



Subject:	City workshop on addressing poverty through inclusive growth
Date:	13 April 2016
Reporting Officer:	Jill Minne, Director of Organisational Development
Contact Officer:	Sharon McNicholl, Strategic Planning & Policy Manager Claire Patterson, Business Research and Development Manager Jelena Buick, Business Research and Development Officer Mark McCann, Business Research and Development Manager

Is this report restricted?	Yes <input type="checkbox"/>	No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Is the decision eligible for Call-in?	Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	No <input type="checkbox"/>

1.0	Purpose of Report or Summary of main Issues
1.1	To provide elected Members with information on the work that the Joseph Rowntree Foundation (JRF) has been doing on connecting growth and poverty reduction and to present JRF's manifesto briefing for a shared prosperity and reduced poverty in Northern Ireland.
1.2	In addition, this report is to advise Members of a workshop that will determine the initial approach that the Council and its partners will seek to adopt in order to better maximise the potential of citywide economic growth to enable people to lift themselves and their communities out of poverty.
1.3	The Joseph Rowntree Foundation (JRF) is currently supporting Leeds City Council and its stakeholders in its work to realise a similar ambition and the Strategic Policy and Resources Committee agreed in March 2016 that Belfast City Council seek to engage with JRF to determine what steps Belfast needs within our particular city context and as an integral part of the Belfast Agenda.

2.0	Recommendations
2.1	Members are asked to note the information provided at the appendices to this report, (including the significant work that Council and its partners undertake in relation to mitigating the impact of poverty) and to note that the Council will seek to engage JRF and others to facilitate a workshop in spring 2016 at City Hall to support the development of an integrated approach to addressing poverty and inequality.
3.0	Main report
3.1	<p><u>Key Issues</u></p> <p>At the January meeting of Strategic Policy & Resources Committee Members acknowledged the growing issue of poverty and inequality in the city. Committee also noted that the Council and its partners already made significant contributions towards mitigating the impact of poverty (particularly in relation to issues of food, fuel and housing). Please see attached at Appendix 1 the report that went to Strategic Policy & Resources Committee in January 2016.</p>
3.2	In relation to tackling the root causes of poverty in Belfast, there was also agreement that the over-riding need was to maximise household income by addressing unemployment, low pay, and ensuring full access to benefits.
3.3	Members acknowledged that, while it is very important to mitigate the negative impact of poverty here and now, it is also critical to understand and address the root causes of why people are in poverty in the first place and work towards reducing that risk.
3.4	<p>In Leeds JRF has been working successfully with the Local Authority and with local business in the Leeds Enterprise Partnership (LEP) to find out how economic growth can be promoted in a way that makes addressing poverty an integral part of that city's local growth strategies. The city has established a 'More jobs, Better Jobs' partnership to achieve this see. It has four aims:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To better understand the relationship between poverty and the economy at the city and city region level; • To identify what can be done and by whom at city/city region level to create more and better jobs; • To make a compelling practical case for why cities should link growth and poverty reduction; and

- To make addressing poverty a more integral part of local growth strategies in cities and city regions.

3.5

A number of major projects are now underway in Leeds including:

- A citywide programme to ensure job quality, skills utilisation and clear labour market progression
- Maximising the contribution of the city's anchor institutions as employers, contractors and providers of services
- Maximising the social value of large infrastructure and development opportunities
- Building understanding about the business case for poverty reduction, the costs and benefits that accrue to the city

Please see a report on this work attached at **Appendix2**.

3.6

Members may also be aware that JRF also produces an annual independent assessment of progress in tackling poverty and other types of disadvantage across great Britain and Northern Ireland. Its latest report for Northern Ireland was published on 15 March 2016 and covers trends relating to Money, Work and Worklessness, Welfare and Benefits, Services and Housing. Please see report attached at **Appendix3**.

3.7

JRF is also working towards a major strategy for tackling poverty in Northern Ireland which they expect to publish in September 2016. Prior to the release of the full strategy they have published a manifesto for tackling poverty in Northern Ireland with which they are seeking to influence the next NI Programme for Government. Please see report attached at **Appendix 4**.

3.8

On the basis of its work in Leeds, and ongoing analysis of poverty in Northern Ireland it was agreed at Strategic Policy & Resources Committee that Belfast City Council engages with JRF and others to facilitate a city workshop in City Hall in **late Spring**. All Members would be invited to attend with invitations issued to relevant stakeholder organisations. It is proposed that the initial aims of this work would be to:

- Learn from the Leeds approach and to consider how aspects of it could be adapted for a Belfast programme as part of the Belfast Agenda
- Consider how we might develop a model of inclusive growth for Belfast
- Seek to determine an integrated package of interventions and indicators that cover growth and poverty reduction as part of the Belfast Agenda and that seeks to ensure we lead by doing.

<p>3.9</p> <p>3.10</p>	<p><u>Financial & Resource Implications</u></p> <p>The development of an approach to tackling poverty/employability and skills is included within current Council estimates.</p> <p><u>Equality or Good Relations Implications</u></p> <p>Equality and good relations implications will be taken into consideration in relation to tackling elements of poverty; however it is anticipated that any collaborative efforts should have a positive effect on section 75 groups.</p>
<p>4.0</p>	<p>Appendices</p>
	<p>Appendix 1 - Strategic Policy & Resources Committee report on 22 January 2016</p> <p>Appendix 2- Connecting Growth and Poverty Reduction, More Jobs, Better Jobs in Leeds City Region</p> <p>Appendix 3 - Joseph Rowntree Foundation’s Monitoring Poverty and Social Exclusion in Northern Ireland 2016</p> <p>Appendix 4 - Joseph Rowntree Foundation’s manifesto for a prosperous, poverty-free Northern Ireland</p>