

# Workshop E: Equality & Social Justice For All: Tackling Poverty in Lancashire 14

## LACVS - LOCAL Project Strategic Launch: A Manifesto for Change



Jointly facilitated by Naz Zaman, Chief Officer Lancs BME Network & Tracy Hopkins, Chief Executive, Blackpool Citizens' Advice  
Notes taken by Denise Hayhurst, LACVS LOCAL Project  
16 participants

### The group thought that the following people should also be around the table:

- People with lived experience of poverty including people with disabilities as an example only 30% of people with autism are in employment
- Government – Local & National
- Local Authorities, Council representatives
- NHS - Health providers & stakeholders
- Mental health services
- Charities that support people directly
- DWP
- Asylum-seekers & Refugees
- Community Leaders/Faith Leaders
- Grassroots organisations dealing with poverty e.g. foodbanks,
- Probation – Criminal Justice Services
- Education providers
- Poverty Truth Commissions
- NHS and the [CORE 20+5](#) approach (the 20% + most disadvantaged local communities)



- Specialist organisations that help with fuel poverty eg Cadent Foundation should also be around the table.
- Uncoordinated or unknown sources of help are making fuel poverty worse
- Poor Housing – organisations that offer and regulate the housing stock

# Workshop E: Equality & Social Justice For All: Tackling Poverty in Lancashire 14

## LACVS - LOCAL Project Strategic Launch: A Manifesto for Change



***Poverty requires a holistic strategic approach. The impact Covid has had on young people in education will cause problems in the future unless addressed:***

- Needed to be digitally connected during Covid to access education, adversely affecting the families in poverty.
- Anxiety & fear affecting mental health
- Lack of motivation
- Affected level of achievement – under achievement
- Reliance on network of support & lack of engagement with formal education
- Social isolation and delayed development – lack of social skills
- Possibly creating a cycle of poverty for younger generation as they may struggle to get a career or work life off the ground and lack resilience & persistence to overcome challenges.

### ***Real Living Wage:***

Is Preston to be a real living wage city creating uplift and bringing people out of poverty. The LOCAL project should also focus on supporting adoption of the Real Living Wage across all of Lancashire 14 (as mentioned in Priority 3 of the VCFSE Manifesto for Lancashire 14, <https://www.locallancashire.org.uk/economic-model-that-works-for-lancashire/> section 3.6 supports a commitment to the real living wage).

LCC have had a benefit take-up campaign aimed at people who didn't know they were entitled (aged 75+); they are reluctant to claim benefits due to pride and stigma.

Poverty is a route cause of ill health and is life-limiting; old people living in poverty develop more illness and are admitted to hospital more often.

# Workshop E: Equality & Social Justice For All: Tackling Poverty in Lancashire 14

## LACVS - LOCAL Project Strategic Launch: A Manifesto for Change



### ***VCFSE role in health prevention:***

The VCFSE can help with front loading and help prevention – putting in early prevention rather than picking up the pieces starting with early years. The NHS has too much bureaucracy i.e. measuring things & meeting targets. Can we not top slice some of the NHS budget to fund work in the VCFSE sector to help prevent people ending up in A&E unnecessarily?

NHS services are under pressure –the delivery model needs an overhaul to improve the health of communities e.g. diabetes – more education & early intervention.

ICB are focused on the crisis in hospitals. It is estimated that in 20yrs the demand for hospital beds will increase by 60% which is unmanageable. There are medically fit people stuck in hospital beds due to poverty; their homes are cold, they have no food and no support. The VCSFEs can help get these people discharged WITH RESOURCES.

Who is looking at prevention? Things are changing but this should have happened 20yrs ago. Ideas are top down with little bottom up. We need to build resilience in communities and change structure and the way we deal with things.

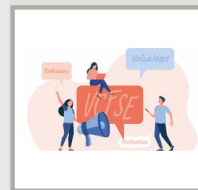
Social prescribing is a great model when there are services to prescribe to but it's a postcode lottery of services.

### ***How can poverty in Lancashire be described?***

- Hidden poverty - working poor is a real issue in Lancashire.
- Grossly inadequate income, bottom line is money & lack of it – solution to debt used to be solvable but it is much more difficult now with costs rising far more quickly than wage rises.
- Benefit system with sanctions & adjustments to payments cause poverty – people need a consistent and predictable income – we need a universal basic income like Scandinavian countries
- Injustices, inequality of opportunities
- Vulnerability and isolation
- Child poverty – 31,000 children living in poverty even though both parents work
- Lack of resources that enable you to live a decent life or not having the means for the basics/essentials e.g. period poverty
- Impacts on health both physical & mental. Those falling out of employment at an early age due to poor health created or exacerbated by poverty
- Neglect – lack of investment in property upkeep leads to poor housing conditions
- Lack of motivation, lack of ability and lack of support
- Having to choose between eating & heating

# Workshop E: Equality & Social Justice For All: Tackling Poverty in Lancashire 14

## LACVS - LOCAL Project Strategic Launch: A Manifesto for Change



- Homelessness, people on the streets – could happen to anybody
- Increased number of foodbanks & increase in the number of people using/needing them
- Affecting those with disability – physical & mental
- Substance misuse
- Increase in crime
- Cash poor but asset rich
- Stigma, fear and shame about asking for help -people do not want hand-outs
- Cannot afford a mobile phone
- Digital exclusion – everything becoming digital discriminates against those people who do not have the digital skills or cannot afford the equipment or broadband costs this in turn affects their ability to apply for jobs, generate income holding them in poverty.

### ***How does having a protected characteristic affect poverty?***

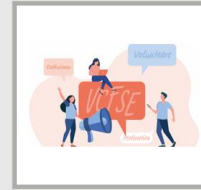
The government message is not helping the national narrative.

NB Not just protected characteristic there are others including care leavers, children etc

- Learning disabilities – fewer prospects
- Social isolation exacerbated
- Health implications both long- and short-term sickness & disability
- Transport barriers - costs to access support for health problems & poor transport routes & links
- Limits opportunities to improve life chances
- Limitations for unpaid carers and those with young children /childcare responsibilities who may only work part-time therefore lower income
- Lack of ability to ask for help, need help advocating
- Gender pay gap
- Age can affect poverty due to the vulnerability of the old & the young – older people often digitally excluded
- Intersectionality (impact research by Emma Walker for parliamentary committee) – multiple forms of disadvantage can compound inequality
- Dehumanising behaviour of some people/organisations towards certain groups with protected characteristics
- Lack of respect lowers self-esteem
- Language barriers to accessing support and services
- Cultural issues

# Workshop E: Equality & Social Justice For All: Tackling Poverty in Lancashire 14

## LACVS - LOCAL Project Strategic Launch: A Manifesto for Change



### ***Devolution:***

Where was public consultation on the Devolution plan publicised? Where is the voice of the people? There were no emails or social media messages via VCFSE so they could have distributed the message wider. The Council used Libraries and websites, why not use schools, churches, mosques in the community?

Perhaps people did not get involved in the devolution debate as they did not perceive it to be important to them – they are too far removed from it.

People who were digitally excluded, had a language barrier or literacy difficulties may have been left out of the consultation.

\*\*\*\*

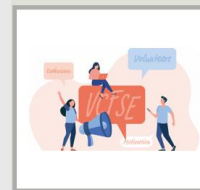
*The inequality & lack of equal opportunities makes us angry!!*

*Parents are working hard to stay out of poverty They need help to be resilient and help to develop resilience for their children.*

*Focus on Your Street, Your Locality, Your Community.*

# Workshop E: Equality & Social Justice For All: Tackling Poverty in Lancashire 14

## LACVS - LOCAL Project Strategic Launch: A Manifesto for Change



### SUMMARY:

The delegates considered a cross section of organisations that would be knowledgeable about this manifesto priority and could add value to the workstream. It was thought that dealing with poverty requires a holistic approach tackling material needs as well as physical & mental health, social skills and education. Poverty is thought to create poor physical & mental health with life limiting effects.

Employers signing up to the Real Living Wage is thought to create an uplift bringing people out of poverty. Poverty contributes to Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACE's) creating a cycle of poverty. The VCFSE sector has a major role in early intervention plus prevention for health and poverty but requires funding to be able to do it effectively & consistently.

The NHS is currently under pressure and underperforming with no prediction for improvement. This cannot continue, we need to change the way we do things and build community resilience – the VCFSE sector can help with some elements of the service but again requires sufficient funding.

When asked how the delegates saw poverty in Lancashire, they responded saying it is a lack of money often exasperated by the benefit system that doesn't provide a consistent and predictable income – having to choose eating over heating, an increased number of foodbanks, food clubs and people needing to access them. The other signs of poverty delegates recognised were a lack of opportunities leading to increased homelessness, substance misuse and crime. "It impacts on health both physical & mental. Those falling out of employment at an early age due to poor health created or exacerbated by poverty".

Other delegates said that child poverty and hidden poverty i.e. being asset rich, but cash poor were also indicators along with digital exclusion, increased vulnerability and isolation perhaps, worst of all the fear, stigma or shame that keeps people from asking for help.

Transport issues were also identified as exacerbating poverty and social isolation. Equally the way people are treated by others, who can show a lack of respect and present dehumanising behaviour.

### **How do protected characteristics affect poverty?**

Those who have Protected Characteristic were thought to have additional factors in relation to the causes of and impact of poverty. Vulnerable people e.g. those with learning disabilities, the old and the young being particularly susceptible and more so if people have multiple forms of disadvantage when they may lack the ability to be able to ask for help. Language and cultural barriers are also a factor as was the gender pay gap all of which limited people's life chances and their ability to be able to improve their lives to get out of poverty. This also has a detrimental effect on people's confidence and self-esteem.

# Workshop E: Equality & Social Justice For All: Tackling Poverty in Lancashire 14

## LACVS - LOCAL Project Strategic Launch: A Manifesto for Change



### Equality and Social Justice For All Workshop E – Potential Action Points

- i. LOCAL should explore becoming and advocating for Real Living Wage employers.
- ii. Explore the role that VCFSE can play in supporting health & social care services and how these might be funded.
- iii. Explore ways to help communities build resilience.
- iv. How to identify and rebalance the inequalities in our communities

#### FURTHER INFORMATION & LINKS:

- Speaking of Poverty Differently:  
Olivier De Schutter was appointed as the UN Special Rapporteur on extreme poverty and human rights by the UN Human Rights Council in 2020  
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=31xY6rYiu2E>
- Link to NHS CORE 20+5  
<https://www.england.nhs.uk/about/equality/equality-hub/national-healthcare-inequalities-improvement-programme/core20plus5/>
- VCFSE Sector Manifesto For Lancashire 14  
<https://www.locallancashire.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2024/01/A-VCFSE-Sector-Manifesto-for-Lancashire-2022-6.pdf>
- Media from the event  
<https://www.locallancashire.org.uk/strategic-launch/>