

Musselburgh Area Partnership

Meeting Notes of Special Meeting on Poverty Monday 22 May 2017, 7-9pm Esk Rooms 1&2, Brunton Hall, Musselburgh

Members (and substitute members) present:

Iain Clark, Chair (IC)
Cllr Andy Forrest (AF)
Cllr Katie Mackie (KM)
Cllr John Williamson (JW)
Alister Hadden, Wallyford CC (AH)
Cathie McArthur, Windsor Park TRA (CMc)
Gaynor Allen, Musselburgh GS Parent Council (GA)
Vivien Struthers, Stoneyhill PS Parent Council (VS)
Stuart Thomson, Oldcraighall TRA (ST)
Janice MacLeod, Support from the Start (JM)

Others in attendance:

Annette Bruton, Chair, East Lothian Poverty Commission and Chief Exec of Edinburgh College (AB)
Morag Alexander, East Lothian Poverty Commission, ELCAP Board (MA)
Liz Kilpatrick, EL Foodbank (LK)
Rebecca Spillane, Project Manager, ELC (RS)
Peter Dicker, Manager EL Foodbank (PD)
Yvonne Cassidy, Musselburgh CAB (YC)
Margaret McKay, Carers of East Lothian (MM)
Anna Potter, Active Schools, ELC (AP)
Jane Cumming, CLD, ELC (JC)
Caroline Davis, CLD, ELC (CD)
Stuart Baxter, Area Manager, ELC (SB)
Carolyne Murray, Business Support Administrator, ELC (CMu)

Apologies:

Cllr. Stuart Currie, Elected Member (SC)
Margaret Stewart, Musselburgh & Inveresk CC (MS)
Irene Tait, Musselburgh & Inveresk CC (IT)
Jeanette Boyd, Windsor Park TRA (JB)
Sharlene Miller, Musselburgh GS Parent Council (SM)
Laura Munro, Campie PS Parent Council (LM)
Emma Stewart, Musselburgh Council of Churches
Callum Maguire, QMU
Emma Scarcliffe, Bridges Project
David Dalgleish, CLDS, ELC (DD)

1. Welcome & Introductions

IC welcomed everyone to the meeting and introduced the speakers.

2. Understanding Poverty & Recommendations

AB and MA gave an overview of the Poverty Commission report followed by RS who explained how the Scottish Index of Multiple Deprivation (SIMD) statistics are viewed.

- SIMD – 132 data zones in East Lothian
- EL Foodbank referrals are up 37% since introduction of Universal Credit (UC)
- 41% of food parcels are delivered to the Musselburgh Area
- East Lothian by Numbers is viewable on the East Lothian Partnership page her:
www.eastlothian.gov.uk/info/200135/community_planning/1751/east_lothian_and_wards_by_numbers
- 22% of residents in Musselburgh have no access to the internet which is required to apply for UC
- EL Poverty Commission 's Facebook page is available - www.facebook.com/East-Lothian-Poverty-Commission-483627518504733
- North Berwick Community Centre set up a Kindness Cooperative to help those in crisis

LK is working with RS and East Lothian Council conducting research to clarify recommendations still to come.

What Can be Done?

- Food surpluses directed to community cafes
- Rolling training programme for those wanting to learn and those wanting to teach cookery skills.
- Extend the reach of affordable fresh food
- Fundraise to provide basic equipment
- Schools – Fundamental Foods – all P1-3, Holiday Kitchens, Breakfast Clubs

Can You Help?

- Venues?
- Human resources?
- Examples of past projects
- Evidence of food poverty
- Groups who could benefit

Key points during discussion –

- Ruth Davie, Fundamental Foods, Pennypit Community Development Trust is available for community cooking lessons etc however there is a lack of facilities in Musselburgh as well some underutilised spaces
- A Cook Bus had visited Musselburgh previously perhaps something similar could be set up.
- Thought needs to be given to the people that we want to help eg many are working, no free time, tired, child care issues etc.
- Need a community facility run by the community and then use its facilities to help.
- Aspirational ideas are good yes however what can we do now. Can schools in the cluster make policy decisions so we can identify need?
- An issue with schools sharing information regarding those in need due to data protection legislation and it is getting more and more difficult to identify families, individuals.
- The school equity fund is based on free school meals eligibility which could provide an opportunity to consider ways of identification.
- It's difficult to connect the teachers and schools now and to get their buy in with communities.

Actions:

CD/JC to discuss further with LK

LK asking Musselburgh Area Partnership for help with research in Can You Help.

3. Open Questions/Discussion

Q - How does Musselburgh as a partnership link in, how do we identify what will work, what has been the impact of ward changes?

A - The biggest impact of ward changes has been in the Haddington & Lammermuir ward, not so much Musselburgh.

Q - What stigma between the east and west of Musselburgh?

A - The SIMD does break down statistics into very specific areas however local knowledge is needed to clarify the stigma that may exist.

- PD advised that Trussell Trust sat on a Scottish Parliament review board re getting rid of food banks. TT told them that poverty needs to be got rid off and only then would food banks not be needed.
- YC advised that CAB had been struck by lone parent's poverty and during January conducted research in Haddington and Musselburgh over a two week period when every client who visited the CAB offices completed a survey. Predictions of the impact of UCs had suggested that single parents would be the hardest hit and those with disabilities the least affected but the data collated from the survey in January found that those undergoing a benefit check and new found disability claims were being equally affected. CAB is preparing to publish the results and while aware that this was a small sample the results are worrying and they can't emphasise enough the impact of UC on people in East Lothian. CAB has asked the Scottish Government to halt rollout and would encourage other groups and organisations to do the same.

- PD added that Edinburgh Food banks are very busy with 20 referrals a day possible and they have stated that they won't be able to cope with a roll out of UC in Edinburgh.
- AP advised that Active School staff are reminded if planning an early morning activity to consider the effect on behaviour of youngsters not having had breakfast. Active Schools are also piloting a free activities scheme in the next academic year and they are faced with the difficulty of getting those most in need signed up as online registration is not possible for all. Help is needed with getting the word out regarding the pilot too.
- Sustainability is an issue as it is not always possible to reapply for funding for the same project year on year. The Area Partnership itself doesn't know if available funding will be the same year on year.
- Poverty Champion, should Musselburgh Area Partnership consider it? Need to choose someone who will never give up!
- Awareness is critical, perhaps sharing information about poverty and its impact with children could be considered. Children can be very empathetic and non-judgemental. Communities are then taking ownership.
- Agreements among parents perhaps eg no birthday presents at parties.
- EL Foodbank worked with guides and scouts and ran a cookery competition and is now looking at using those recipes to create a cookbook. Useful tool in increasing skills and knowledge.
- Campie Primary School used to run a Friday Lunch Club which was a community occasion with everyone included and families sat down to each together. The Parent Council asked to continue this but were told couldn't use school kitchen. EL Council needs to work with communities to allow use of facilities.

4. What can the Musselburgh Area Partnership do?

AB advised that all 54 recommendations in the report are supported by evidence and recommended that Musselburgh AP work through them systematically and identify what the Area Partnership can feasibly do and/or utilise and select perhaps 10 to adopt. AB also suggested that the Area Partnership decide whether its approach would be

- to the root of the problem
- 'sticky plaster' solutions
- sustainability of an action

IC thanked everyone for coming along and acknowledged that tonight had been very useful and the Area Partnership would use the report as the starting point and confirmed that Poverty is very definitely on the agenda.

SB reminded everyone that a community stall is available for organisations at every Friday Market and just to contact him.

PD added that holiday lunch clubs should get in touch with the EL Foodbank as there is help available.