

**REPORT TO: NEIGHBOURHOOD RESOURCES AND DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE  
- 13 MAY 2002**

**REPORT ON: DEFINING AND MEASURING POVERTY AND SOCIAL EXCLUSION IN  
DUNDEE**

**REPORT BY: DIRECTOR OF NEIGHBOURHOOD RESOURCES AND DEVELOPMENT**

**REPORT NO: 338-2002**

## **1.0 PURPOSE OF REPORT**

**1.1** The report provides an update on the implementation of the Dundee City Council Anti-Poverty Strategy recommendation to review Council information on poverty.

**1.2** The report highlights some of the issues/difficulties involved in gathering, analysing and presenting strategic information on poverty and social exclusion.

**1.3** The report recommends ways in which the Council can overcome these difficulties to achieve its Anti-Poverty Strategy objective.

## **2.0 RECOMMENDATIONS**

It is recommended that the Committee

**2.1** Notes the progress made to date on the review of Council information on poverty.

**2.2** Acknowledges the difficulties involved in gathering, analysing and presenting strategic social justice/poverty data.

**2.3** Supports a partnership bid to the Scottish Executive through the Scottish Neighbourhood Statistics Initiative to fund a project which will define and measure poverty and social exclusion in Dundee.

**2.4** Agrees the formation of a steering group, which includes representation from Dundee's Community Planning partners, to oversee project planning, implementation and monitoring.

## **3.0 FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

**3.1** The Scottish Executive has agreed to support a Scottish Neighbourhood Statistics bid to fund a project which will define and measure poverty and social exclusion in Dundee.

**3.2** The only financial implication for Dundee City Council will be staff time incurred through involvement of the Steering Group.

## **4.0 LOCAL AGENDA 21**

**4.1** The Research Project will produce a framework of indicators which can be used to:

- describe how poverty and social exclusion show up in local neighbourhoods across Dundee and measure the changes taking place over time
- predict emerging social problems/trends demanding attention
- monitor progress and effectiveness of specific policies, programmes and initiatives eg Social Justice Strategies, Community Plans, Anti-Poverty Strategies
- enable comparisons between Dundee and other local authority areas.

## **5.0 EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES**

**5.1** The Research Project will define specific geographical areas (neighbourhoods) and population sub-groups (eg lone parents, ethnic minorities, people with disabilities) towards which policy is directed.

## **6.0 BACKGROUND**

**6.1** Dundee City Council adopted its Anti-Poverty Strategy in December 1999 and in so doing, made a commitment to implement the recommendations contained in the report, subject to the availability of finance.

**6.2** The Anti-Poverty Strategy recognises very important deficiencies in the information available to the local authority about the pattern of poverty in the City. As a result, the Council recommended its information systems be reviewed in order to collate as fully as possible all information relevant to the subject of poverty.

**6.3** A Poverty Information Monitoring Framework has been established in line with the Anti-Poverty Strategy Framework. The Framework holds an integrated set of indicators drawn from the Social Justice Milestones, the Social Inclusion Partnership Monitoring and Evaluation Framework, the Community Plan, the Dundee City Council Plan and the Council's Anti-Poverty Strategy.

**6.4** Data has been collected wherever possible for 1996 and 1999 and presented at Social Inclusion Partnership, Dundee and Scottish levels.

## **7.0 DATA COLLECTION ISSUES**

**7.1** Data collection difficulties have precluded a detailed analysis of poverty and social exclusion in Dundee for the following reasons:

**7.2** Local authorities and individual Council departments working on data collection independently of each other and the Scottish Executive with no overall co-ordination.

**7.3** Lack of clarity about the mechanisms currently available for accessing local and national social justice data.

**7.4** Data collection systems do not currently meet the information needs of local government or the Scottish Executive.

**7.5** Data is not always available at Social Inclusion Partnership or local neighbourhood level.

**7.6** The functional responsibility for gathering, analysing and re-presenting strategic social justice data within the Council could be more clearly identified.

## **8.0 SCOTTISH NEIGHBOURHOOD STATISTICS INITIATIVE**

**8.1** The Scottish Executive has agreed funding of £7 million over three years to develop Neighbourhood Statistics across Scotland, aimed at transforming the production, dissemination of data at a local level. The initiative intends to provide support which might include consultancy funding for local authorities and financial assistance to assist data providers to develop their information retrieval systems.

## 9.0 DEFINING AND MEASURING POVERTY AND SOCIAL INCLUSION IN DUNDEE

9.1 The Scottish Executive Central Statistics Unit has agreed to support a bid to fund a Dundee Research Project which aims to:

- develop a robust methodology and framework for measuring and analysing the concepts of urban poverty and social exclusion across a range of geographic and thematic based definitions.
- demonstrate a more complete understanding of poverty, social exclusion and definitions of the inter-relationship between these concepts and other forms of disadvantage.
- report on aspects of poverty and exclusion in relation to social and economic circumstance, change and trends in the context of the urban environment; and
- provide a template which can be used by other local authorities in urban areas to develop their own poverty and social exclusion analysis.

9.2 Should the Research Project meet with the approval of Dundee City Council and the Scottish Neighbourhood Statistics Development Group, a Steering Group will be established to oversee project planning, implementation and monitoring.

9.3 Steering Group representation will be drawn from Dundee's Community Planning partners and the Central Statistics Unit at the Scottish Executive as follows:

- *Dundee City Council* - leading the Community Plan and social inclusion/anti-poverty strategies.
- *Scottish Enterprise Tayside* - leading an economic/financial inclusion.
- *Communities Scotland* - leading on the wider regeneration role.
- *Tayside NHS Board* - leading strategies to address health inequalities.
- *Employment Services* - providing an overview of employment - related issues.
- *Central Statistics Unit* - providing a link with SNS and the Scottish Deprivation Index.
- *University of Dundee* - maintaining an overview of the SIP monitoring and evaluation programme.
- *Dundee Anti-Poverty Forum* - leading the participative development of poverty indicators.

## 10.0 CONSULTATION

The Chief Executive, Director of Finance and Director of Support Services have been consulted in the preparation of this report.

## 11.0 BACKGROUND PAPERS

No background papers, as defined by Section 50D of the Local Government (Scotland) Act 1973 (other than any containing confidential or exempt information were relied on to any material extent in the preparation of this report.

**Director of Neighbourhood Resources and Development .....**

**Date .....**