENDICES

No.	Title
None	

## AUDIT TRAIL

<b>Lead Officer</b>	David Quirke-Thornton, Strategic Director for Children's and Adults' Services	
<b>Report Author</b>	Sarah Girling, Principal Programme Manager	
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<b>Dated</b>	01/03/24	
<b>Key Decision?</b>	No	
<b>CONSULTATION WITH OTHER OFFICERS / DIRECTORATES / CABINET MEMBER</b>		
<b>Officer Title</b>	<b>Comments Sought</b>	<b>Comments Included</b>
Assistant Chief Executive Governance and Assurance	No	No
Strategic Director, Finance	No	No
Cabinet Member	Yes	Yes
Date final report sent to Constitutional Team	1 March 2024	