



NORTHAMPTON BOROUGH COUNCIL

SCRUTINY PANEL 1 - FOOD POVERTY

20 NOVEMBER 2019

BRIEFING NOTE: CHILD POVERTY ACTION GROUP (END CHILD POVERTY) - STATISTICS

1 INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 At its inaugural meeting, the Scrutiny Panel agreed that it would receive details of statistics and published reports regarding food poverty.

2 INFORMATION

- 2.1 A Member of the Scrutiny Panel provided details of poverty figures for 2019 provided by the Child Action Group.

- 2.2 The Child Poverty Action Group reports a number of facts around poverty in general:

- There were 4.1 million children living in poverty in the UK in 2016-17.
- London is the area with the highest rates of child poverty in the country.
- Child poverty reduced dramatically between 1998/9-2011/12 when 800,000 children were lifted out of poverty. Since 2010, child poverty figures have flat-lined. The number of children in absolute poverty has increased by 0.5 million since 2010.
- As a direct result of tax and benefit decisions made since 2010, the Institute for Fiscal Studies project that the number of children in relative poverty will have risen from 3.6m to 4.3 million by 2020.
- Work does not provide a guaranteed route out of poverty in the UK. Two-thirds (67 per cent) of children growing up in poverty live in a family where at least one member works.
- Children in large families are at a far greater risk of living in poverty – 42% of children in poverty live in families with three or more children.

- Families experience poverty for many reasons, but its fundamental cause is not having enough money to cope with the circumstances in which they are living. A family might move into poverty because of a rise in living costs, a drop in earnings through job loss or benefit changes.
- Child poverty blights childhoods. Growing up in poverty means being cold, going hungry, not being able to join in activities with friends. For example, 50 per cent of families in the bottom income quintile would like, but cannot afford, to take their children on holiday for one week a year.
- Child poverty has long-lasting effects. By GCSE, there is a 28 per cent gap between children receiving free school meals and their wealthier peers in terms of the number achieving at least 5 A*-C GCSE grades.
- Poverty is also related to more complicated health histories over the course of a lifetime, again influencing earnings as well as the overall quality – and indeed length – of life. Men in the most deprived areas of England have a life expectancy 9.2 years shorter than men in the least deprived areas. They also spend 14% less of their life in good health. Women share similar statistics.
- Child poverty imposes costs on broader society – estimated to be at least £29 billion a year. Governments forgo prospective revenues as well as commit themselves to providing services in the future if they fail to address child poverty in the here and now.
- Childcare and housing are two of the costs that take the biggest toll on families' budgets.

Source: <http://www.endchildpoverty.org.uk/key-facts/>

2.2 The full report can be accessed [here](#).

2.3 Appended to this briefing note are statistics produced by the Child Action Group in relation to children living in poverty in Northampton during the period 2017/2018.

3 CONCLUSIONS

3.1 The report details information about poverty in general but also refers to food poverty, for example, it highlights that by GCSEs there is a 28% gap between children receiving free school meals and their wealthiest peers in terms of the number achieving at least 5 A*-C GCSE grades.

4 RECOMMENDATIONS

4.1 That the findings of the desktop research exercise informs the evidence base of the Scrutiny Review – Food Poverty

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