

A strategy to tackle child poverty in Bedford Borough

2009-2011



Draft

August 2009

Bedfordshire Child Poverty Network

INTRODUCTION

1. BACKGROUND

Poverty blights the daily lives of many children, families and communities and touches everyone in society. Various research has shown that prolonged periods of poverty and material deprivation have long lasting detrimental effects on children.

There is common consensus that children should grow up free from deprivation and disadvantage and should not be held back from achieving their full potential by birth and social background.

Tackling child poverty is therefore vital. It can help reduce inequalities and deprivation and can improve the life chances of many of our children and young people.

This document sets out the first steps in a strategic approach to tackle child poverty within the Bedford Borough area. The strategy will be supported by a realistic **action plan** which will help achieve the desired outcomes in trying to reduce child poverty.

The strategy has been prepared in response to the inclusion of **National Indicator NI 116** as a local indicator in the Local Area Agreement for Bedfordshire (from June 2008) and then for the new Unitary Authority area in Bedford Borough (from April 2009).

This indicator aims to "Reduce the proportion of children in poverty in Bedford Borough".

2. NATIONAL CONTEXT

The Government defines child poverty as:

"Children in Britain can be said to live in poverty when they live in families which lack the resources to enable their children to participate in the activities and have the living conditions and amenities which are customary, or at least widely encouraged or approved"

(Child Poverty in the UK, Work and Pensions Committee, Second Report of Session 2003-04)

Since 2003 child poverty in the UK has been officially measured by the Government using a tiered approach, which uses a set of inter-related indicators which capture different aspects of poverty. The objective of the Government is to make progress against all three indicators.

The Government's three child poverty indicators are:

1. Children experiencing relative low income – defined as children in households with incomes below the poverty line (60% of the current national median income). This is the headline measurement used by the Government. Using this measure there are currently 2.9 million children (23%) living in poverty

2. Children experiencing material deprivation and relative low income combined – defined as children in households with incomes below 70% of the current national median and who are experiencing material deprivation (ie goods and services which poor families are less likely to be able to afford for their children).

3. Children experiencing absolute low income – defined as children in households with incomes below a particular threshold (from 1998/99) which is adjusted each year for inflation.

It should be noted that these official indicators do not take into account the cost of housing. **Child Poverty Action Group**, the national campaigning charity, prefers to use after housing costs data, as this gives a better indication of real disposable incomes. Using this measurement CPAG estimates that there are about 4 million children (31%) living in poverty in the UK.

The latest figures on national child poverty are given below.

**Children in poverty using various measures
(% of children)**

Year	Official measures (all before housing costs)			CPAG measure (low income after housing costs)
	Relative low income	Material deprivation and relative low income	Absolute low income	
1998/99	26	-	26	34
1999/00	26	-	23	33
2000/01	23	-	19	31
2001/02	23	-	15	31
2002/03	23	-	14	30
2003/04	22	-	14	29
2004/05	21	17	13	28
2005/06	22	16	13	30
2006/07	22	16	13	30
2007/08	23	17	13	31

Source: National Statistics on Households Below Average Income (HBAI) - produced by the Department for Work and Pensions - released on 7 May 2009

In 1999 the Government made a commitment to halve child poverty in the UK by 2010 and eradicate child poverty by 2020.

The Government's current strategy on child poverty is outlined in four important documents.

Ending child poverty: everybody's business

(HM Treasury, DWP, DCSF, March 2008)

This document set out the steps to be taken by central Government to help meet their 2010 and 2020 targets.

The document also listed all the Government policies and funding initiatives related to tackling child poverty

Ending child poverty: making it happen

(Child Poverty Unit, January 2009)

This consultation document gave a strong indication of the future direction of travel for local authorities and their delivery partners in tackling child poverty effectively in local communities and making sure it is everybody's business.

Child Poverty Bill

(HM Treasury, DWP, DCSF, June 2009)

This Bill aims to enshrine in law the Government's commitment to eradicate child poverty by 2020. It will require the Government to: publish a UK child poverty strategy; establish a Child Poverty Commission; and publish annual progress reports.

Progress towards the eradication of child poverty will be measured against four income targets which will cover: relative poverty; material deprivation; persistent poverty; and absolute low income.

The Bill will also place duties on local authorities and local delivery partners to work together to tackle child poverty. There will be a legal duty to:

- Conduct a local needs assessment
- Produce a child poverty strategy
- Take child poverty into account in the production and revision of Sustainable Community Strategies

Take up the Challenge

(Child Poverty Unit, June 2009)

This is the report of the Government's recently formed **Take-up Taskforce**. The Taskforce was asked to develop ways to help local services to support parents to access their full benefit entitlement.

The report gives examples of good practice in benefit take-up work from across the country.

Various support materials will be produced later this year to help local authorities and partners take positive action in their local areas.

3. LOCAL CONTEXT

In Bedfordshire a decision was taken in 2008 (see page 1 of this document) to include a local indicator in Bedfordshire's Local Area Agreement to reduce the proportion of children in poverty.

From April 2009, this indicator has been transferred to the new Local Area Agreement for Bedford Borough.

The **LAA Delivery Plan for NI 116**, was drafted in October 2008 with the following objectives for 2008/09:

- Set-up, launch and facilitate a county-wide poverty network to plan and oversee the development work related to the indicator.
- Conduct research into child poverty and its impact in Bedfordshire.
- Set a baseline for NI 116 and targets for 2009/10 and 2010/11.
- Develop a strategy to tackle child poverty in Bedfordshire.
- Agree an action plan for 2009/10.

An update on the progress made in 2008/09 is given below.

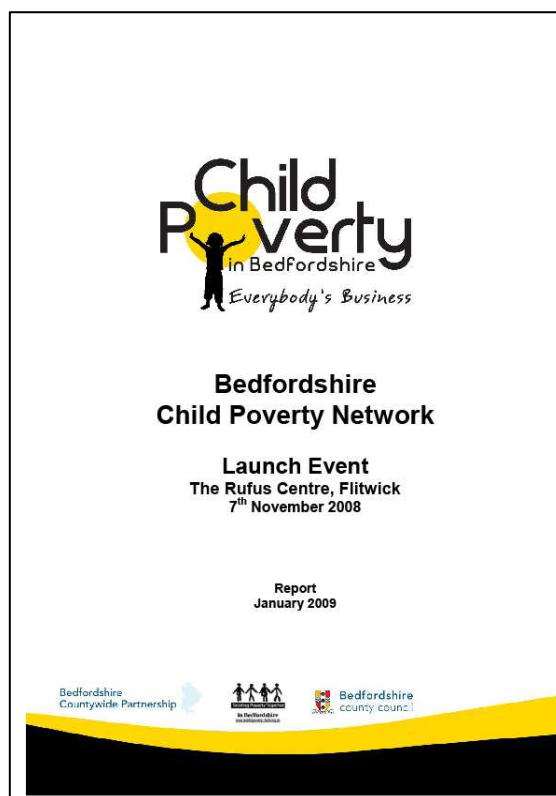
A new Delivery Plan for 2009/10 is currently being developed for the Bedford Borough Local Area Agreement.

Child Poverty Network

In November 2008 a county-wide Child Poverty Event was held to raise awareness of national and local child poverty and launch a **Bedfordshire Child Poverty Network**.

Over 100 people joined the new network, and 87 attended the launch event.

A full report on the event is available on the child poverty page of the Bedfordshire Tackling Poverty Together Group's website:
www.tacklingpoverty-beds.org.uk

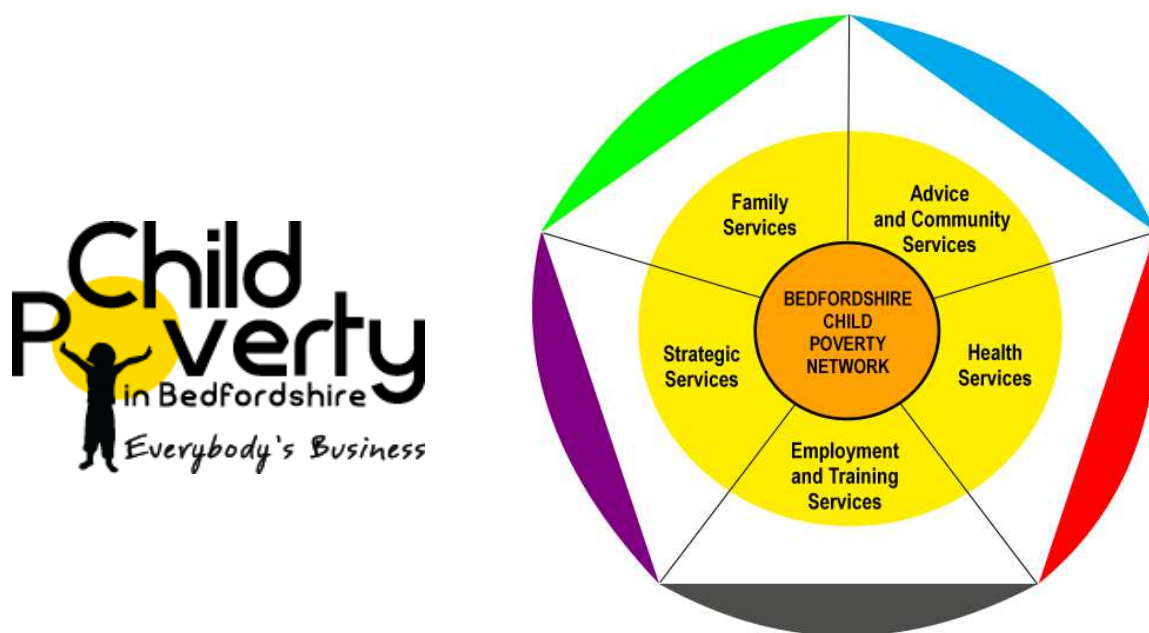


As a result of the event, a countywide, multi-agency **Child Poverty Task Group** was formed in early 2009 to provide strategic leadership for tackling child poverty in Bedfordshire. Meetings were held in February and March 2009.

Details of the membership of the Task Group can be found in **Appendix 1**.

The Terms of Reference for the Task Group can be found on the TPT Group's website: www.tacklingpoverty-beds.org.uk

An important function of the Network and Task Group was to raise awareness that tackling child poverty is **everybody's business** - and that representatives from five key sectors need to be involved in the Task Group.



In March 2009 it was agreed that the Task Group would continue to act as a countywide group in 2009/10 despite the split into two Unitary Authorities in April 2009. Meetings of the Task Group were then held in May and July 2009. However, at the last meeting in July, it was decided that the countywide Task Group should cease to meet and that separate arrangements would need to be made in Bedford Borough and Central Bedfordshire.

Research into local child poverty

As an early priority, the Task Group commissioned some initial research into child poverty in Bedfordshire. The report on the research was published in May 2009.

The findings from the research have been used to inform this strategy - see pages 10-13 of this document for further details.

It will be important to conduct further research in the future to update the statistics on local child poverty and to find out more about the impact of child poverty on the lives of local children and families.

Baseline for NI 116

The data used by the Government to measure child poverty (see page 3 of this document) is not yet available on a local level and therefore cannot be used in Bedfordshire as a measurement for NI 116 (the indicator of child poverty in the Local Area Indicator).

Until new data is available, a proxy measure for NI 116 will need to be used. Using the findings from the local research report, the Child Poverty Task Group has decided to use the **proportion of children living in low income families** as a proxy measure. This measurement is based on data collected from Child Benefit, Child Tax Credit and Working Tax Credit statistics.

In Bedford Borough **39% of children live in low income families**. This figure has been adopted as the baseline figure for NI 116 for 2009.

Future strategies and action plans

With the creation of two new Unitary Authorities in Bedfordshire on 1st April 2009, each new authority will need to set specific targets for 2009/10 and 2010/2011 as part of their own Local Area Agreements. As part of this work it was also agreed to develop a **child poverty strategy** and action plan for each area.

New **Lead Agencies and Lead Officers for NI 116** were appointed for Bedford Borough and Central Bedfordshire with effect from 1 April 2009 as follows:

Bedford Borough

Lead Agency for NI 116 - Bedford Borough Council

Lead Officer for NI 116 - Assistant Director, Integrated Services 0-19

Thematic Partnership responsible for NI 116 - Social Inclusion, Social Cohesion and Culture Thematic Partnership.

Overall responsibility for the LAA - Bedford Borough Partnership

Central Bedfordshire

Lead Agency for NI 116 - Central Bedfordshire Council

Lead Officer for NI 116 - Head of Early Childhood Intervention and Prevention

Thematic Partnership responsible for NI 116 - Stronger Communities Thematic Partnership

Overall responsibility for the LAA - Central Bedfordshire Local Strategic Partnership

In order to tackle all aspects of the causes of poverty, there will be need for co-ordinated action not just in relation to the designated thematic partnerships specifically focused on social inclusion/stronger communities, but across all five of the blocks in the **Local Area Agreement**:

- Growing our economy
- Protecting and enhancing our environment
- Delivering good health and well-being
- Raising the aspirations of our children and young people
- Building cohesive, strong and safe communities

The key link between the Child Poverty Strategy and Bedford Borough's existing strategic framework is through the **Sustainable Community Strategy** which acts as the cross-cutting strategy for the local community. It will be important to make sure that the Child Poverty Strategy and Sustainable Community Strategy are closely linked in the future.

It will also be important to link the child poverty strategy to future work on the **Comprehensive Area Agreement** in Bedford Borough.

FUTURE STRATEGY TO TACKLE CHILD POVERTY IN BEDFORD BOROUGH

1. VISION

Our vision is to work in partnership to reduce the proportion of children living in poverty in Bedford Borough - and make a real difference to children's lives

Tackling child poverty is everybody's business and the main principles that underpin this work should be **equality and inclusivity**. It is therefore important for this strategy, and any associated action plans, to be equality impact assessed. This will therefore be built into the Delivery Plan for NI 116 for 2009/10.

2. AIMS OF THE STRATEGY

The aims of this initial strategy of the Child Poverty Network is to encourage local organisations to work in partnership to:

1. Establish an effective system of measuring child poverty in the Bedford Borough area to evaluate the impact of the strategy on future levels of local child poverty
2. Ensure that tackling child poverty becomes an essential part of the strategic agenda in the Bedford Borough area and that appropriate funding is allocated to tackle local child poverty
3. Evaluate how child poverty is currently being tackled in the Bedford Borough area
4. Ensure that current services are fit for purpose and are as effective as possible in tackling local child poverty
5. Plan coordinated services to tackle child poverty that will have a real impact on children and their families in Bedford Borough

3. RESEARCH TO SUPPORT THE STRATEGY

The Child Poverty Task Group commissioned some initial research into child poverty in Bedfordshire early in 2009. The research report, ***Child Poverty in Bedfordshire***, was published in May.

A copy of the full research report, and a summary report, is available on the child poverty page of the Tackling Poverty Together Group's website:

www.tacklingpoverty-beds.org.uk

The research looked at: child poverty in the UK; statistics on child poverty in Bedfordshire; and opinions on how to tackle child poverty in Bedfordshire. Further details on the local aspects of the research are given overleaf.

Statistics used in the research

The figures that the Government uses to measure child poverty are not currently available at a local level. Therefore local data for the research was taken from other sources:

- **The Income Deprivation Affecting Children Index (IDACI)** which measures income deprivation for families with children (under 16) in Local Super Output Areas (ie small geographical areas within wards).
- **Tax Credit data** which gives information on the number of claimants of Child Tax Credit and Working Tax Credit. Proxy measurements for child poverty - the proportion of children living in workless families, and the proportion of children living in low income families - can be obtained from this data. The data covers children aged 0-16 and those aged 16-19 in non-advanced education.

The statistics show that almost 13,200 children (14%) live in workless families in Bedfordshire and about 28,500 children (31%) live in low income families.

- **Other local data** showed that child poverty is linked closely to under achievement at school, poor health and lower life expectancy.

Child poverty in Bedford Borough

- **9 Local Super Output Areas in Bedford are ranked in the top 10% in England for child poverty¹**

These 9 LSOAs are in the wards of Castle, Harpur, Kingsbrook, Goldington, Queens Park, Cauldwell and Kempston North

- **19% of children (over 6,500 children) live in workless families²**

In the wards of Kingsbrook, Queens Park, Cauldwell and Goldington this figure rises to over 30%

In the Bedford Parliamentary Constituency area (which is the urban part of the Borough in Bedford and Kempston), 23% of children live in workless families

- **39% of children (over 13,600) live in low income families²**

In the wards of Queens Park, Cauldwell, Kingsbrook and Goldington this figure rises to over 50%

Notes

¹ Indices of Deprivation 2007 - Income Deprivation Affecting Children Index

² Figures published by End Child Poverty in 2008 - www.endchildpoverty.org.uk - The figures are based on the latest available Child Benefit geographical statistics (August 2006) and the latest finalised Tax Credit geographical statistics (2006/07)

The table below gives the 10 wards with the highest proportion of children in low income families in Bedford Borough. See **Appendix 2** for the full list of wards in Bedford Borough.

Children in low income families - Bedford Borough

Local Authority	All children	Children in workless families		Children in families on Working Tax Credit		Total children in low income families	
	Number	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent
Bedford	34,945	6,510	19%	7,100	20%	13,610	39%
Ward							
Queen's Park	2,345	805	34%	670	29%	1,475	63%
Cauldwell	2,435	790	32%	655	27%	1,445	59%
Kingsbrook	2,345	840	36%	555	24%	1,395	59%
Goldington	2,480	770	31%	580	23%	1,350	54%
Kempston North	1,430	415	29%	270	19%	685	48%
Eastcotts	980	230	23%	225	23%	455	46%
Harpur	1,165	235	20%	265	23%	500	43%
Kempston South	1,995	410	21%	375	19%	785	39%
Castle	1,690	290	17%	350	21%	640	38%
Kempston East	1,405	205	15%	280	20%	485	35%

Source: End Child Poverty (2008) - www.endchildpoverty.org.uk - The figures are based on the latest available Child Benefit geographical statistics (August 2006) and the latest finalised Tax Credit geographical statistics (2006/07)

How to tackle local child poverty

The research also collected various **opinions on how to tackle child poverty** in Bedfordshire from local professionals working in the anti-poverty field.

The following quotes illustrate some of the key themes that appeared in the comments:

"Child poverty is not just about children, it is about families - and is everybody's business".

"There is a need for more collaborative working and more flexible, integrated and preventative services"

"Although Bedfordshire is generally affluent, there are pockets of high deprivation - and it is unacceptable to have even these small pockets of poverty"

"More commitment, political leadership and strategic thinking is needed on poverty issues in Bedfordshire".

"An holistic approach is needed by local councils, and key partners, to tackle child poverty - and LGR provides a great opportunity to take this forward".

Recommendations from the research

The recommendations from the research were:

1. The statistical information gained through this research should be used to help:

- (a) Set local baselines to measure child poverty
- (b) Develop strategies to tackle child poverty in Bedford Borough and in Central Bedfordshire

2. The opinions on how to tackle child poverty, which are recorded in this report, should be taken into consideration:

(a) By the new Child Poverty Network

The Network (and Task Group) should continue to:

- Raise the profile of child poverty issues
- Promote the idea that even having small pockets of child poverty in Bedfordshire is unacceptable
- Stress that child poverty is everybody's business - by developing the links between partners across all the sectors affected by child poverty
- Undertake further research into local child poverty - the next stage could be some qualitative research into the impact of poverty on local families

(b) When developing child poverty strategies

The local strategies should encourage:

- An holistic approach to tackling poverty with more collaborative working between partners
- The development of stronger links between adult and children's services
- More flexible, integrated, and preventative services

The strategies need to consider:

- Using poverty impact assessments in new policies and strategies
- Using a mixture of area based and individual based interventions - including interventions in rural areas
- Suggesting that a senior Council officer in Bedford Borough and Central Bedfordshire is appointed to be responsible for promoting, implementing and monitoring the strategies - to show a high level of Council commitment
- How to link the strategic approach on child poverty into the wider Sustainable Community Strategy

4. OBJECTIVES FOR 2009/10

Based on the vision and aims of this strategy, and the research on local child poverty, the following objectives have been set for 2009/10.

VISION: To work in partnership to reduce the proportion of children living in poverty in Bedford Borough - and make a real difference to children's lives

AIM 1: Establish an effective system for measuring child poverty in the Bedford Borough area to evaluate the impact of the strategy on future levels of local child poverty

Objective (a): Agree a baseline measurement for child poverty in the Bedford Borough area for 2009

Objective (b): Update the statistics in the *Child Poverty in Bedfordshire* report on an annual basis to review the levels of child poverty in the Bedford Borough area

Objective (c): Commission some further research to find out more about the real impact of child poverty on the lives of children and families in the Bedford Borough area

AIM 2: Ensure that tackling child poverty becomes an essential part of the strategic agenda in the Bedford Borough area and that appropriate funding is allocated to tackle child poverty

Objective (d): Review and refresh the arrangements for overseeing the work on NI 116 in the Bedford Borough area

Objective (e): Produce and distribute regular information and updates on child poverty issues to continue to raise general awareness of child poverty in the Bedford Borough area

Objective (f): Ensure that child poverty issues are taken into account in the refresh of the Sustainable Community Strategy for Bedford Borough

Objective (g): Develop a template and some guidance on how strategies and policies can be "child poverty proofed"

Objective (h): Encourage Bedford Borough Council, and other key local partners, to give a commitment to "child poverty proof" new strategies and policies that will affect children and families

Objective (i): Encourage Bedford Borough Council to nominate a Councillor to become a child poverty champion and to appoint a specialist officer responsible for child poverty issues

AIM 3: Evaluate how child poverty is currently being tackled in the Bedford Borough area

Objective (j): Distribute a questionnaire to Child Poverty Task Group members to collect information on current projects and activities relating to tackling child poverty in the Bedford Borough area

Objective (k): Analyse the responses to the mapping questionnaire and identify any gaps in provision in the Bedford Borough area

Objective (l): Update the information on current child poverty related projects and activities on a regular basis

AIM 4: Ensure that current services are fit for purpose and are as effective as possible in tackling local child poverty

Objective (m): Develop an evaluation tool (with success criteria and guidance material) on how to evaluate the success of a local child poverty project or activity

Objective (n): Pilot the evaluation tool with some local projects or activities

AIM 5: Plan coordinated services to tackle child poverty that will have a real impact on children and their families in Bedford Borough

Objective (o): Plan future coordinated activities amongst partners to tackle child poverty in the Bedford Borough area - following completion of objectives (j) and (k).

These collaborative activities should incorporate:

- An holistic approach to tackling child poverty
- Develop stronger links between different sectors (eg adult and children's services)
- Flexible, integrated, and preventative services

The activities should use a mixture of area based and individual based interventions - and should include interventions in rural areas as well as urban areas

The activities should also take into account the recommendations in the **Take up the Challenge** report (see page 4 of this document)

Activities should be planned across all five of the sectors represented in the Child Poverty Network.

5. ACTION PLAN FOR 2009/10

The action plan for 2009/10 is included as **Appendix 3** of this document.

A revised action plan for 2010/11 should be agreed in April 2010.

6. EXPECTATIONS OF THE STRATEGY

This is the first child poverty strategy that has been developed for Bedford Borough. It therefore needs to be recognised that the strategy will need to be enhanced and developed as time goes on.

It also needs to be recognised that although many services are planned at local authority level, there are some strategic functions that are planned at national, regional and sub-regional levels over which locally we can have little or no impact.

There therefore needs to be a realistic approach to what can be achieved in terms of tackling child poverty in the short, medium and longer term.

7. RESOURCES

As part of the work in mapping current services relating to child poverty (see objectives (j) and (k) in the 2009/10 action plan), details of the resources being used to tackle child poverty will be obtained. This information will give a picture of the resources, from national, regional and local sources, are already being used to tackle local child poverty.

It will be important to consider whether any future resources will be available, from appropriate sources, to meet any of the gaps that are identified in service provision.

Although funding may be available from national and regional sources for specific projects and activities, it will also be important for local resources to be allocated, by key partners in Bedford Borough Partnership, towards tackling child poverty.

8. MONITORING OF STRATEGY

This strategy will need to be reviewed on an annual basis.

It will also be important to evaluate the success of this strategy in the longer term.

APPENDIX 1

CHILD POVERTY TASK GROUP

Introduction

A Task Group was formed in early 2009 to represent, and oversee the work of, the new Child Poverty Network.

It is essential that plans and action to tackle child poverty are cross-cutting and involve a wide range of organisations from family services, advice and community services, health services, employment and training services, and strategic services.

Membership of the Task Group therefore covered all these sectors and consisted of representatives from:

- Family Services (16 members)
- Advice and Community Services (6 members)
- Health Services (3 members)
- Employment and Training Services (5 members)
- Strategic services (6 members)

There were 36 places on the Task Group - see below.

NB It will now be important to review these arrangements because a decision was made in July 2009 that the countywide Task Group should cease meeting and that work on tackling child poverty should be taken forward separately in Bedford Borough and Central Bedfordshire.

Family services
Organisation
Bedford Borough Council (Children's Services)
Integrated Services 0-19
Commissioning and Business Support
Early Intervention and Prevention, Childcare Development, Extended Schools and Children's Centres
Education Welfare and Integrated Youth Support Services
Children with Disabilities
Looked After Children
Travellers and Asylum Seekers
Bedford Borough Council (Adult Services)
Central Bedfordshire Council (Children's Services)
Development and Commissioning
Early Intervention and Prevention, Childcare Development, Extended Schools and Children's Centres
Education Welfare and Integrated Youth Support Services
Children with Disabilities
Looked After Children
Travellers and Asylum Seekers
Central Bedfordshire Council (Adult Services)
Voluntary Organisations Consortium

Advice and Community Services

Organisation

Voluntary sector

Advice sector / BME representative (BAF / BREC)

General member / rural representative (BRCC)

Bedford Borough Council

Benefits and Community Welfare Service

Library Services

Central Bedfordshire Council (Library Services)

Housing Association Liaison Group (Bedford) - BPHA

Aragon Housing Association

Health Services

Organisation

NHS Bedfordshire

Public Health

Provider Services

Commissioning Services

Employment and Training Services

Organisation

Bedford Borough Council (Economic Growth)

Central Bedfordshire Council (Economic Growth)

Jobcentre Plus

Learning and Skills Council (NB Invited but membership not agreed yet)

The Chamber (NB Invited but membership not agreed yet)

Strategic Services

Organisation

Bedford Borough Council

LAA strategic officer

Portfolio Holder for Children's Services

Portfolio Holder for Adult Services

Central Bedfordshire Council

LAA strategic officer

Portfolio Holder for Children's Services

Portfolio Holder for Adult Services

APPENDIX 2

CHILDREN IN LOW INCOME FAMILIES - BEDFORD BOROUGH

	All children	Children in workless families		Children in families on Working Tax Credit		Total children in low-income families	
	Number	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent
Local Authority							
Bedford Borough	34,945	6,510	19%	7,100	20%	13,610	39%
Ward							
Queen's Park	2,345	805	34%	670	29%	1,475	63%
Cauldwell	2,435	790	32%	655	27%	1,445	59%
Kingsbrook	2,345	840	36%	555	24%	1,395	59%
Goldington	2,480	770	31%	580	23%	1,350	54%
Kempston North	1,430	415	29%	270	19%	685	48%
Eastcotts	980	230	23%	225	23%	455	46%
Harpur	1,165	235	20%	265	23%	500	43%
Kempston South	1,995	410	21%	375	19%	785	39%
Castle	1,690	290	17%	350	21%	640	38%
Kempston East	1,405	205	15%	280	20%	485	35%
Newnham	1,385	175	13%	220	16%	395	29%
Wilshamstead	1,165	165	14%	160	14%	325	28%
Brickhill	1,790	215	12%	240	13%	455	25%
Clapham	1,340	145	11%	170	13%	315	24%
Putnoe	1,805	165	9%	275	15%	440	24%
Wootton	1,330	180	14%	140	11%	320	24%
Great Barford	950	85	9%	135	14%	220	23%
Riseley	610	40	7%	85	14%	125	20%
De Parys	810	50	6%	100	12%	150	19%
Harrold	730	50	7%	90	12%	140	19%
Roxton	600	45	8%	65	11%	110	18%
Turvey	585	40	7%	60	10%	100	17%
Carlton	530	35	7%	50	9%	85	16%
Oakley	610	10	2%	75	12%	85	14%
Sharnbrook	695	40	6%	60	9%	100	14%
Bromham	1,750	65	4%	145	8%	210	12%

Source: End Child Poverty (2008) - www.endchildpoverty.org.uk - The figures are based on the latest available Child Benefit geographical statistics (August 2006) and the latest finalised Tax Credit geographical statistics (2006/07)

APPENDIX 3

ACTION PLAN FOR 2009/10

VISION: To work in partnership to reduce the proportion of children living in poverty in Bedford Borough - and make a real difference to children's lives

AIM 1: Establish an effective system for measuring child poverty in the Bedford Borough area to evaluate the impact of the strategy on future levels of local child poverty

Objective		Further details	Responsibility	Target date
a	Agree a baseline measurement for child poverty in the Bedford Borough area for 2009	Agreed baseline is proportion of children in low income families (39% in Bedford Borough)	Child Poverty Task Group	May 2009
b	Update the statistics in the <i>Child Poverty in Bedfordshire</i> report on an annual basis to review the levels of child poverty in the Bedford Borough area	Need to update statistics used in 2009 report and collate any relevant new statistics		Spring 2010
c	Commission some further research to find out more about the real impact of child poverty on the lives of children and families in the Bedford Borough area	Agreed to plan a documentary film on child poverty in Bedfordshire	Partners in Child Poverty Task Group	Summer 2009

AIM 2: Ensure that tackling child poverty becomes an essential part of the strategic agenda in the Bedford Borough area and that appropriate funding is allocated to tackle child poverty

Objective		Further details	Responsibility	Target date
d	Review and refresh the arrangements for overseeing the work on NI 116 in the Bedford Borough area	New arrangements need to be set up to replace the countywide Child Poverty Task Group. The new structure needs to be aligned with local thematic partnerships responsible for implementation of the Local Area Agreement and the Sustainable Community Strategy		Autumn 2009
e	Produce and distribute regular information and updates on child poverty issues to continue to raise general awareness of child poverty in the Bedford Borough area	Information will include articles in <i>Poverty News</i> and updates to child poverty page on TPT website	TPT Group	Ongoing
f	Ensure that child poverty issues are taken into account in the refresh of the Sustainable Community Strategy for Bedford Borough	Strategy was discussed at Task Group meeting in May. An aim to tackle poverty has been added to Strategy (Chapter 6 - An Inclusive Borough)	Child Poverty Task Group	July 2009

AIM 2: (Continued)

Objective		Further details	Responsibility	Target date
g	Develop a template and some guidance on how strategies and polices can be "child poverty proofed"			Autumn 2009
h	Encourage Bedford Borough Council, and other key local partners, to give a commitment to "child poverty proof" new strategies and polices that affect children and families			Autumn 2009
i	Encourage Bedford Borough Council to nominate a Councillor to become a child poverty champion and to appoint a specialist officer responsible for child poverty issues			Autumn 2009

AIM 3: Evaluate how child poverty is currently being tackled in the Bedford Borough area

Objective		Further details	Responsibility	Target date
j	Distribute a questionnaire to Child Poverty Task Group members to collect information on current projects and activities relating to tackling child poverty in the Bedford Borough area	Questionnaire sent to members of Child Poverty Task Group	Infotrain	July 2009
k	Analyse the responses to the mapping questionnaire and identify any gaps in provision in Bedford Borough	Responses will be analysed and a report will be produced	Infotrain	September 2009
l	Update the information on current projects and activities on a regular basis	A further review will need to be undertaken in 2010		Spring 2010

AIM 4: Ensure that current services are fit for purpose and are as effective as possible in tackling local child poverty

Objective		Further details	Responsibility	Target date
m	Develop an evaluation tool (with success criteria and guidance material) on how to evaluate the success of a local child poverty project or activity			Early 2010
n	Pilot the evaluation tool with some local projects or activities			Spring 2010

AIM 5: Plan coordinated services to tackle child poverty that will have a real impact on children and their families in Bedford Borough

Objective	Further details	Responsibility	Target date
<p>○ Plan future coordinated activities amongst partners to tackle child poverty in the Bedford Borough area - following completion of objectives (j) and (k).</p> <p>These collaborative activities should incorporate:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • An holistic approach to tackling child poverty • Develop stronger links between different sectors (eg adult and children's services) • Flexible, integrated, and preventative services <p>The activities should use a mixture of area based and individual based interventions - including interventions in rural areas</p> <p>The activities should also take into account the recommendations in the Take up the Challenge report (see page 4 of this document)</p> <p>Activities should be planned across all five of the sectors represented in the Child Poverty Task Group.</p>			Autumn 2009