

To consider:

- **the geographical consistency of anti-poverty initiatives;**
 - **the effectiveness of area-based anti-poverty programmes such as Communities First;**
 - **the progress on the recommendations of the Assembly's former Rural Development Committee's 2008 report into 'Poverty and deprivation in rural Wales'.**
- 1. There are a range of voluntary and community initiatives that tackle poverty and social exclusion. Local Authorities / volunteers / charities/ community groups/ social enterprises already play a key role, and care is needed to ensure they continue to do so.**
 - 2. Funded projects through WEFO – ESF/ERDF play a significant role in tackling poverty. To ensure that services are streamlined a coordinated approach is needed to reduce/avoid duplication and to ensure that Counties are aware of projects commencing /ongoing in the area.**
 - 3. Partners from across the North Wales region are currently collaborating on a project proposal for ESF funding to increase the employability of the economically inactive and long term unemployed. Current figures report that there are 21,000 benefit claimants aged 25+ who are economically inactive.¹**
 - 4. Initiatives to ensure a geographical consistency should initially tackle the increased duplication of services through using local and national intelligence. This in turn will allow us to focus more on the needs of the individuals, other than the needs/outcomes of the organisations.**
 - 5. Move away from short term projects to enable considered planning and commitment to securing sustainable outcomes rather than quick fixes.**
 - 6. We recognise that more needs to be in place to ensure that those living in rural areas have opportunities to access support. We recognise that this holds a heavy burden on resources and funding.**

¹ Data received from the 'North Wales Economic Ambitions Board' 2014

This could be supported with an increase in online support, such as electronic-forms and electronic appointment booking.

- 7. Better coordination, alignment and streamlining required especially in context of funding cuts are needed.**
- 8. We consider that funded project should look to overlap to bridge the gap between one service ending and another beginning. As it stands, there is a break between services causing disparity and inconsistency for service users.**
- 9. Community-based approaches play a very critical role in tackling poverty. The Communities First Programme (CF), Team around the Family (TAF) and Flying Start (FS) are the most prominent of these.**
- 10. The Local Public Health Team has been impressed by the Ynys Mon Communities First team's readiness to inform themselves and engage with Wellbeing as a valuable concept to embed into their anti-poverty work, using self-assessment tools based on The Five Ways to Wellbeing. Communities First makes a highly valued contribution to tackling poverty in their defined areas of Holyhead and Llangefni.**
- 11. CF is a longer term programme and after the review, appears far more structured with better governance, targets measurable outcomes**
- 12. Nevertheless, it should be better realised that the large majority of poor households in Wales live outside designated CF/TAF/FS areas. This is especially so in the rural counties where poverty is more statistically 'hidden' due to the smaller nature of settlements. It should be noted that rural counties share of Wales' low income households is higher than their share of the Wales CF budget.**
- 13. CF – has potential to exclude small pockets of deprivation in high income areas. Could also fail to incorporate needs of groups of people living in rural areas.**
- 14. Area based programmes in disadvantaged areas focus on income poverty and access to training but if there is no employment to move people into.**

- 15. Strong links are needed with CF and the Vibrant and Viable Places (VVP) programme to capitalise on opportunities to tackle poverty**
- 16. Wherever possible, anti-poverty programmes should target households / individuals in need regardless of where in Wales they live.**
- 17. Anti-poverty initiatives should not lead to greater exclusion.**
- 18. Some existing CF activities (eg food banks) do benefit residents from non-CF wards, and such activities to benefit a wider area should be recognised/ supported by WG.**
- 19. It is increasingly important to work in collaboration and look into ways to reduce corporate costs. IoACC have welcomed the invitation to co-locate Discretionary Payments Officers within the Community First offices to ensure information is targeting those in need.**
- 20. The future long-term sustainability of community-level anti-poverty activities must be considered, and opportunities to reduce reliance on public sector grants must be developed. Town and community councils can raise their own funds and could play a greater role in community level provision in the future.**
- 21. The County Council's recently adopted Community Benefits Contributions (CBC) Strategy does make reference to utilising such funds to improve the Island's quality of life and contribute towards socio-economic transformation through alleviating disadvantageous circumstances (including poverty).**
- 22. Future tackling poverty plans should address the issue of increased in-work poverty and how this will be addressed for all Counties.**
- 23. As stated in Strand 1, we believe to begin tackling poverty more must be done to ensure affordable housing is available and access to affordable childcare to encourage employment and education.**
- 24. Support for older unemployed people is a must for tackling the economically inactive.**

- 25. We should be aiming to strengthen links between statutory council based services and third sector service providers.**
- 26. We should be practically mindful of the effects of Welfare Reform on working age, able bodied individuals and couples with no dependants. This client group are potentially facing severe poverty and are unable to find work. The prospects of finding work in a rural environment may be severely compromised by a lack of income with which to cover the cost of running a car; something that is essential in many parts of rural Wales.**
- 27. Geographic targeting is more efficient in terms of making best use of limited public resources as you don't need detailed info on individual households**
- 28. We all know that poverty impacts on opportunities and life chances e.g. educational attainment, and that we are in tough economic climate, welfare reform, lower living standards and household income, less money for statutory and non-statutory services. We must consider in work poverty when looking at anti-poverty initiatives.**
- 29. Job creation is key to providing a sustainable route out of poverty.**
- 30. There needs to be an holistic approach taken - service provision can be disjointed**
- 31. We need to join up funding streams to avoid duplication and to ensure that a service is provided to all residents. Measureable outcomes that monitor successes are needed within these projects to monitor the need for change and assess how much benefit they actually bring.**
- 32. Regeneration is always going to be area based whilst anti-poverty strategies need to be mainstreamed.**
- 33. Anglesey has a high rate of owner occupation, 72.3% of the housing stock. With the increased proportion of in work poverty, it is likely that a fair proportion are asset rich and cash poor. Due to financial constraints it is likely that there will be no money available**

for grants for owner occupiers, properties may well fall into disrepair, adverse impact on health etc.

- 34. The creation of Wylfa Newydd will see an increase in rental charges and an increased dependency on the private rented sector. Initiatives should be in place to encourage landlord to house benefit claimants and increased support should be made available to ensure tenancies are sustainable.**
- 35. More strategic direction required between government departments to achieve this holistic approach - ensuring that programmes/initiatives are complementary, have clear targets and measurable outcomes e.g. economic development is crucial to providing work and providing sustainable solution to poverty across all ages - children will fare better in families with a reasonable income, young people can put their training to good use etc. Also need to ensure that programmes are applied consistently across local authorities otherwise cannot measure success nationally only on a project by project basis.**