

Anti-Poverty Event - Thursday 11th July 2013

The Vale of Glamorgan is ranked sixteenth in Wales out of all Welsh local authorities in relation to the proportion of children living in poverty. The purpose of the event was to raise awareness of influencing themes that contribute to generational poverty, to challenge all partners about what they can contribute and to agree some joint anti-poverty priorities.

More than seventy delegates attended the event which was organised through the Vale Local Service Board (LSB) as a partnership event between the Vale Children and Young Peoples Partnership (CYPP) and Save the Children. Councillor Chris Elmore (Chair of the CYPP and Cabinet Member for Children's Services) opened the event and emphasised that poverty is a reality in the Vale and its complex nature. Mary Powell-Chandler, Chief Executive of Save the Children Cymru explained the purpose of the day and advised delegates that 16% of 0-19 year olds live in relative income poverty in the Vale and 14% of children and young people in the Vale are living in severe poverty.

Key Note Speakers

The first key note speaker was Professor David Egan, Cardiff Metropolitan University who spoke about educational inequalities and how they impact on future opportunities and adult life. He emphasised the gap in attainment between those receiving free school meals and those who don't.

Dr Sian Griffiths, Consultant in Public Health Medicine at Public Health Wales and Chair of the Vale Public Health and Wellbeing Board and Eryl Powell, Principal Health Promotion Specialist, Public Health Wales were the next key note speakers. They highlighted the importance of the early years and also provided information about life expectancy and in particular healthy life expectancy.

Copies of all the presentations are available on the LSB [Anti Poverty Event](#) page.

Workshops

Delegates then participated in a series of workshops which were based on a toolkit developed by Save the Children as part of the Poverty Solutions work funded by Welsh Government. In the workshops delegates were asked to consider a number of standards and features linked to;

- ❖ Leadership and Governance and Policy Development
- ❖ Partnership Working
- ❖ Capacity and Resource Management

A number of interesting points were raised during the workshops and these include;

Leadership and Governance and Policy Development

- For some organisations tackling poverty is their main purpose but for others it is not part of everyday business.
- The need for the Single Integrated Plan to include a clearer statement and plan on child poverty and in particular around money and opportunity.
- Strategies need to align and not be at cross purposes.
- Different organisations do not always know what each other are doing and smaller organisations often have difficulty linking in with larger partners.
- There needs to be shared definitions, aims and understanding.
- Performance measures do not highlight what we are trying to achieve or give a sufficient focus. We need to benchmark with other areas.
- Engagement needs to be more meaningful and better use needs to be made of local expertise and mechanisms e.g. school councils
- A positive step is the greater alignment between Welsh Government regeneration policy and Communities First.
- Need to agree some key data requirements e.g. a top ten.

Partnership Working

- Greater clarity is needed on the structure of partnerships, their remit, membership and how to influence them.
- Unsure about where governance or responsibility for child poverty sits in the Vale and there needs to be a clear delivery plan.
- How can issues and risks be escalated to strategic groups? There needs to be a system to highlight issues, request reports and enable consensus on priorities e.g. whether to accelerate an issue.
- Long term strategic goals are needed but a degree of flexibility is also important.
- More can be achieved by working together.
- Have the focused outcomes of the CYPP Core Aim groups been lost?
- Is there a genuine shared approach and do we know enough about each other's services?

Capacity and Resource Management

- Need clear child poverty priorities to be agreed by the LSB.
- Need to be clear about where we can make a difference.
- Importance of early intervention.
- An electronic directory of services should be developed.
- A need for collective planning and procurement.
- Greater awareness of funding pots.
- Services should be delivered by those with the relevant expertise.
- Further work on data sets is needed.
- Young people should be engaged in budget setting but internal processes often prevent this.
- Often insufficient awareness of child poverty and the impact of inequalities.

Question Panel

At the end of the event there was a brief question and answer session. The panel of speakers were asked 'what one thing they would do?' The Panel gave a range of responses which included;

- Using existing funding and 'policy bending' to the most needy families.
- Targeting of services and the importance of the early years.
- Better use of evidence to inform interventions and that they need to be early.
- A need to invest in employment.
- Raising awareness across the wider community about levels of poverty and how it impacts on the whole community.
- Need to take a whole family approach, challenge what we do, intervene and track progress.
- Build on our assets and our strengths and make the links between services.
- Good that there is still a CYPP in the Vale but important to engage with local communities including schools and GPs in the area.

Next Steps

Councillor Neil Moore, Leader of the Vale of Glamorgan Council, Chair of the Local Service Board and Anti Poverty Champion closed the event. He thanked everyone for their participation and challenged them to use every opportunity to raise the issue of poverty and increase understanding about the reality of poverty in our local communities.

Councillor Moore explained how the work undertaken in the workshops and comments raised in discussions would be used to influence the Local Service Board Event in the Autumn and the next Community Strategy Delivery Plan which would be overseen by the Local Service Board and delivered through a range of organisations and local partnerships.

The detailed issues raised in the different workshops have been collated and will be used to inform future work. The report will be discussed by the Local Service Board and also the Children and Young Peoples Partnership and together with the Unified Needs Assessment and performance information will help shape the Community Strategy Delivery Plan for 2014-18.

Feedback From Delegates

Colleagues responded highly positively to the event, many expressed that the event had raised awareness and knowledge of issues surrounding child poverty. It was felt that the event will influence how personal roles can impact on child poverty. Working in partnership to tackle issues of poverty was a common statement. Some colleagues will look at the support that their services offer and how it can be extended, raising awareness of child poverty and how services can fit into the wider picture.

Some delegates felt the event will improve communication and dissemination of information between partners and colleagues. It was also reported that facts and figures will help with child poverty priorities. Delegates generally found that the event was beneficial to networking with other organisations.

On the whole colleagues found presentations/speakers and workshops of interest. The workshops and presentations raised awareness and knowledge on child poverty issues, and how it could influence organisations and their work. Delegates were more aware of the number of organisations working with young people in the Vale, knowledge of information and how it will impact on the work of organisations. There was an opportunity to look at impacts across services, delivery and an integrated strategy.

Networking and sharing best practice were generally felt to be one of the important features of the event and making links between poverty, health and education was also expressed.

Delegates reported that the event was generally a good event and although involvement with workshops was positive the purpose and aim of the workshops could have been clearer for a few. Suggestions were made to have a structural diagram of partnerships and plans in the delegate packs, and explanation on how this feeds up to higher level for discussion. There was also a suggestion to promote a directory of all services in the Vale and to make the Child Poverty event an annual one if possible.

A need to look at joint priorities was expressed to ensure the LSB is informed about the work of each of the partnerships and why they apply for bids, and from whom, to form consistent outcomes and ensure these outcomes are constantly measured.