

TRAFFORD

POVERTY STRATEGY 2023-25

Preventing and reducing
poverty in Trafford



PUTTING LIVED EXPERIENCE AT THE CENTRE OF OUR PLANS

When setting out our vision to reduce poverty in Trafford, our 2023-2025 Poverty Strategy builds on our previous version, embedding the work of the Trafford Poverty Truth Commission (PTC).

This version of the strategy is a combination of both the Trafford Poverty Strategy 2022-2025 and the Trafford Poverty Truth Commission 2023 End of Commission Report and therefore has not only been developed in partnership, with involvement from Trafford's voluntary, community, faith, and social enterprise (VCFSE) sector, public services, health services, and housing associations, but most importantly builds upon the voices and recommendations from residents in Trafford with lived experience of poverty.

Our 2023-2025 strategy continues to set out the commitments we have made in partnership to tackle poverty in our communities. We know that living in poverty can prevent people from reaching their potential and can impact on their health and wellbeing. The rising costs of living could result in more households experiencing poverty in Trafford and this will disproportionately impact certain groups such as those on a low income, older people, people with disabilities and single parents. Whilst the rising cost of living cannot be directly influenced by Trafford's organisations, we can work together locally to support residents who are experiencing poverty and focus our efforts on prevention.

As the Poverty Truth Commission was taking place, we saw inflation in the UK rising to a 30-year high and recognised how vital a joined-up partnership strategy on poverty was needed. Poverty is a problem of insufficient resources to meet everyday needs and to participate fully in society. This is primarily about a lack of income; therefore, our strategy highlights the need for people to have the money they require to support themselves and their families and the dignity and choice that comes with this, that we should all be entitled to. This strategy recognises that food poverty or fuel poverty cannot exist independently; an individual or family struggling will be experiencing all the challenges that come with having insufficient resources to afford everyday needs.

In our revised Poverty Strategy, we will continue to work towards the five key themes co-developed in partnership in 2022. These five interlinking themes continue to be important areas of focus to ensure we are moving towards a reduction in poverty and ultimately being able to alleviate poverty in the borough. For 2023-25 the five key themes will now have a stronger focus on how the voice of lived experience will be embedded in the actions that sit within these thematic areas.

The biggest shift in this revised strategy is the inclusion of our breakthrough priorities. These priorities are those recommended in the final report of our Poverty Truth Commission. Framing them as 'breakthrough priorities' establishes the need for us to shift our focus to these recommendations in response to what we have been told by individuals that know the most about poverty in our borough – those with lived experience. These priorities will be given precedence over the next 12 months, while continuing to progress our thematic areas and ensuring business as usual in these areas.

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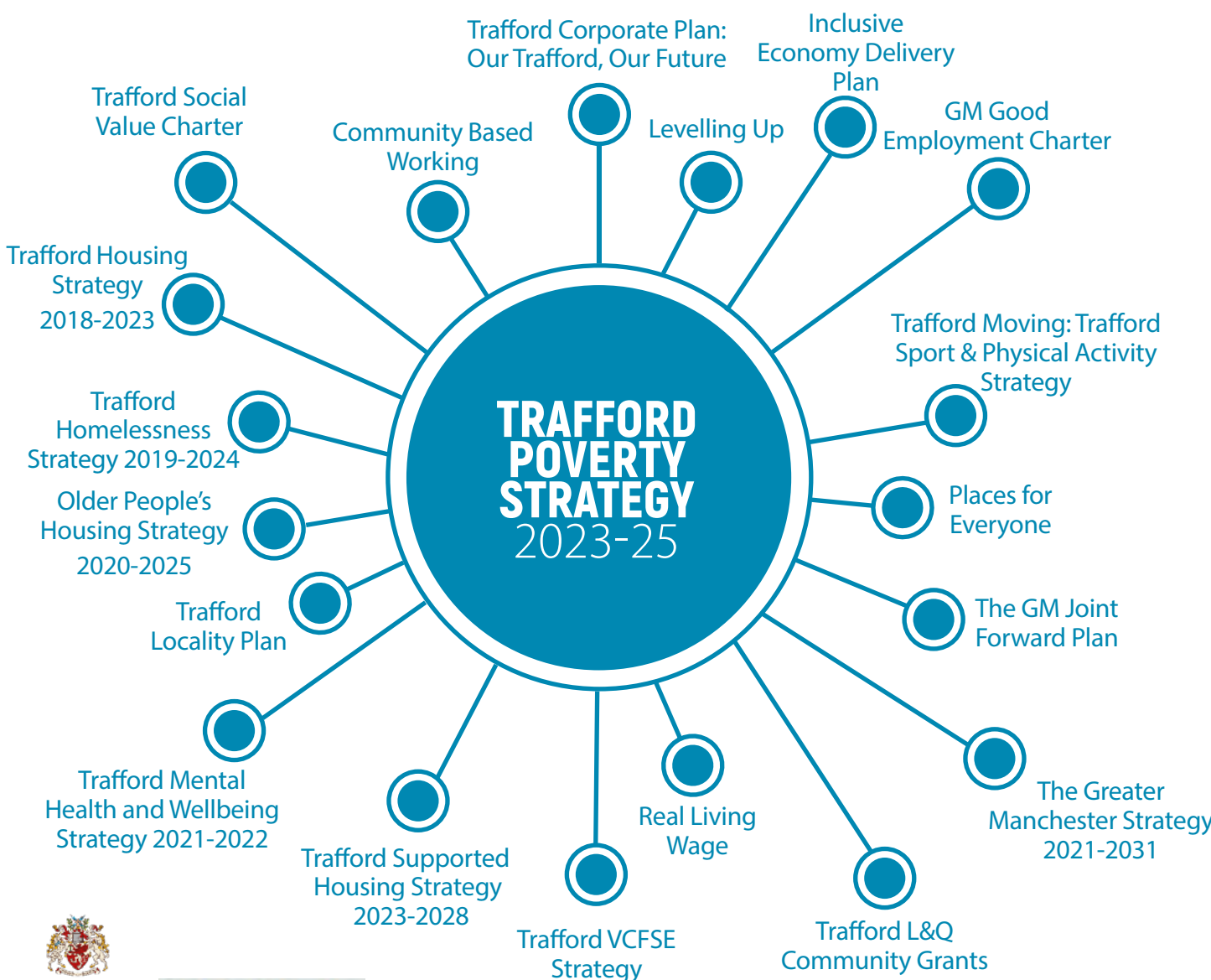
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"Quite often you feel powerless, but this time I've felt part of something, and like I've got a voice."
Trafford Poverty Truth Commission

WORKING IN PARTNERSHIP

With the publication of our 2023-25 Strategy, we recognised the importance that this strategy has been developed in partnership with over 20 organisations from the public and VCSE sectors.



“Each organisation involved is passionate about working in partnership in Trafford to support residents living in poverty and ultimately end poverty in the borough. Although each organisation has its own vision and programmes for reducing poverty, it is recognised by partners that we can have a greater impact by working together. The importance of listening to lived experience has been felt by all partners in their full support of our Trafford Poverty Truth Commission, and this strategy aims to put their recommendations at the fore of the work we do.”

Councillor James Wright, Executive Member Housing and Advice.

Trafford Poverty Action Group, made up of cross-sector partners, continues to meet to understand how we can all play a practical part in responding to the actions. Each organisation continues to play a role in taking ownership of actions to support the delivery of this strategy and will continue to do so. To ensure success in achieving our aims we need all our partners to work together and make reducing and ending poverty everyone’s business.

Building on our partnership approach to tackling poverty in Trafford, our Trafford Poverty Truth Commission – launched in May 2022 – moved away from traditional partnership engagement towards a focus on co-design and co-production.

The Poverty Truth Commission was formed of Commissioners who are residents of Trafford and have lived experience of poverty, and of leaders from the public, private and voluntary sectors in the borough. Throughout their yearlong project they have worked collectively to form relationships, explore the causes of poverty and its effects, and to develop their ideas for how we can come together as a community to tackle poverty, through sharing their experience of navigating systems.

Implementing the PTC recommendations across partners and systems will be a future focus for the wider Trafford Partnership – our local strategic partnership – highlighting the importance of what needs to happen together to have an impact.

WHAT DOES POVERTY LOOK LIKE IN TRAFFORD?

OUR DEFINITION OF POVERTY

Poverty is when someone doesn't have access to the material resources they require to both meet basic needs and to participate fully in society.

OUR VISION FOR REDUCING POVERTY IN TRAFFORD

"Trafford should be a borough where no one is marginalised or discriminated against due to financial or material circumstances, where everyone has the opportunity to improve their life chances, and where everyone can access the benefits and opportunities that come with living in a vibrant and successful borough."

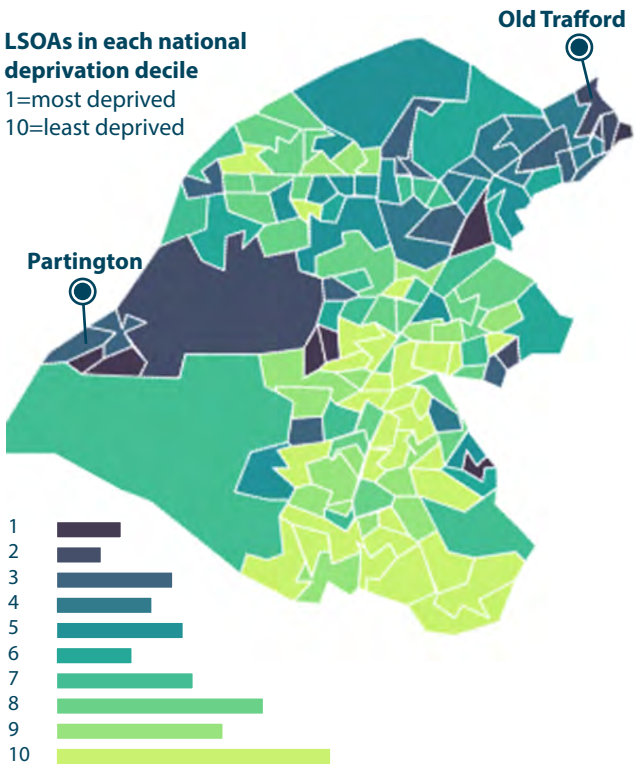
Because Trafford's poverty statistics look better than other areas of Greater Manchester, there is often a misconception that poverty is not experienced by residents in our borough. On average, just over 1 in 10 children (12.34%) in Trafford are living in poverty compared to an average of 1 in 3 children in other boroughs in Greater Manchester. The reality is that this average figure for Trafford masks the poverty experienced by residents in some of our communities; in our Clifford Ward, 1 in 3 children are living in poverty (33.7%) – more comparative to other GM borough rates.

It should also be noted that these figures are based on poverty experienced by households before housing costs; therefore, the level of poverty could increase with the current rise in living costs.

This strategy recognises that the causes of poverty are wide-ranging and many existing strategies and programmes of work are underway in Trafford to help reduce inequality and improve lives. This strategy does not intend to duplicate any of the work that is already underway but seeks to complement and support delivery.

Poverty in Trafford

Within Trafford, five small areas (called Lower Super Output Areas) rank in the 10% most deprived areas in the Income Deprivation Affecting Children, in the whole of England. Seven LSOA rank in the 10% most deprived areas in the Multiple deprivation domain. This is shown on the map below which highlights the scale of deprivation across the borough.



WHAT DOES POVERTY LOOK LIKE IN TRAFFORD?

CREATING AN INCLUSIVE ECONOMY

- In 2022, 89.1% of Trafford residents were paid at or above the real living wage by their employer. The real living wage is £10.90 per hour in Greater Manchester.
- In June 2023, 11.3% of Trafford residents claimed Universal Credit; this includes people who are working on a low income and require additional financial support and those whose health or caring responsibility prevent them from working. This has increased from 6.1% in January 2020.
- In Partington and Old Trafford, 28.7% and 24.8% respectively claim Universal Credit in June 2023. This is up from 26.3% and 23.2% in the previous year.
- The Council has recently uplifted 320 employees on the lowest pay bands across the Council and eligible schools to be paid the Living Wage and has been accredited as a Real Living Wage employer. The accreditation from the Living Wage Foundation recognises those organisations which voluntarily choose to pay their staff more than the government's minimum wage.
- Trafford has 67 accredited organisations employing more than 10,000 people.

IMPROVING ACCESS TO INFORMATION AND ADVICE

- In early 2022, it was estimated that 393 residents living in two wards within Stretford and Old Trafford were entitled to claim Pension Credit but were not doing so; this would account to almost £1 million.
- Ending smoking for all would lift around 450,000 households out of poverty. Ending smoking in our communities would not just benefit the health and wellbeing of individuals but also their financial circumstances.

WHAT DOES POVERTY LOOK LIKE IN TRAFFORD?

MAXIMISING HOUSEHOLD INCOME

- A household is considered fuel poor if the household's house energy efficiency rating is Band D or below and their disposable income (after housing and fuel costs) is below the poverty line. Definition from Fuel poverty factsheet, England, 2020 (publishing.service.gov.uk)
- In 2021, 11.8% of Trafford households were fuel poor. In Clifford ward 20.7% of households were living in fuel poverty.

SUPPORTING CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE

- In August 2022, 1.89% of young people aged 16 and 17 in Trafford were NEET (not in employment, education, or training).
- 11.4% of children in Trafford live in low-income families. This percentage rises in Old Trafford where 30.4% of children are living in low income families.
- 63% of eligible families in Trafford are claiming Healthy Start as of April 2023.

LIVED EXPERIENCE OF POVERTY

Trafford Poverty Truth Commission (PTC) has been the coming together of a group of 34 people who care about poverty in Trafford, many of which are personally impacted by it and want to make things better. As Commissioners, both Community and Civic, the members agreed to come together as equals to work for change.

The group was made up of 14 Community Commissioners from across Trafford of different ages, backgrounds and with different life experience, who all share in having lived experience of poverty. For the Community Commissioners poverty does not define them, but it is something they all share, and they have used their

shared experiences and voices to try to change things for everyone experiencing poverty in Trafford.

Alongside the Community Commissioners, Trafford's Poverty Truth Commission also included 20 Civic Commissioners from a variety of public, private and third sector organisations. Their jobs mean that the decisions they make, and the way they work, has an impact on people who experience poverty in Trafford.

They took part in the Poverty Truth Commission to ensure that the impact is felt in the future within the organisations they work for in Trafford and beyond.

The timeline below shows the process the group followed in their work:

To conclude the year long Poverty Truth Commission project, all Commissioners together developed the

End of Commission Report which brought together all their work into four key recommendations for partners across Trafford. The recommendations are:

1. Improve how Trafford residents access services.
2. Continue to use the voice of people with lived experience in the development of policy and services in Trafford.
3. Make public transport truly accessible for everyone.
4. Tackle mental health and isolation.

These recommendations will be our collective focus over the next 12 months, framed as breakthrough priorities, and we will continue to work to understand how we can best achieve the asks of residents in Trafford with lived experience of poverty.



OUR BREAKTHROUGH PRIORITIES

To ensure the work of the Poverty Truth Commission influences the continued work across Trafford to prevent and reduce poverty, the four recommendations will become the poverty strategy breakthrough priorities that we will be focussing on for the next 12 months.

This breakthrough approach is how we work together to make a change or improvement which we have not been able to achieve before.

The focus will include immediate action to help mitigate against the impact of poverty and developing a longer-term plan of action focused on prevention and reduction to ensure we are responding to the asks and needs of people living in poverty in our borough. Alongside these breakthrough priorities, a concrete action plan, developed in Summer 2023, ensures that we identify key owners of the actions and create a clear timeline for the work.

To view the full report please [click here](https://stretfordpublichall.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2023/03/PTC-Final-Report-March-23.pdf)



<https://stretfordpublichall.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2023/03/PTC-Final-Report-March-23.pdf>



**POVERTY
TRUTH** **TRAFFORD**

1. IMPROVE HOW RESIDENTS LIVING IN POVERTY ACCESS SERVICES.

A ONE STOP SHOP

We will work with partners to develop a 'One Stop Shop' in communities across Trafford, that complements the support currently being provided by the Community Hubs. This could be based around a range of in-person services, phone lines and online support and information and while working towards creating a system that focuses on people rather than services.

The work includes specific actions to help people to navigate 'the system'. As well as raise awareness of benefit entitlements and support available and direct residents to community resources such as hubs, youth centres and sports clubs. This will raise awareness of mental health support and highlight education opportunities and give advice on budgeting and personal finance.

No Wrong Door There should be 'no wrong door': those providing frontline services in Trafford need to have the knowledge and ability to refer people to the service(s) they need. This includes developing an online resource that brings together benefit information and an online tool to help people use technology effectively.

Better information that is easy to access such as newsletters, leaflets, noticeboards, clear language alongside information champions and training for frontline workers and policy teams.

2. MAKE THE VOICE OF 'LIVED EXPERIENCE' PART OF TRAFFORD'S WAY OF WORKING

There needs to be a focus on meaningful engagement where residents are part of the decision-making process.

The panel can help advise the Community Hubs and other service providers beyond the Council.

A panel of people with lived experience of poverty is to be set up and will be consulted in setting up new services and policy. The Poverty Action Group will be the principal point of engagement; however the aim is for the panel to engage across issues and organisations, not just when poverty is the main theme or issue.

We want to actively encourage people with lived experience of poverty to apply for the roles of Community Champions. Where possible, we would reward people for their time and expertise, preferably by paying them money or with vouchers.

3. IMPROVE PUBLIC TRANSPORT SO PEOPLE LIVING IN POVERTY ARE ABLE TO MAKE FULL USE OF IT.

This will include joint working between the council and TfGM to understand the full journey from doorstep to destination and the barriers faced by people living in poverty to using and accessing the full range of public transport.

We will look at removing barriers to access such as allowing all bus passes to be used all day, not just off-peak.

We will also look at making it easier to plan your whole journey if you need to use more than one bus/train/tram line and planning services so they link up better.

4. TACKLE MENTAL HEALTH AND ISOLATION

We will put the impact of poverty on mental health at the forefront of the design of new services such as the One Stop Shop. This means that people are not expected to repeat their story over and over again.

This will require prioritising investment in community groups and youth clubs to reduce social isolation. For example, we could create a 'buddy' scheme in communities where there are people who are responsible for befriending those who are isolated and helping them to be more involved in the community. This could be led by the Community Hubs with input from the council and others including health services.

There will need to be work across Trafford to increase awareness and reduce stigma around mental health, including in schools and other community spaces.

We will recognise the link between physical and mental health, by improving access to opportunities for fitness and nutrition for people experiencing poverty and isolation.

We will set out in one place (online and in physical leaflets) the pathways in Trafford on how to get mental health support from early intervention to crisis.

Ripples of influence

The 20 Civic Commissioners have each made a pledge about what they and their organisation will do in the coming years following the PTC. This will be reported back and help encourage action across partners in the borough.

"To begin with, it was harrowing to hear the stories, but then it was about how we respond to that with tangible things we can do to effect positive change."

Andrea George – PTC Civic Commissioner

Not only do we see these four recommendations as new standalone priorities for the next 12 months and beyond, but we recognise that they all connect and link into the key themes developed in partnership in our Poverty Strategy. In particular, recommendation 2 to 'continue to use the voice of people with lived experience in the development of policy and services in Trafford' is a priority we see necessary to intertwine into the previous five key themes. The intensive deep dive, participation and deliberation from the PTC has identified what needs to change and happen and means we can shift our focus to how to do this together.

OUR FUTURE PRIORITIES FOR 2023-2025

The next few pages highlight the existing 5 themes from the previous strategy which compliments the Poverty Truth Commission recommendations. This sets out what we are doing already and what more we plan to do under each of the 5 themes to tackle the causes of poverty and raise people out of poverty.

1. CREATING AN INCLUSIVE ECONOMY

We aspire to create an inclusive economy in Trafford where economic growth in our borough creates opportunities for all residents, and businesses are guided and supported to create conditions where their workforces can develop and thrive. These opportunities could be in the form of good employment and training opportunities, better employment conditions and more businesses investing in targeted social value to benefit the specific needs of our communities. The Poverty Truth Commission made a recommendation focussed on improving access to services. The recommendation highlights how residents would be enabled to access advice on budgeting and finances in spaces that are inclusive and feel safe to them through the mechanism of a 'One Stop Shop'. The PTC also highlighted the need for consideration of support for families, such as affordable childcare, which in turn could enable residents living in poverty to access work opportunities. We recognise that for many residents, being able to access work opportunities is difficult. By offering more support, and removing barriers, we can hopefully make our economy a more inclusive one.

WHAT ARE WE DOING ALREADY?

The Trafford Employment, Enterprise, and Skills Group (TEES) is made up of partners working together to improve opportunities in Trafford for residents to improve their skills and access employment. One of the programmes delivered by this group is the Trafford Pledge which matches residents looking for work with employment and training opportunities. Support is targeted to our communities within Trafford who are experiencing the greatest inequalities.

The Council has a dedicated Inclusive Economy Delivery Plan which was agreed by the Council in February 2023 which has been developed to help both residents and businesses to continue to recover from the Covid Pandemic but also seeks to address the Cost-of-Living Crisis and as such, contains many actions related to addressing poverty in the borough.

WHAT MORE DO WE PLAN TO DO?

To build on the work we are doing already, we aspire to:

- Actively encourage businesses to improve employment conditions.
- Increase the number of Trafford businesses paying the Real Living Wage through communicating the benefits for both businesses and their employees and work towards becoming a Real Living Wage borough including health and social care sector.
- Support businesses to offer flexible working to allow increased job opportunities for residents with caring responsibilities.
- Support businesses to offer greater health and wellbeing support and information to employees.
- Deliver against the activities contained within the Social Value Action Plan in support of the agreed Trafford Social Value Charter. As part of this commitment, the Council and partners will seek to match social value opportunities with voluntary and community organisations to encourage local spend and ensure benefits remain as local as possible to our Trafford Communities.
- Continue to support Trafford residents into employment and training.
- Create clear pathways from education and training through to employment so people can recognise the journey they are taking and how to progress. We will focus on specific sectors such as social work, construction, and the green economy.
- Provide employment advice and support for residents who are furthest from the job market, such as those over the age of 50 years.
- We will work with education providers to provide accessible courses to residents in their communities, so they are able to enhance their skills.
- We will develop a digital learning hub to increase the amount of people who are digitally upskilled in Trafford.
- Work with Transport for Greater Manchester to investigate the possibility of allowing all bus passes to be used all day, not just off peak. This would enable residents to use bus passes at peak times to get to work opportunities that they may not currently be able to access.

2. IMPROVING ACCESS TO INFORMATION AND ADVICE

We aim to ensure that residents who are seeking information and advice can access this easily and that people are directed to the most appropriate support. This is especially important for residents facing difficult circumstances whereby this information and advice is needed as quickly as possible. Similarly, to supporting an inclusive economy in Trafford, the development of a 'One Stop Shop', a single point of access for services, was recognised by the Poverty Truth Commission as being a key driver in ensuring residents living in poverty can best access the information and advice they need.

"If we see the One Stop Shop happen, that'll make a big difference. And if someone doesn't have to tell their story fifty thousand times, we've achieved something."

Claire – PTC Community Commissioner.

WHAT ARE WE DOING ALREADY?

Trafford's Information and Advice Working Group has been meeting with partners from the public sector and VCFSE sector who provide information and advice to residents. These partners work together to improve accessibility to information and advice. The group has mapped the information and advice offer across Trafford to better understand where residents can go for support and how well known, used and accessible this support is.

Trafford's six Community Hubs, established during Covid-19 have been funded to continue to provide face to face information, advice, and support for residents within their communities. To increase digital access, residents can seek support from a Digital Champion, access Trafford's laptop lending scheme or attend free courses.

Health services proactively social prescribe residents advice and support needed to address the wider determinants of health.

Trafford partners have worked together, designing, and launching the Money Advice Referral Tool with the Poverty Truth Commissioners, hosting workshops with the Community Commissioners to test how this will help access relevant information and advice across organisations. This includes having a digital and print version of the tool, which has been launched with GM Poverty Action.

We've worked with partners to donate tablets to Community Hubs, including the Hideaway Hub and Hope Community Café. People can then use the devices for free to check emails, search for jobs or browse the web.

We have worked with partners to develop Trafford Healthy Lifestyle, a free of charge opportunity for citizens of Trafford who want access to a personal health coach and online support to improve health and wellbeing.

We have targeted the Household Support Fund at Trafford Assist, our local welfare assistance scheme to help residents in short-term acute financial difficulties.

We've held an initial workshop with Community Hubs and VCFSE partners to start scoping what a Trafford One Stop Shop offer could look like.

WHAT MORE DO WE PLAN TO DO?

We acknowledge that it can be challenging for Trafford residents to identify the right information and advice due to there being so many different 'routes of entry' for support. To address this, we aspire to enable residents to easily understand where they can access the most appropriate support.

We commit to reviewing and improving digital access to all information and advice by 2025. Trafford Council will review digital accessibility for residents requiring information and advice on what services to access for support. We will ensure this information and advice supports those experiencing poverty and difficulties such as housing, money management, welfare rights, children and adult services, health, and wellbeing. We acknowledge the importance of maintaining face to face support and we aspire to continue and improve the information and advice available via the telephone and face to face, with a particular focus on providing this support in community

venues. We will coordinate more training opportunities for frontline staff and volunteers to ensure they have the knowledge and skills to support people to access the information and advice needed.

We will also be appointing an employment officer alongside this work to sit in Trafford's Community Hubs to support residents with job applications.

We plan to use the recommendations from the PTC on improving how Trafford Residents access Services which includes a focus on:

- Developing a One Stop Shop offer.
- Help people to navigate 'the system'.
- Raise awareness of benefit entitlements and support available.
- Signpost residents to community hubs, youth centres and sports clubs. This will include continued work with Trafford Leisure to ensure grassroots sports are accessible for all residents in Trafford.
- Highlight education opportunities, with advice on budgeting and personal finance.
- 'No Wrong Door Policy' helping train up and equip staff working in frontline services in Trafford to effectively refer residents.
- 'Information Champions' across Trafford to signposting others to the support that exists.

3. MAXIMISING HOUSEHOLD INCOME

We will support residents experiencing poverty to increase their household income and to be able to stretch this income with the use of available schemes. Rising costs of food and fuel are impacting households' ability to pay for basic needs. To address this, we will work in partnership to support residents to access the income and support they are entitled to. The Poverty Truth Commission highlighted the stigma attached to poverty and the importance of residents understanding that there is no shame in asking for help and accessing support to maximise the income of your household. The need to continue to raise awareness of benefit entitlements and support available was recommended, as the Poverty Truth Commission recognised that many people do not claim the support that they are entitled to, keeping them in poverty.

"You do feel shame that you're going to the food bank, to admit that you're struggling. It takes a lot." Julie – PTC Community Commissioner.

WHAT ARE WE DOING ALREADY?

Our Welfare Rights Team continue to offer training around what the WR team offers and how referrals into the team can be made to other professionals. They have updated the referral form as they were finding the quality of referrals to be poor and therefore increasingly time consuming to go back to the referrer for the information required to proceed. This obviously was resulting in a delay in exploring the client's case and potential applications. The process has improved since launching the new referral form.

Our commitments to ensure residents experiencing poverty can access the advice and information they need easily and quickly will support individuals and families to maximise their household income. The Money Advice Referral Tool supports people to access the right services to ensure they are in receipt of the income they are entitled to, financial support in crisis situations and opportunities to stretch income.

Organisations working across Trafford offer support and administer a range of schemes to support individuals and families needing financial support; this includes emergency financial support for fuel and food costs, school uniform and supplies, advice on energy efficiency to reduce the cost of heating homes and tailored support to resolve or reduce debt. We will continue to provide advice and specialist support for residents to access the benefits they are entitled to claim.

We have increased the budgeting support sessions across Trafford to include a wider range of venues. This ensures a broader range of individuals have access to this invaluable support.

We have developed Trafford Healthy Lifestyle, a free of charge opportunity for citizens of Trafford who want access to a personal health coach and online support to improve health and wellbeing.

WHAT MORE DO WE PLAN TO DO?

As the cost of living rises, we aspire to equip frontline staff, communities and residents with the information and advice they need to be able to pay for basic needs. We will create a partnership to ensure support for people experiencing difficulties paying for gas and electricity is coordinated. A number of organisations in Trafford offer advice to people on reducing the cost of fuel and insulating homes; we will bring these organisations together so collectively they can ensure residents are receiving the best advice and support. The partnership will share knowledge on the best ways to liaise with energy companies on behalf of customers in order to reduce the impact of rising fuel costs on residents.

- We will continue to promote schemes that enable households to stretch their income and pay for basic needs in times of crisis.
- We will continue to work to increase the uptake of the Healthy Start Scheme in Trafford to improve access to food and reduce health inequalities.
- We will support and promote offer of community food provision and look to understand how we can sustainably respond to the increasing cost of food.
- We will promote temporary financial 'cash-first' support schemes such as the Household Crisis Fund available through Trafford's Community Hubs to ensure those entitled can access this support.

- We will work with foodbanks and organisations providing discounted food schemes to ensure advice and information to the residents using these services is accessible.
- We will continue to promote the benefits of using Credit Unions.
- We will encourage Pension Credit uptake and share campaigns locally with our residents.
- We will develop workshops focussed on budgeting support as an early intervention approach to reduce the risk of residents getting into debt. We feel this would be especially beneficial for students attending UA92.
- We will work to continue to improve the connection between Trafford's Welfare Rights Team and commissioned Information and Advice services to ensure clients are referred to the correct team at the earliest opportunity.
- Through our Carbon Neutral Plan we will deliver ECO4 which will offer eligible residents who own/rent a property that is heated with electricity and receive income-related benefits a government grant.
- We will work with Transport for Greater Manchester to understand how residents can readily access information to plan their whole journey to ensure it is cost effective if you need to use more than one mode of transport.

4. SUPPORTING CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE

Children living in poverty are likely to experience multiple health and social inequalities. We will work in partnership to enable children and young people to benefit from education in the best possible way, as well as support families who face many challenges because of living in poverty. To provide children with the best start in life and to close the educational attainment gap between children from disadvantaged backgrounds and their peers, Trafford aims to support more families through early interventions and support from services such as the Healthy Child Programme, parenting support and mental and emotional health services. Although the Poverty Truth Commission didn't include the voices of children and young people, many of the Community Commissioners shared how living in poverty affected their families and children. Through offering support to families such as one stop shop advice, signposting to healthy start vouchers and free school meals that may go unclaimed, and offering affordable childcare options, children and young people will benefit.

WHAT ARE WE DOING ALREADY?

- Trafford has used the Household Support Fund to support the most vulnerable households in the most need with food, energy, and utility bills as well as for other wider essential costs. Most of the fund was given to families with children eligible for free school meals to support with food during the school holiday periods.
- Schools in Trafford have been benefitting from GMPA's Money Matters programme to help families to gain thousands in household income. The programme is supporting families through schools, reaching them via newsletters, classroom update apps and events such as parents evenings. Plus helping with budgeting, applying for grants to buy essential items such as cookers and beds, and clearing utility debts.
- Children's services in Trafford are no longer rated 'inadequate' by Ofsted following a recent inspection with an overall improvement in the quality of social care which has benefited from strong partnership working, significant investment in children's services and a culture focused on children.
- The Council has launched Trafford's Participation and Engagement strategy to give all children and young people the opportunity to take part in decisions which affect their lives and to shape how services are decided upon, planned and delivered. This ensures their voices and experiences can influence the Council decisions and services that affect them.
- Care Experienced Young People has been added as a protected characteristic in our Equality Impact Assessments to ensure decisions that impact them are fully considered.

- The Holiday Activities and Food programme provides activity and enrichment sessions and enables Trafford's young people who are eligible for free school meals to take part activities during the Easter, summer and Christmas school holidays. Over the last 12 months over 4,000 young people have taken part in sessions which include sports, arts and crafts as well as enjoying healthy nutritious foods.

WHAT MORE DO WE PLAN TO DO?

- We will continue to work in partnership to support more young people aged 16-18 to secure employment, education and training which will have a positive impact on their prospects, health and wellbeing.
- We will continue to work to increase the take up of funded childcare and early education places for 2-year-olds, especially in the north of the borough, to increase school readiness.
- Partners in Trafford need to use our strategic funding like the UK Shared Prosperity Fund to support young people not in education, employment, or training (NEET).
- We will consider what can be done to help families with the cost of childcare and early years provision.
- Trafford is using a Family Hubs test and learn in Old Trafford to give parents advice on how to take care of their child, making sure they are safe and healthy and providing services such as breastfeeding support. It will put the voice of parents at the heart of design through parents panels and continued, meaningful engagement.
- We will work with partners to improve access to Healthy Start Vouchers to help eligible parents with young children to access vouchers that can buy fruit, vegetables, vitamins and infant formula.
- We will deliver the Ofsted Improvement Plan to continue to improve outcomes for children and young people in Trafford.
- We will work with partners to develop and implement Neighbourhood Plans through integrated working across health and social care. We will incorporate the view of the service users and residents through a Community Leadership group with a focus on healthy and affordable diets for children and parents.
- For Holiday Activities and Food this year we will do more to target communities that need help the most as we know that schools in the north and west of the borough are seeing the highest number for free school meal eligibility. We will look to work with partners to deliver excellent provision in those areas and provide activities and food that address that need. We will also be working with Trafford Libraries over the summer to deliver the Summer Reading Challenge.
- We will continue to develop ways to support our families through the hardship fund for uniforms and welfare advice and guidance.
- We will continue work to ensure we increase the uptake of Free School Meals in Trafford.

5. FACILITATING COMMUNITY RESILIENCE

Community resilience is the ability for residents and communities to use the resources available to support each other. To enable communities to be able to support each other, the right services and resources need to be available. The role of the public and VCFSE sector is to facilitate this by providing the resources for residents and communities to improve their health and wellbeing. The Poverty Truth Commission highlighted the need for resilience in their recommendation to tackle mental health and isolation. They recognised that the links between poor mental health and poverty were really apparent. The stories and experience they shared highlighted that the stress and anxiety caused by poverty often exacerbates existing mental health problems or create new ones. To enable resilience for residents living in poverty, access to mental health support is vital.

WHAT ARE WE DOING ALREADY?

- Over £2million per year is distributed in Trafford as grants to voluntary, community, faith, and social enterprise organisations to deliver advice, support, and activities in communities. Trafford's six Community Hubs, established during Covid-19 have been funded to continue providing face to face information, advice, and support for residents within their communities. Trafford VCFSE sector has always played a vital role in our communities and the value of the sector was further demonstrated during Covid-19 and then the continuing cost of living crisis.
- The Trafford VCFSE Strategy has been developed to outline how we will work in partnership to further strengthen the VCFSE sector.
- We are redesigning mental health services as part of Living Well - designed to help people recover and stay well as part of their community.
- We are commissioning a VCFSE partner to support Trafford's existing work to embed the voices of our citizens and carry out community and citizen engagement for Living Well.
- We are developing our local social prescribing offer which takes a holistic approach to people's health and wellbeing to connect them to appropriate community groups and services.

WHAT MORE DO WE PLAN TO DO?

- Continue to support the work delivered by Trafford's six Community Hubs in supporting residents and communities.
- Work to enable frontline staff and volunteers to access greater training opportunities so they are equipped with knowledge and information and feel empowered to support and advise residents and communities.
- Commit to delivering the actions outlined in the Trafford VCFSE Strategy in partnership to strengthen our VCFSE sector in Trafford, enabling the sector to better support our communities and people experiencing poverty.
- Work across Trafford to increase awareness and reduce stigma around mental health, including in schools and other community spaces.
- We aspire to work closely with organisations supporting people with disabilities and their carers who are more likely to be living in poverty.
- The GM Integrated Care Partnerships Joint Forward Plan will look to enhance the role of NHS GM in tackling poverty as a driver of poor health.
- Prioritise investment in community groups and youth clubs to reduce social isolation. This should focus efforts on those who don't proactively seek out these groups or may not be aware of them.
- Develop a Suicide Prevention Action Plan in line with the refreshed Suicide Prevention Strategy 2022-25.
- Refresh Trafford's Mental Health and Wellbeing Strategy to incorporate a more all age approach, with a key focus on mental health inequalities and the wider determinants of health.
- Recognise the link between physical and mental health, by improving access to opportunities for fitness and nutrition for people experiencing poverty and isolation in Trafford.
- Develop an innovative, system-wide approach to addressing mental health inequalities at the root causes in Trafford. This includes actions such as providing more opportunities for communities to come together at a low cost.
- Develop community-based approaches to mental wellbeing, violence reduction and safer streets for women and girls to remove barriers and enable active lives.
- Set out in one place (online and in physical leaflets) the pathways in Trafford on how to get mental health support from early intervention to crisis.
- We will continue to work and connect with partners in the development of Trafford's All Age Mental Health strategy to ensure the voice of those with lived experience of poverty is reflected.
- We will work with partners towards 'A fairer private rented sector' in line with the government's 2022 white paper that sets out a long-term vision for a private rented sector (PRS) that is fit for the 21st century and delivers a better deal for tenants.
- We will work with partners to deliver on Trafford's Supported Housing Strategy 2023-2028 which identifies key priorities in relation to supported housing in the borough. The aim of the strategy is to deliver an integrated approach to the housing requirements of those with support needs and includes a focus on enabling people with support needs to live as independently as possible within the borough.
- As partners we can also act to design our decisions around preventing and reducing poverty. We will work towards voluntarily adopting the socio-economic duty to help inform and understand the impact of our decisions on people with lived experience.

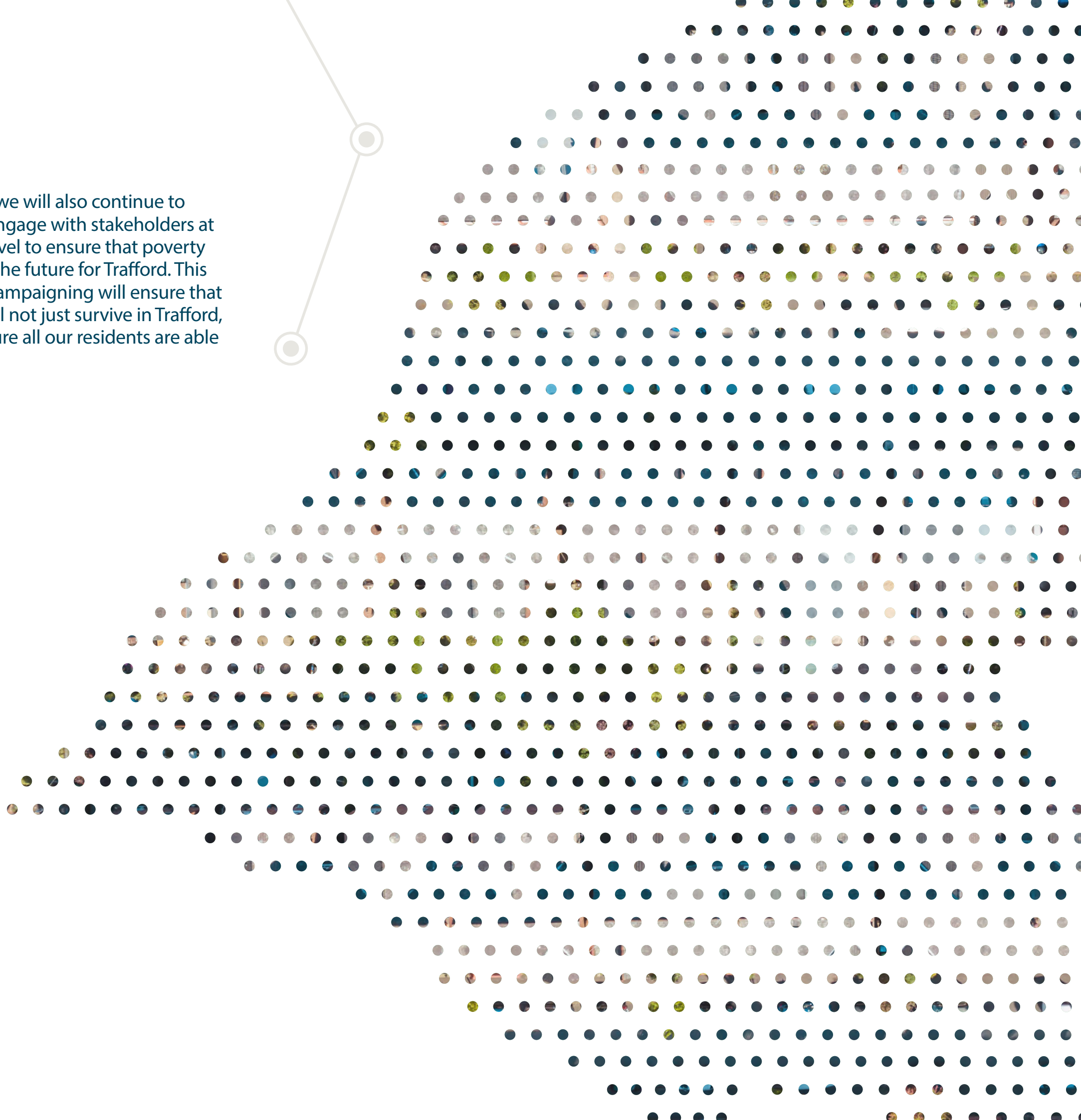
FINAL WORDS

We can only tackle poverty by working together: “The fight against poverty cannot be won if we all ignore it or just watch.” Community Commissioner, Trafford Poverty Truth Commission.

Tackling poverty in Trafford is everyone’s business: public services, the voluntary, community, faith and social enterprise sector, businesses, and communities. This is why the Trafford Poverty Strategy 2023-25 is not owned by one organisation but by all stakeholders who have a key role to play in reducing poverty. With the cost-of-living impacting residents, now more than ever, we need to collaborate to tackle, prevent and support people out of poverty.

Over the next two years, the Trafford Poverty Action Group will monitor and measure the impact of the strategy. All organisations represented on the group will commit to actions which support the outcomes in this strategy and an action plan will be developed to hold ourselves accountable. There is also a key role for anchor institutions and strategic partners in Trafford to lead the way and be part of the action we will take.

As partners we will also continue to lobby and engage with stakeholders at a national level to ensure that poverty isn’t part of the future for Trafford. This continued campaigning will ensure that residents will not just survive in Trafford, but will ensure all our residents are able to thrive.





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