

Child Poverty Needs Assessment (Swindon, Jan 2012)

Executive Summary

□ Part 2 of the Child Poverty Act places a duty on local authorities and named partner authorities to cooperate with a view to reducing, and mitigating the effects of, child poverty in their local areas. This cooperation will involve producing a local child poverty needs assessment which will enable local partners collectively to understand better the distribution and characteristics of child poverty across their local areas and the extent and nature of the local challenge.

□ The Child Poverty Act 2010 uses as its definition of poverty, a measure known as Relative Low Income, which measures whether the poorest families are keeping pace with the growth of incomes in the economy as a whole. This indicator measures the number of children living in households below 60% of contemporary median equivalised household income. This is calculated through measuring the proportion of children in poverty as follows:

Number of children in families in receipt of either out of work benefits, or tax credits where their reported income is less than 60% median income, divided by Total number of children in the area

It is this measure, which will be used as the definition of poverty in this needs assessment. Other measures such as the Index of Multiple Deprivation and the Child Well Being Index are discussed in order to deepen our understanding of the nature of child poverty in Swindon.

This assessment has been synthesised from existing needs assessments. Our aim has been to provide an insight into the information we currently hold. Based on this assessment the next steps will be

□ To map current responses and services, building on existing mapping information, service delivery and business planning and strategies.

□ To identify the gaps in knowledge.

□ To produce a strategy, which will be a response to the assessment. This strategy will align with existing strategies and will include our response to refining and expanding our local knowledge.

Further phases will consider

□ Completion of the knowledge base

□ Identification of gaps and misalignment in services and investment

□ Using the assessment to inform decisions and priorities.