

Annex 2: The Emerging Poverty - 10 Point Plan – a call to action

For a decent standard of living, we all need security and stability in our lives – secure housing, a reliable income, and support when things get difficult. For too many of us, there is no such security. This Plan outlines key policy changes and interventions that could support and ensure we move in the right direction in tackling the long-term causes of poverty. It also supports options to deal with the symptoms on a shorter-term basis.

1. Measuring Poverty

Identify measure of poverty which incorporates income levels and the cost of living as parallel whilst acknowledging geographic variances and deprivation in the FO district through enhanced research studies. The focus will be on showcasing rural disparities.

- To include the cost of the food basket research
- Transport Poverty
- Fuel Poverty

2. Anti-Poverty Commission

We will design services with people suffering the impacts of poverty symptoms collectively, to ensure we provide the relevant support and meet the needs of the people. We will work to establish an Anti- Poverty Commission in the district

3. Enhanced access to Basic essentials

All members of the FO community will have access to community services that support them through periods of financial difficulty. Work will be progressed to ensure interventions are readily available to enhance access to nutritional food, fuel and support services when needed. Work to strengthen referral mechanisms and provide one stop shops for those in need will be progressed.

4. Access to Services

Transport, especially in rural areas, should be considered an essential service, equivalent to water and electricity, and the government should regulate the sector to the extent necessary to ensure that people living in rural areas are adequately served. The CPP and its partners will work to ensure this is researched and supported through the levelling up agenda.

5. Reduce homelessness

We work with housing providers to reduce homelessness through improving access to social homes. We work to develop a measure to identify latent housing demands and for this to be reflected on waiting lists.

6. Improve systems

The six-week delay in receiving benefits under Universal Credit should be eliminated, separate payments should be made to different household members, and weekly or fortnightly payments should be facilitated.

In light of both Brexit and the COVID 19 pandemic the Government should adopt policies designed to ensure that the brunt of the resulting economic

burden emerging is not borne by its' most vulnerable citizens. (i.e. Support CPAG call to increase child benefit payments by 10 pounds as this would meet most families living in poverty quickly).

7. Increase benefits in line with cost of living

We need to strengthen the benefits system so that it provides the anchor that people need in tough times. The current system needs to be improved to ensure it gives adequate support. We also need the system to offer a better service for people using it, and to shift public thinking so that a poverty-fighting social security system is seen as an essential public service and receives sustainable investment.

8. Affordable homes for all

We need to increase the amount of low-cost housing available for families on low incomes and increase support for people with high housing costs. We will work to address the sense of insecurity felt by many people living in the private rented sector] and explore mechanisms to do so with housing providers. This includes intermediate rents.

9. Promotion of a living wage

We need as many people as possible to be in good jobs and improve earnings for low-income working families, helping people in the lowest-paid jobs or working part-time. Too many people are stuck in low-paid, insecure jobs, with little chance of progression and too few hours of work to reach a decent living standard. Workers need more security, better training and opportunities to progress, particularly in part-time jobs. In-work poverty must be seen as a critical issue for our economy and given high priority by economic policymakers.

10. Employment Opportunities

We will provide enhanced opportunities for people in poverty to access jobs by developing their skills and literacy levels.

End.../