



Ending child poverty **IN Salford**

Position statement June 2010
The call to action



Foreword

.....

The urgency and importance of tackling child poverty cannot be overstated.

.....

The impact of poverty on the life chances of children is stark. A child that grows up in poverty is more likely to experience poor physical and mental health throughout their lives. By the time they start school they are already likely to be at a lower educational level than a child from a more affluent family, a trend that continues throughout their education. Poor children are less likely to get qualifications but more likely to be bullied. Their chances of securing well paid work are lower. Statistically they are likely to die younger. And their children are likely to experience the same.

This is what it means to grow up in poverty.

This cycle must be broken and we must take the strongest measures and work together to ensure that we do break it. It is unacceptable that the odds of having happy, healthy lives are stacked against any of our children. It must also not be forgotten that child poverty is not only about children. We know that for parents and for carers bringing up children on incomes below the bread line means a daily struggle. It means having to make difficult, at times heartbreaking, decisions on a regular basis. A child's birthday can be cause for crisis, not celebration.

The best route out of poverty is through employment. Families living in areas of high and entrenched unemployment can face additional barriers to getting a job and experience a sense of hopelessness. Parents and carers need support to overcome this sense of hopelessness and they need practical and personal support to overcome the barriers they face and to get into work.

Tackling child poverty must be everybody's business, whatever organisation or department we work for. To leave the duty with organisations that work with children would be to treat the symptoms but fail to address the cause. The development of the Working Neighbourhood teams, which have brought people from across different agencies and organisations to work together to make life better for Salford residents, has been a hugely important step.

We must now go further and we must get there faster. However, welfare to work policy and programmes are changing, and the public sector is facing significant budget reductions. This means we need to think very creatively about how we meet these key challenges with less money.

We are unwilling to accept that Salford must always suffer from these problems. We have the vision and scale of ambition to imagine a better future and we have the drive and determination to ensure that together we make that future real. What is needed now is the sharing of information and analysis, strategic work together to develop the strategy

Cllr John Merry

Chair of Partners IN Salford and Leader of Salford City Council, and

Cllr Margaret Morris

Lead Member for Children's Services



Contents

Forward	01
Introduction	01
Policy context	01
Scale and nature of the challenge	01
Our current response	01
Employment and Skills	01
Education Health and Family	01
Housing and Neighbourhoods	01
Financial Support	01
Where we want to be	01
How we will get there	01
Timetable	01
How to contact us	01

Introduction

The costs of child poverty are huge for Salford – tackling child poverty needs to become ‘everybody’s business’

Purpose of the report

This position statement sets out why child poverty is such a critical issue for Salford and describes the scale and nature of the challenge for partners. It calls for urgent and collective action. The report is intended to ‘launch’ the partnership work required to end child poverty in the City.

The Child Poverty Act 2010 provides the framework and overall direction. It introduces new duties on local authorities in England and named partners to co-operate to reduce and mitigate the effects of child poverty; to prepare and publish a local child poverty needs assessment; and to develop a joint child poverty strategy.

The rationale for partnership action is clear. Poverty negatively affects the lives of children, families and communities. Children who grow up in poverty often do not enjoy the same range of experiences as other children and this often results in poorer outcomes in childhood and adult life. Child poverty means growing up in a low income household. When children and families experience poverty and deprivation, their standard of living is well below what would be considered acceptable by most people in Britain today.

However, the causes and consequences of child poverty are wide-ranging and not just about income. Children can miss out in many ways: socially, emotionally, materially and culturally. Although some children will achieve their full potential in spite of growing up in poverty, many will not. Families living in poverty may experience problems accessing public services and affordable credit. They may live in areas of high crime and anti-social behaviour, or with a poor environment.

In Salford, child poverty affects whole communities and hinders the City’s ability to grow and prosper because of poor levels of educational attainment and skills, and high levels of worklessness. Services are put under increased pressure. The costs are significant for children and families, and the communities in which they live, and for Salford as a whole. Child poverty needs to be a shared priority for all partners in Salford.

What we are already doing is outlined in four sections of this report, set out against four key ‘building blocks’:

- Employment and Skills
- Education Health and Family
- Housing and Neighbourhoods
- Financial Support

This Position Statement sets out the vision for where we want to be and how we will get there, and the timetable and process for joint work.

Call to Action

The case for joint action to end child poverty is clear. Partners IN Salford can’t afford not to make ‘tackling Child Poverty’ a top business priority, and we urge you to play an active part in developing and delivering on this critical issue.

Policy Context

The Government have committed to an ambitious target to eradicate child poverty within a generation

National policy context

The family, worklessness and welfare dependency have been key national priorities for this and the previous government. And, improving life chances by addressing poverty and inequality is at the heart of the agenda for the new Coalition Government.

The recently published State of the Nation Report (May 2010) sets out the picture of poverty in the UK and recognises the need for departments to work together to tackle the complex and wide-reaching problems of poverty and disadvantage, through a new Social Justice Cabinet Committee.

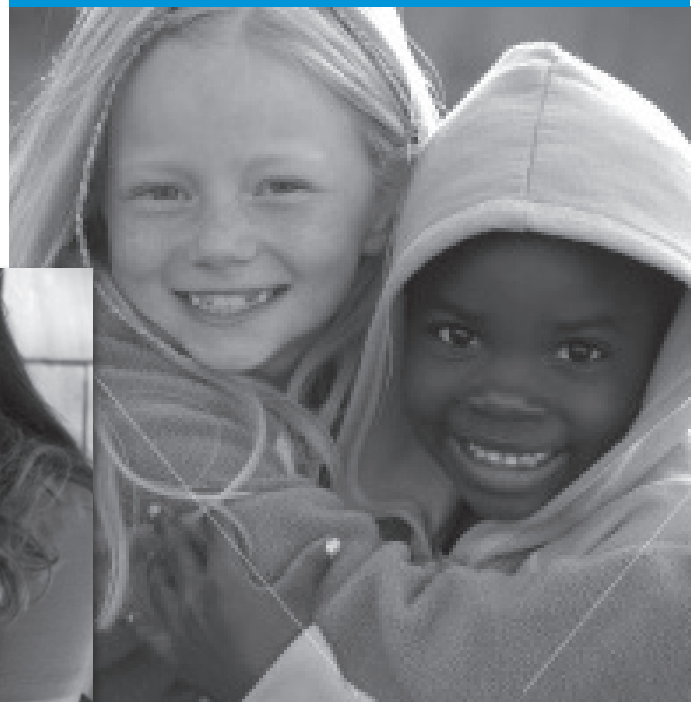
The Child Poverty Act

The target to end child poverty by 2020 is now enshrined in law after support from all the major parties, and the coalition agreement between the Conservatives and the Liberal Democrats has pledged to meet this challenge

The Child Poverty Act (March 2010) places duties on local authorities and other local delivery partners to work together to develop a needs assessment and child poverty strategy, and work together to reduce child poverty.

The Act introduces new duties on local authorities in England and their named partners to:

- a) Co-operate to put in place arrangements to work with partners to reduce, and, mitigate the effects of child poverty;
- b) Prepare and publish a local child poverty needs assessment to understand the drivers of child poverty on their local areas and the characteristics of those living on poverty; and
- c) Prepare a joint child poverty strategy setting out measures that the local authority and each named partner propose to take to reduce, and mitigate the effects of, child poverty in their areas



Salford policy context

Tackling child poverty is a huge and complex challenge and has to be set in the context of wider local strategies.



As providers of services to children, young people and families, local authorities and their partners have a vital part to play in reducing the numbers of children living in poverty, and finding creative local solutions to reduce the impacts of living in poverty. The foundations for achieving this have already been outlined in Salford's Sustainable Community Strategy 2009-2024, 'Connecting People to Opportunities'.

This set out seven key elements that we, as a partnership, need to deliver on to achieve our vision for a better Salford:

- A Healthy city
- A Safe city
- A Learning and creative city
- A City where children and young people are valued
- An Inclusive City
- An Economically prosperous
- A city that's good to live in

Reducing child poverty is a key priority in the Salford Agreement. This is reflected in a range of targets to tackle the wider determinants of child poverty:

The proportion of children living in households dependent on out-of-work benefits
National LAA National Indicator 116

NI 117: 16 to 18 yr olds not in education, employment or training (NEET)

NI 112: Under 18 conception rate

NI 153: Working age people claiming out of work benefits in worst performing neighbourhoods

NI 163: Proportion of working age population qualified to at least Level 2 or higher

NI 161: Number of Level 1 qualifications in literacy (including ESOL) Achieved

NI 162: Number of Entry Level qualifications in Numeracy achieved

NI 166: Median earnings of employees

NI 158: Percentage of non-decent council homes

The Children's Trust

The Apprenticeships, Skills, Children and Learning Act 2009, gives a statutory basis for Children's Trusts, and extends the named partners with a statutory duty to cooperate. It makes the Children's Plan the responsibility of the Trust and clarifies the relationship between the Trust and Local Safeguarding Boards.

In 2005/6 Salford developed a local Children's Trust, and published the first Children and Young People's Plan in 2006.

Steps taken since then include:

- An Interim Children and Young Peoples Plan for 2009-10
- Development of a new three year Children's Plan starting September 2010.
- Development of a new Children's Trust from April 1st 2010.

The duty to co-operate

The City Council and partners made a significant contribution to the development of the Child Poverty Bill. At the Bill's consultation stage, Partners IN Salford Executive proposed that there should be duty on all public sector partners, not just local authorities, to have regard to child poverty in their work. This reflects our view that that we cannot deliver on the challenge unless we join up our services. The fact that the Child Poverty Act now includes this duty for all key partners, as we suggested, will help us deliver our ambition for the City.

The new duty should support Salford to take further the highly joined up approach we have already adopted, which the national Child Poverty Unit and Government Office for the North West recognise as an example of best practice.



Scale and nature of the challenge

In the UK more than 1 in 4 children are living in out of work poverty, and there is an even greater risk for some families.

Between the late 1970s and mid-1990s child poverty in the UK doubled, from 1 in 10 in 1979 to 1 in 3 in 1998. Since 1999, when the Labour government pledged to end child poverty, 600,000 children have been lifted out of poverty. However, the national ambition to eradicate child poverty by 2020 will require moving around 4 million children out of relative income poverty.

What Child Poverty Means for a family:

60% Median income level is equivalent to income levels after housing costs of:

- £115 per week for single adult with no dependent children;
- £199 per week for a couple with no dependent children;
- £195 per week for a single adult with two dependent children under 14; and
- £279 per week for a couple with two dependent children under 14.

This means that families living in poverty may have less than £10 per day per person to buy everything they need such as food, heating, toys, clothes, electricity and transport.



Child Poverty in Salford

At present, it is not possible to measure local child poverty using the government measure of relative income poverty. Until data is available, local partnerships are advised to use a measure of children living in workless households.

The term 'workless' applies both to registered unemployed and those receiving other out of work benefits.

Progress on child poverty in the UK is currently measured using three indicators: relative low income; absolute low income; and combined low income and material deprivation.

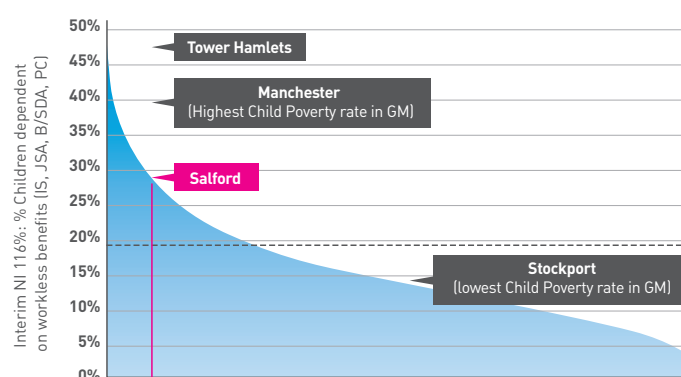
PSA 9 Headline definition of child poverty:

The number of children in relative low income households (earning less than 60% of median income)

Before the recent economic downturn, the out of work poverty rate amongst children in Salford had fallen from over 32% in 2004 to 29% in 2008. This meant over 1,500 children moved out of poverty over this period.

However, there is still much to do. Salford has historically experienced significantly higher rates of child poverty than the national and regional averages. The city has the second highest child poverty rate in Greater Manchester and is within the worst 10% of local authorities nationally.

Proportion of children living in out of work poverty by district

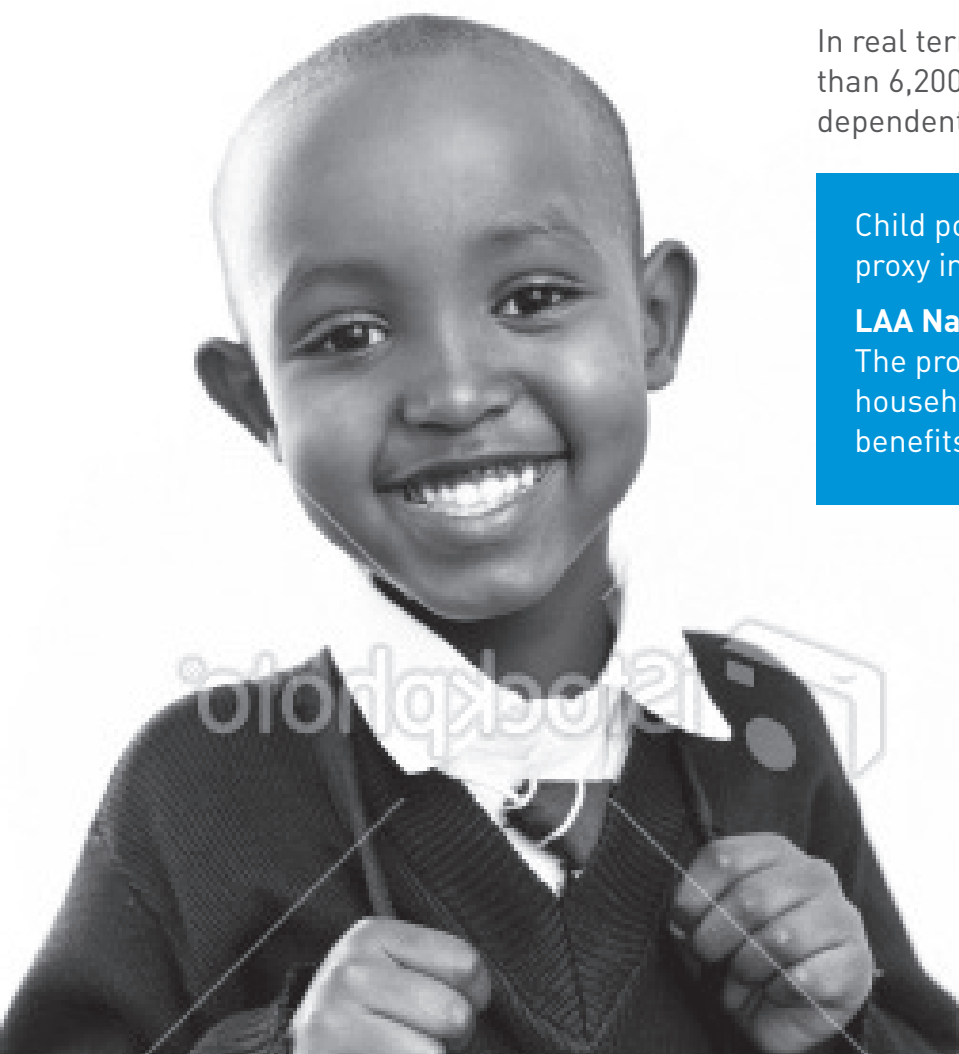


In real terms, this means that in 2008, more than 6,200 families and 11,900 children were dependent on out of work benefits.

Child poverty is measured locally using a proxy indicator of out of work poverty.

LAA National Indicator 116:

The proportion of children living in households dependent on out-of-work benefits

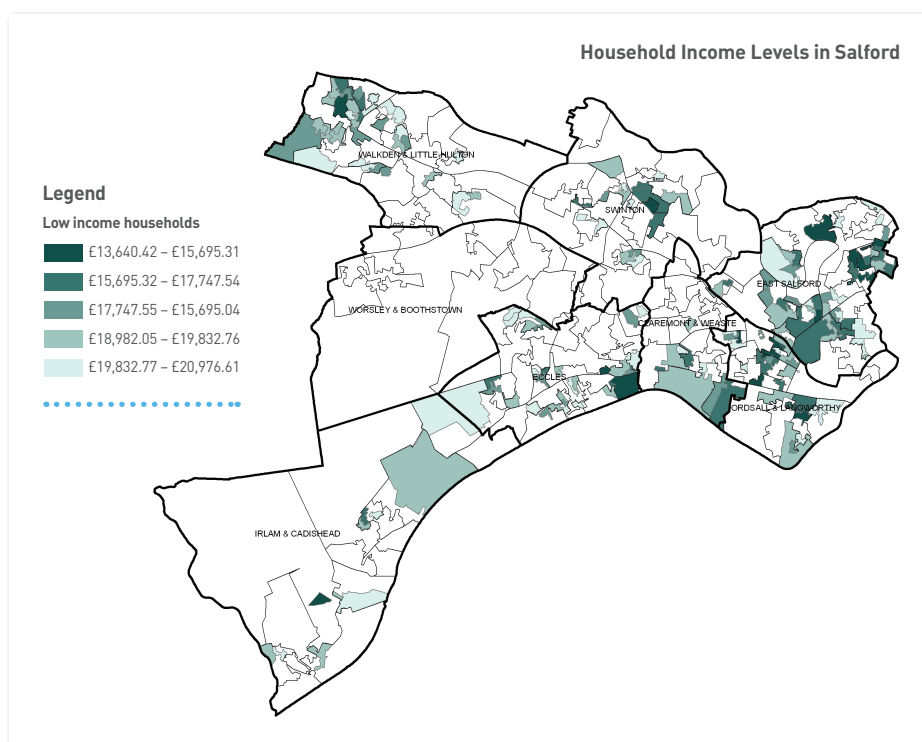


	Couples	Lone Parents
Out of work	600,000	600,000
In work	1,200,000	300,000

In work poverty

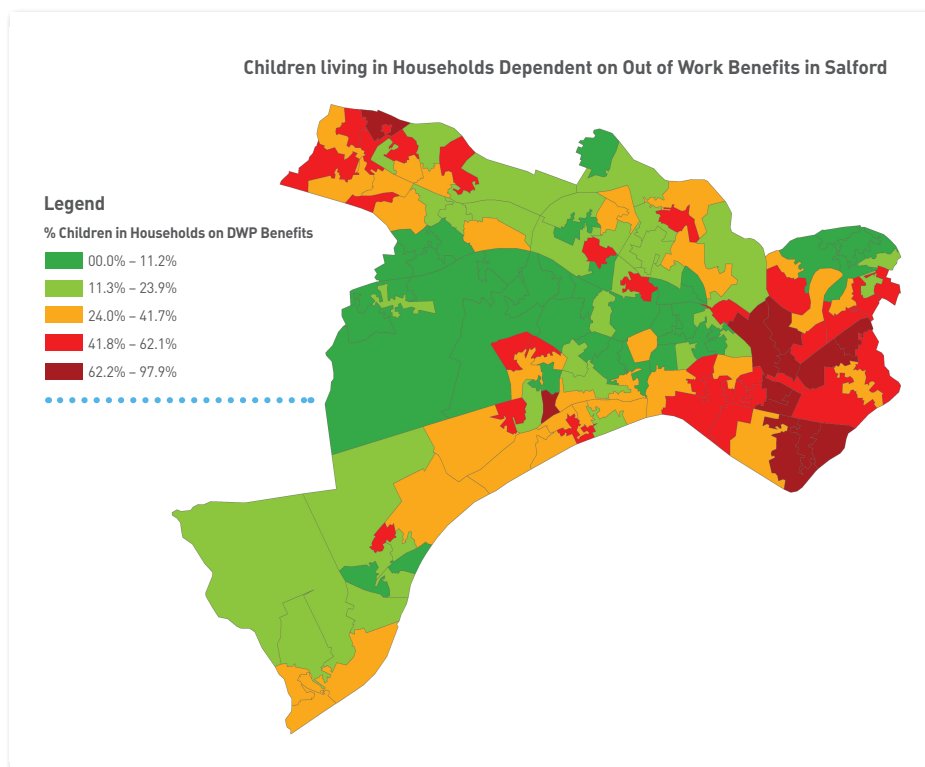
Although it is accepted that work is the single greatest determinant of poverty, we know that paid work is not, on its own, a guarantee of moving families out of poverty. In 2007/08, 59% of income-poor children in the UK were in households where one or more parent was in work.





Low wages, part-time work and not having both adults in work in a two-parent household all increase the risk of poverty. And, with almost two fifths of Salford adults qualified to less than level 2, relatively low skills levels translate to median pay levels that are around 12% below the national level.

Tax Credit records suggest that around 14,000 Salford children live in low income working households. This means that the true level of all child poverty in Salford could be closer to 60%.



Impact of recession

Progress in tackling child poverty has slowed as the recent economic downturn has created new challenges and difficulties for families and public services. Levels of unemployment have risen sharply across the UK and, in Salford, the number of adults receiving Jobseekers' Allowance almost doubled between Jun 2008 and Dec 2009. Although national data is yet to confirm the full impact of recession on levels of child poverty in the city, local assessments suggest that an estimated 1,100 Salford children have moved into workless poverty over this period.

Concentration of child poverty

The link between poverty and deprivation is clear, but for children living in some areas of Salford, the risk of poverty is even greater. The proportion of children living in out of work poverty ranges from less than 5% in Worsley and Boothstown to more than half in Pendleton. In some smaller neighbourhoods, the incidence of child poverty is even higher, affecting more than two thirds of children.



Lone Parents

The ability of parents to work full-time is an important factor in determining poverty. Around half of all lone parents in the UK are on a low income, over twice the rate for couples with children. Salford has 4,000 lone parent households dependent on benefits, accounting for around two thirds of children living in workless poverty.



Large families

Similarly, children growing up in large families are twice as likely to be poor than those living in a one-child family. The average family size in Salford is above the national average. In some parts of the city households are likely to be larger, including families with four or more children.

Black and minority ethnic groups

The risk of poverty for black and minority ethnic (BME) families is particularly high, with over half of Pakistani, Bangladeshi and Black African children growing up in poverty in the UK. As communities in Salford become increasingly diverse, there is a growing challenge to connect all people to employment opportunities. Current employment rates for some BME groups compare poorly with the averages for both men and women in Salford.

Families living with disability

Families with either a disabled adult or child in the household are at greater risk of poverty. The ability of parents to work is often limited while having to meet the extra costs of disability. Research suggests that families need an extra £18 per week to raise a child with disabilities and that these families are more likely to be in debt. In Salford, more than 1,500 children are in receipt of Disability Living Allowance and over 3,000 children are living in households dependent on a sickness related benefit.

Material deprivation

The experience of children growing up in poverty often means going without. In reality, many families have only about £10 per day per person to cover all day-to-day expenditure, including food, transport, clothing and bills as well as school trips and activities for children.

For those families in the bottom twenty percent of income, poverty means:

- 1 in 10 can't afford celebrations on special occasions like birthdays;
- Almost 1 in 5 can't afford to have friends around for tea or a snack once a fortnight;
- More than a quarter do not have enough bedrooms for every child aged over 10 years and of a different gender;
- Nearly 1 in 4 do not have outdoor space / facilities to play safely; and
- 3 in 5 can't afford a holiday away from home for at least a week a year.

Households Below Average Income,
National Statistics, 2008

'Not long ago, it was my son's birthday, and I couldn't afford to buy him a present. So I found myself shoplifting. I'm not proud of what I did, but it was the only way I could get him something nice.'

Parent in Salford

Poverty and life chances

Children who grow up in poverty lack many of the positive experiences and opportunities that others take for granted. As a result, they often have poorer health, wellbeing, educational outcomes and social lives and relationships both as a child and as an adult.

Living in a poor family can reduce children's aspirations. We know they are less likely to stay on at school or to attend school regularly, more likely to be young parents. This potentially locks families into intergenerational cycles of deprivation.





Children growing up in poor households are more likely to:

- suffer from a higher incidence of infant mortality, premature birth and lower birth weight;
- suffer from respiratory infection, hypothermia and asthma;
- experience mental health issues;
- be overtaken by a less able child from a rich family by the age of six;
- experience and commit anti social behaviour and crime;
- be homeless; unemployed and suffer from ill health as an adult.



With more than 1 in 4 Salford children living in out of work poverty, the evidence clearly demonstrates that a commitment to transform the experiences, living standards and life chances of disadvantaged families in a challenging economic climate, will require action right across the partnership.

.....

Our current response

We are already responding to child poverty at partnership, departmental and service level. With increased alignment of these responses, our approach to child poverty is beginning to deliver improved services

Partner engagement

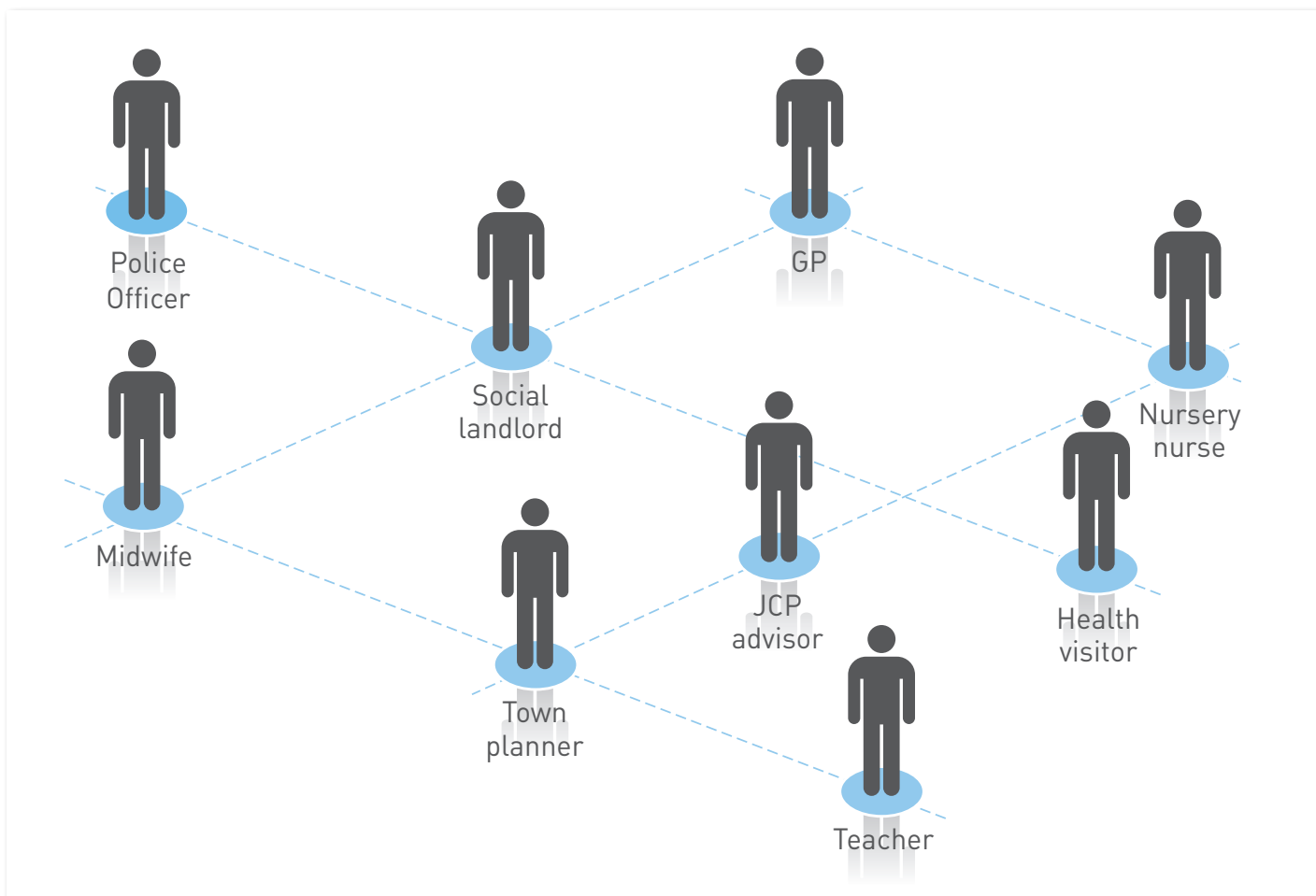
We are sharpening our tools to tackle child poverty, working with national think tanks, learning from best practice and in dialogue with partners.

Work with Centre for Economic and Social Inclusion and Child Poverty Action Group has supported our understanding of the scale and nature of tackling child poverty. In 2008, over 80 practitioners from key services met to discuss local understanding of child poverty and the current service responses. This was

the beginning of Salford's journey to join up our response to addressing child poverty in the City.

Joining up on investments

Through Partners IN Salford (Salford's Local Strategic Partnership), we are shaping commissioning arrangements needed to deliver on critical issues like this. Tackling child poverty requires effective integrated commissioning and delivery arrangements. We are bringing partners together to plan joint investment and delivery through our Think Skills and Work Board.



Integrated models of delivery

From our Spotlight work we have developed a new approach to tackling worklessness at neighbourhood, family and individual level, which we call Working Neighbourhood Teams (described later).

This approach is currently being rolled out across all AGMA Local Authorities as a key objective of the Greater Manchester Area Agreement. The model has been recognised by the (Houghton) Tackling Worklessness Review,

key government departments, The Child Poverty Unit, Home Office and the IDeA.

Building blocks of our response

Salford's approach is to build shared ownership and a partnership response. The Council is leading this work jointly through its Chief Executive's and Children's Services Directorates.

Our current response on child poverty is outlined in four sections described as the key 'building blocks'. In this section, we highlight some of the work already taking place

The 'building blocks' for the 2020 strategy describe the range of causes of low income that will be required tackling to end child poverty



Employment and Skills

Objective: More families are in work that pays and have the support they need to progress

Work is the main way out of poverty. However, we have stated that many children are affected by poverty even if their parents work. Skills and qualifications are a key determinant of future earnings, and a critical stepping-stone out of poverty.

Think Skills and Work partners deliver a wide range of local provision alongside mainstream services such as Jobcentre Plus and the Skills Funding Agency. Services aim to meet the needs of local communities, individuals and families, to connect residents with opportunities, and assist them to overcome barriers to improving their skills and employability.

Connecting people to opportunities

Employers are key to providing opportunities for local residents. Think Skills and Work partners aim to lead by example, ensure exemplar employment practice and to create employment and training opportunities.



Innovative pre-employment 'Academy'

programmes support Salford's most marginalised residents into City Council employment. These include jobs in Customer Service, Horticulture, Highways Maintenance and Social Services, and many more in the private sector.

The council is committed to providing Apprenticeships for looked after young people and work placements with on the job training and support for workless adults.

The Future Jobs Fund Programme aims to deliver 8000 jobs for long-term unemployed 18-24 year olds and adults by March 2011, including 800 jobs in Salford. By June 2010, 281 workless residents had been recruited for jobs. The Council has committed to create 300 job opportunities overall.

Creating opportunities through inward investment and regeneration is a key priority. Through MediaCityUK, 1,521 residents gained construction employment in 2009-10, 11% of the overall workforce. £95m was awarded to Salford contractors (22% of the contracts overall to date), and 500 people were supported to gain a qualification. 70 volunteers have been engaged in two community projects.

This approach to providing jobs and training for local people has also been successfully piloted with the Building Schools for the Future programme and is being adopted for the regeneration programme in Pendleton.

Improving adult skills

Adult Literacy and numeracy skills are a key priority for Salford. There is a high estimated level of need, particularly in our most deprived communities. Parents with poor literacy and numeracy are more likely to be out of work or in low paid employment. They also find it difficult to support their children's learning.

Salford providers have worked hard to improve residents' literacy and numeracy skills, and have met Public Service Agreement targets a year early. The newly combined Salford City College is the main provider of Skills for Life provision in the city, and along with the Council's Family Adult and Community Learning Service provision is delivered on campus and in the community.

Information advice and guidance

Flexible and responsive adult Information Advice and Guidance (IAG) is an important part of Salford's employment and skills provision. Salford's Skills and Work service delivers impartial advice and support focused on reducing barriers to employment. These services are delivered through a mix of local offices and outreach activities. In 2009-2010, this service helped almost 1,500 workless residents into jobs. Extra help and support was also provided through targeted 'out-of-hours' surgeries for people affected by the recession.

Skills and Work has also trained partners in the Orthodox Jewish Community to deliver quality IAG to residents, filling a gap in local provision.

Wraparound support

Over £1m of new services has been commissioned from local third sector organisations to support long-term workless residents since April 2008. The Raising Aspirations programme has involved many new providers as key partners, in providing personalised help and support for those who are not yet ready to take up mainstream employment services.

This programme has positively engaged and supported more than 3,200 residents from our most deprived communities, delivered training to over 900 residents, helped 1,900 to improve self confidence, provided 832 with Information Advice & Guidance and enabled almost 200 to enter employment. The programme has been extended for a further twelve months to deliver essential wrap around support to assist parents into work.

Working Neighbourhood Teams

Working Neighbourhood Teams are enabling a highly joined up approach to engagement, outreach and intervention at street and family level – enabling key public services to tackle their most challenging objectives together. Teams operate across all the city's disadvantaged neighbourhoods and are starting to deliver joint action plans for individuals and families.

Case Study: Salford Skills and Work service

Personal circumstances meant life suddenly changed and I had to get things sorted for me and my daughters. In the past I had worked in the hotel industry but I felt I could not do anything else; I was not very confident about my skills. I found my advisor, Teresa, really approachable, she always had time for me and I felt she really cared about how I did. She even sent me a text to congratulate me when she found I got my job!

She also found me some training that really helped me. I attended a confidence building course that really made me look at myself and realise the many things I could do. I'm now working for Salford City Council, in a job I really enjoy, even though it's a complete change of career for me. When I wake up in the morning I don't feel I have to go to work, I want to go to work!

The pay is also really good, which means my children don't have to be without

Education, health and family

Objective: Poverty in childhood does not translate into poor experiences and outcomes

The Children's Services Business Plan 2010-13 sets out five objectives as key to improving the lives of Salford children living in poverty:

- Increasing the number of young people leading healthy and safe lifestyles
- Safely reduce the number of looked after children whilst continuing to improve safeguarding arrangements
- To narrow the gap in outcomes for vulnerable groups against a background of improvement for all
- Increase the number of young people engaged in positive activities and participating in decision-making
- Enable all children to 'start life well'.

Improving Educational outcomes

Although the level of need remains high in Salford, the response of the Council and partners is already leading to improved outcomes.

We have seen steady improvements in GCSE results in comparison to the national average. The percentage of children with 5 A*-C GCSEs including English and Maths rose from 40.3% in 2008 to 45.8% in 2009. Secondary school attendance and key Stage 2 results have also improved. or been maintained

Salford works hard to improve educational outcomes for all vulnerable young people, including looked after children and care leavers. The council has met targets set to reduce the numbers of young people not

engaged in education and training (NEET), and has continued to reduce the numbers of young people entering the youth justice system.

Work is underway to strengthen support for young people, including plans for new integrated 14-19 teams.

Primary and secondary school capital investment in new and improved school buildings will further develop the opportunity for schools to become community hubs.

Improving children's health

New Children's Trust arrangements are strengthening the existing partnerships with health providers. The Teenage Pregnancy team, healthy schools, Sure Start Children's Centres and drug and alcohol teams all support health and well-being, as do local Three new Gateway Centres incorporating local authority, community and primary healthcare services, and new Healthy Living Centres also provide a range of community-based health services.

Salford City Council and Salford NHS have an ambitious shared vision to improve their integrated working arrangements to deliver improved outcomes for children and families.

Salford PCT and Salford City Council have set up a Health Trainer service, which offers practical support for individuals to improve their health and well-being. Health Trainers understand the day-to-day concerns of the people they are supporting. Health Improvement Teams also provide support for groups and individuals.

Case Study: Social Prescription

Social Prescription is a mechanism for linking patients in with non-medical support in the community. It is a way of working that addresses poor mental health, social isolation and work limiting illnesses that limit health improvement and maintain high levels of worklessness.

Social prescription is currently being piloted by Salford Health Matters, a Community Interest Company which delivers primary care services in: Eccles, Little Hulton and Charlestown and Lower Kersal. This approach began in the Charlestown and Lower Kersal New Deal for Communities (NDC) area, to tackle health inequalities and high levels of worklessness. The pilot has subsequently been rolled out to Eccles and Little Hulton, and has engaged with 260 patients to date.

Early outcomes include: 49% reduced visits to GP's; 15% improved mental well-being; 17% ceased and 17% reduced smoking; 21% moved into training/learning; 12% moved into work/voluntary work. An analysis of the Social Return on Investment was done, which has concluded that for every £1 invested there is a social return of £4.28.

Delivering Family support

Salford is committed to both high quality universal and targeted services. 16 Surestart Children's Centres are now open across Salford, delivering integrated services for parents and young children; including childcare and early education, health, family support and support to access work and training.

Salford continues to improve support the most vulnerable families and children, through improving all areas of safeguarding, and by bringing together family support and other services into localities, focusing on early intervention. A Think Family Pathfinder is underway, one of 15 nationally, bringing together both services and systems reform to ensure families at risk receive a 'whole-family' package of support.

There is good practice to build on in terms of wider support for families, e.g. Family and Community Learning, parenting courses and work with parents. Working Neighbourhood and Locality Teams plan and deliver support for specific groups, including young parents, fathers and ethnic minority groups.

The focus on children is a key pillar in the new Life Chances pilots in two areas of the City. This is developing through the Greater Manchester City Region arrangements, which aim to transform how public services are delivered at a local level.

Case Study: Surestart Children's Centre

'I started to attend an adult education course at a local centre, where I was also encouraged to join play and stay activities with my four year old son. It was hard at first because I didn't know anyone, but I was made very welcome.

Since then, I joined the weekly parents group, and have been going for about six months. I even gave a demonstration of hand massage to the group! I've now been asked to become a volunteer for the centre, and am interested in getting training to become a centre worker myself.'

Housing and neighbourhoods

Objective: A Child's environment supports them to thrive



A child's healthy growth and development is dependent on many factors that include the immediate environment in which they live. Living in poor housing increases a child's chances of being socially disadvantaged and the built environment around neighbourhoods has an enormous impact on the emotional well-being of residents. For some children, this may lead to a vicious circle between poor housing and poor life chances.

Therefore, good quality, affordable housing plays an important role in tackling child poverty in Salford. The City Council is working with social and private housing partners to improve the quality and availability of housing in the city.

Investing in quality of homes

Regeneration and development has improved the physical quality of housing in the city. New investment, via the Housing Market Renewal Fund, for example, has led to improvements in many homes in Salford.

Salix Homes, has secured £9m to improve the quality of social housing in Central Salford, through the Decent Homes programme. This builds on the successful transfer of council housing to City West, who are similarly improving housing quality in the west of the city.

Regeneration and development

Future developments in Salford include securing over £100m through the Private Finance Initiative to redevelop Pendleton. The Media City development is transforming the landscape at Salford Quays, attracting business investment and creating opportunities in the city. Salford City Council has also attracted funding through the Kickstart Programme to deliver over 100 units of affordable housing.

Tackling fuel poverty

Living in a cold home creates risks for people of all ages and fuel poverty contributes to a wide range of problems for children and families, including poor health, reduced quality of life, poor educational attainment, social isolation and debt.

A household is classified as being in Fuel Poverty if, in order to maintain an acceptable level of temperature throughout the home, the occupants would have to spend more than 10% of their income on all household fuel use. Tackling fuel poverty is a key way to improve both the physical condition of housing and its affordability. Salford's Affordable Warmth Programme offers a range of support to enable homes to be more affordably heated.

Improving access to services

Making physical improvement in the quality of housing has been supported by other key council services. Together, these can make a greater impact on child poverty in the city.

A key service driver was the award of Enhanced Housing Options Trailblazer status for Salford in 2009. This has made it possible to joining up the housing services with support for employment, education and training.

Making homes affordable

Access to affordable private housing has been provided by a Bond scheme, which enables families to access good quality housing through provision of a guaranteed deposit. This enables wider choice for families to access accommodation, e.g. near workplaces or children's schools. The Home Improvement Agency has funded other improvements in the quality of private housing in the city. We are working with key partner landlords, and social housing providers, to build links with Working Neighbourhoods Teams, and with the city's work on Financial Inclusion.



Financial support

Objective: Financial support is responsive to families' situations

People on low incomes, both on benefits and in work, find it harder to access mainstream financial services. Access to independent money and debt advice, banking services and affordable credit are essential to supporting residents to get out of poverty. Salford's financial inclusion partnership is well established. We are also developing a financial inclusion strategy, which builds on work done to date, to address the acute problems caused by recession.

Maximising income

Income maximisation, ensuring that people claim all the benefits they are entitled to, is fundamental to addressing financial exclusion and child poverty. A 'take up' campaign, led by Salford City Council is to be launched in summer 2010. In Salford, over 5,000 (20%) of people do not claim the benefits they are entitled to. This equates to over £8m of unclaimed Child and Working Tax Credits.

Making money clear

Salford's two main providers of welfare rights and debt advice are the Council's Welfare Rights Service and the Citizen's Advice Service (CAB). Family Information Service can also advise parents on benefits and childcare provision.

Mapping of money advice services across the city is about to commence, and will help to inform the future shape of services.

Other agencies also offer additional support for less complex cases. The 'Steady Readies' project has supported over 200 people, including parents, to improve their budgeting skills and open bank accounts. Financial capability courses have enabled parents and carers to join River Valley Credit Union. Financial Inclusion training has been delivered to over 600 front line workers and volunteers in Salford including Children's Centres, and agencies supporting families.

Tackling illegal money lending

Research by the national Illegal Money Lending Team suggests that lone women in their 30s are the most frequent victims of loan sharks, often paying extortionate interest rates and potentially subjected to aggressive behaviour. 60,000 anti loan shark postcards were sent out with Council Tax letters to residents to promote this service. Cards included information about how to get affordable credit. The Illegal Money Lending Team have provided training to agencies, and a confidential helpline is promoted through Steady Readies.

Case Study – Steady Readies

Paul lives in a two bed housing association rented property, with his partner and four young children, aged four, two, one year and a new baby.

Paul and his partner are on Job Seekers Allowance, and get Child Tax Credit and Child Benefit. They were referred to the project with their consent by the housing provider, because they had difficulty with rent payments. Paul said that he did not attend school much after he was fifteen because of family difficulties. He said he had always struggled with his literacy and that his partner does the family budgeting. They struggle to budget and organise their money.

Steady Readies worked on budgeting and priority payments in 1 to 1 sessions. They also supported Paul's ambition to take a catering course as he enjoys cooking. Paul is growing in confidence as he can see a more stable future for himself and his family.

Where we want to be

We have made good progress so far but need to go much further and faster to significantly reduce the number of children living in poverty

Our Vision

Our overall vision for Salford is to seize the moment, and work together to connect all residents to the wealth and opportunities that exist in the City. Delivering this vision involves creating prosperity, improving health, equality and access to affordable housing, and providing citizens with a clean, green and safe environment in which to live. We are ambitious, and we will need to be, if we are to realise our aspiration to end child poverty in Salford. We can not underestimate the scale of the challenge.



The Ambition

Through our Local Area Agreement, we have agreed to narrow the gap between Salford's child poverty levels and the regional average by 0.45% by 2011. To do this, we would need to move around 700 children out of poverty by helping their parents move from benefits and into work.

To eradicate child poverty in Salford by 2020 we need to move more than 8,000 children out of poverty. This would require supporting the parents and carers of at least 4,000 children out of poverty by 2015.

What this means for partners

Ending child poverty in Salford means changing the way we all do business. Otherwise, will not be able to deliver the level of investment, and service improvements that are required.

We have made a good start already but need to go further and faster than ever before. This will mean:

.....
A more joined up system around the family, which delivers improved access to better services.

.....
A new focus of support for people in work, but on low incomes, to gain new skills and increase earning potential will be critical to reducing the numbers of children affected by 'in work poverty'.

.....
We will also continue efforts to connect residents to opportunities, and provide 'wrap around' support for those out of work.

.....
Meeting these key challenges with less money and in a changing policy environment.

How we will get there

Only through real co-operation and joint ownership can we ensure that ending child poverty is everybody's business.



Our ambition to end child poverty is clear. The Child Poverty Act 2010 sets out the framework for preparing a comprehensive integrated local child Poverty Strategy.

The requirement is that the local Child Poverty strategy will be fully prepared by the end of March 2011, and aligned with timetables for the next suite of Local Area Agreements (2011-12 to 2013-14) and with Children and Young People's Plans.

Local needs assessment

To inform the development of a strong and targeted strategy, we need to better understand which groups of children and families are at greatest risk of experiencing poverty, deprivation and disadvantage.

Salford's local child poverty needs assessment will build on our Joint Strategic Needs Assessment and Local Economic Assessment. The assessment will look across the four building blocks to define the specific characteristics, needs and issues of the city and residents; and identify which groups are most at risk. Planned research by the National Research and Development Centre (NRDC) for Skills for Life will give a more accurate picture of levels of need in communities with high levels of worklessness.

Consultation with stakeholders will be critical to fully understanding the drivers of child poverty, and assessing the level and nature of need. Consultation across the building blocks will involve residents, service users, frontline workers, strategic managers, working neighbourhood teams and community groups.

Consultation will be undertaken through a series of focus groups and will build upon well-established mechanisms for involving and engaging people in shaping service delivery. Parents Forums are already informing delivery through schools and Surestart Children's Centres, and a Parent's Panel meets monthly to advise Children's Services.

A Council Scrutiny Commission on Poverty is planned in 2010, which will specifically focus on examining financial exclusion and making recommendations as to how financial inclusion can help end child poverty.

Going further, faster

The strategy development process will determine the detail of our approach, we are clear that alongside the development of a strategy we will continue to make progress on delivery and reform.

The welfare to work policy landscape is shifting and a new single Work Programme is being rolled out. There is a commitment to simplify the benefits system, with fewer types of benefits and tapering when people move into work. We need to take account of these changes and the implications of these in the development of our child poverty strategy. We know that the new coalition government programme includes ongoing commitment to tackle child poverty. However, the public sector is facing significant budget reductions. We don't yet know exactly which government grants to authorities and partners will be affected and how they will cascade down to departments and services.

We will need to consider how budget cuts will impact on how we tackle critical issues such as worklessness and child poverty. This means that the Skills and Work Board, the Children's and Young People's Trust and all partners will have to explore how to deliver on these priorities locally with less money from government. We will need to think creatively about how we can go further and faster with our ambition to end child poverty by integrating delivery, maximising mainstream budgets, building on the key services we already have, and increasing the pace and scale of service reform.

In a recession-recovery climate, services to help boost economic growth, create jobs, develop a skilled labour force and connect local people to opportunities are more important than ever before, and will be critical foundations of our child poverty strategy. Developing an effective and responsive strategy in the context of the current economic and changing policy

climate means that there is greater need than ever before to work creatively across all sectors of the partnership to find new ways to tackle child poverty.

Building on our successful Working Neighbourhoods Team model, and Children's Services Locality Team approach, we will further join up services at local level. This approach will lead to a more effective and joined up response to child poverty.

Closer alignment of skills and work with children's services will be high on Salford's agenda. This is likely to involve joining up the 14-19 agenda with adult and family skills, and ensuring the childcare offer enables families to access opportunities to work and learn.

Salford has nominated three areas to be part of the GM Life Chances work; Little Hulton, Winton and Higher Broughton, which is part of a joint area pilot with Cheetham Hill, being taken forward with Manchester City Council and partners. This work is providing the opportunity to go further and faster with new ways of working which bring a wide range of public service and other interventions together.

A major development in relation to child and family poverty is the development of a new joined up delivery model which brings together services from Children's Services, the NHS and work related services (Jobcentre Plus, skills providers) in way that can deliver joint support for individuals and families much more effectively than at present.

This work will be a major focus of partnership activity in Child Poverty, and all partners will be directly accountable to the Partners IN Salford Executive via a new Place Board for the delivery of outcomes through this work. The work also offers the opportunity to remove barriers to joining up (for example information sharing) through a direct relationship with Government through the Greater Manchester Statutory City Region process.

Timetable for strategy development and consultation

	June 2010	July – Sept 2010	Oct – Dec 2010	Jan – March 2011	March 2011
Publish Child Poverty Position Statement	•				
Launch Scrutiny Commission on Poverty		•			
Undertake Child Poverty Needs Analysis		•			
Stakeholder Analysis		•			
Scrutiny Commission Report on Financial Exclusion			•		
Strategy Development			•		
Draft Strategy Approval				•	
Publish Final Strategy					
Consultation	←————→				

Want to get involved or find out more?

Please contact us via:

Skills and Work Commissioning Team, Salford City Council

T: 0161 793 2501

E: childpoverty@salford.gov.uk
