

Priority 3: Reducing child poverty and the effects for those living in poverty and improving early intervention and prevention	
Objectives	Commentary
Maximise opportunities for families in poverty to access employment which will have the outcome of more families working and thus reducing the levels of family and child poverty	<p>Good progress has however been made in implementing the plans to deliver the strategy 'From Poverty to Prosperity - a Strategy to Reduce Child Poverty and alleviate its effects' and a range of programmes has been commissioned. These include:</p> <p>a. Programmes to Raise Aspirations in Children, Young People and Parents/Adults: CBC Xers and Young Mechanics offering young people opportunities to develop basic bike and mechanics skills; Career Idol offering mentoring and a programme of support for 14 – 19's to enable young people to plan for a successful future career and gain a basic ALAN (Adult Literacy and Numeracy) qualification; Babysitting courses for 14 – 17 year olds enabling young people to develop basic childcare skills, earn money and possible entry into a childcare career. The Aspire Programme which is an accredited programme to raise aspiration, confidence and self-esteem of young men and women in Year 8, increasing their resilience to risk and supporting successful transition into upper schools. Expansion of the Health Champions Scheme to young people aged 16 – 24 so that they can become a qualified volunteer health champion and encourage other young people to access appropriate health, leisure, education and social care services. Roll out of the MK Dons healthy families programme supporting families with children aged 8 – 16 to achieve a healthy lifestyle and gain Open College Network qualifications such as the community sports leader award</p> <p>b. Information advice and guidance including 'life coaching' mentoring and support in areas of debt, cooking/nutrition, budgeting, benefits advice, careers advice.</p> <p>c. The Young Mums to be programme which is focusing on developing teenage parents to be confident in parenting and support their learning in key subjects and gain recognised qualifications .</p> <p>2. Leighton Buzzard Citizens Advice Bureau in conjunction with the Bedfordshire Advice Forum has been commissioned to deliver a benefits awareness training and support package. The aim of this is to ensure that there is a basic understanding and awareness of the benefits system by all front-line staff working with children and their families so that they are able to signpost to the appropriate specialist areas.</p> <p>3. Work is being undertaken with Bedfordshire Adult Skills & Community Learning to target appropriate adult and family learning within existing programmes.</p> <p>4. Negotiations are continuing around the Job Centre Plus offer within Children's Centres in areas of highest need, especially with regard to the introduction of the package of measures branded as Get Britain Working. This includes pre-employment training and work clubs, with this being incorporated into the new specifications for Children's Centres.</p>
Ensure families in poverty are accessing all available financial assistance so that non-working families move from worklessness into work in the meantime accessing appropriate benefits	
To improve life chances of children and families by intervening early to prevent poor outcomes and raising educational achievements and aspirations so that children from poor households gain better qualifications to ensure their access to the labour market so that the cycle of intergenerational poverty is broken	
Work with colleagues from all sectors and agencies to improve the environmental factors which exacerbate the effects of poverty and harness the resources of the third sector and services across the Council so that poor families develop healthier lifestyles to prolong life expectancy and live in an improve environment	

Ref	Title	Good is	Outturn			Target 11/12	Q 1	Q 2	Q 3	Q 4	Rag rating
			National	Group	CB						
Local	Proportion of Children who live in relative low income	Low	21.6%	16.85% (East of England)	12.1% (published Aug 2010 for 2008/9)	10% by 2020		13.1% (published Aug 2010 for 2009)			Amber
Local	Percentage of young people who are NEET (Not in Education, Employment or Training)	Low	6.1%		4.63%		3% (as at June)	3.6%			Green
Local	Percentage of Economic Activity – those working and those unemployed but actively seeking work within a given period	High	76.5%	78.8% (East of England)	82.1% (Sept 2010)		81.6% (Oct-Dec 2010)	81.1% (Jan-March 2011)			No rating.

Risks	Actions to mitigate the risk
<p>The ability to sustain a reduction in the number of young people not in education, employment or training (NEET) given the impact of the recession and loss of grant.</p> <p>Rising youth unemployment across UK – likely to be replicated in Central Bedfordshire.</p>	<p>Actions include more effective communication between the Council and the following agencies: schools, colleges, the Job Centre Plus, Training agencies and employers, as well as by the immediate sharing of data with the Commissioning Team once a young person has dropped out or left a positive destination (school, college training place or job). This will enable us to maintain accurate data as well as ensure that the young person is targeted by the appropriate commissioned service provider. In addition the Council is increasing its capacity to track and contact young people who are unknown or about to become lapsed i.e. those young people who are NEET and not contacted within a three month period. The Council needs to confirm that those young people who are on training courses have their status confirmed every 6 months and those in education have their status confirmed every 12 months, other wise these young people become lapsed and join the unknown cohort.</p>