

Socioeconomic Duty

By Cllr Leanne Feeley Executive member for Education, Achievement and Equalities

Tameside Council has become the latest local authority in Greater Manchester to voluntarily adopt the Socioeconomic Duty, giving us a powerful new tool to understand, address and reduce inequalities in our communities.



The driving force behind choosing to adopt the Socioeconomic Duty at this time was simple. Up and down the country, local authorities and communities are grasping with an unprecedented cost of living crisis, an economic squeeze that the Bank of England predicts will be the longest in a century, and the likelihood of a new round of austerity. Tameside has not been immune to these challenges.

As with every local authority, Tameside Council has a statutory and moral obligation to our residents. We recognise that, when you look behind the economic facts and figures, poverty always carries a very real human cost that we cannot in good conscience ignore.

We were very fortunate in that we could draw upon a considerable body of existing knowledge and best practice on the Socioeconomic Duty to inform and influence the adoption in Tameside. In particular, our colleagues at Salford City Council and Greater Manchester Poverty Action were instrumental in shaping our approach, and we always found their doors to be open to us when we had further questions and enquiries. Further afield, case studies and research undertaken as part of the Fairer Scotland Duty, which was passed into law by the Scottish government back in 2018, provided us with insights from a mature and large-scale implementation of the Socioeconomic Duty.

Armed with this information, it quickly became clear that if we really want to make a difference, then simply adopting the Socioeconomic Duty by itself would not be sufficient. Therefore, as a first step, we took the time to think about what we wanted our priorities in Tameside's fight against poverty to be, and how exactly adoption of the Socioeconomic Duty would turn focus attention and effort towards making them a reality.

This led to the creation of a series of policy recommendations that would align with, and be facilitated by, the Socioeconomic Duty.

Recognising that addressing poverty would be a years (if not decades) long effort, we wanted to ensure that commitment and consistency of practice would be maintained across political administrations and turnover of staff.

To strengthen compliance with the Socioeconomic Duty across the organisation, we proposed a number of improvements to Equality Impact Assessments and the assessment of policy and practice more broadly. Hand-in-hand with this went an effort to broaden and deepen our data gathering and analysis work, with the purpose of reinforcing accountability and giving us better insight into the unique nature of poverty in Tameside.

We also sought to leverage the power of the Socioeconomic Duty to support local residents, especially those with lived experience of poverty, to influence the decisions that affect them in a meaningful and substantive way outside of formal structures such as the Poverty Truth Commission.

Last but not least, a particular characteristic of poverty in Tameside is the prevalence of low-paid employment. At 28.5%, Tameside has the highest proportion of jobs that pay below the Living Wage in Greater Manchester. To start addressing this serious issue, we have linked adoption of the Socioeconomic Duty with promoting the uptake of the Living Wage among local employer. Both of these, we feel, are intrinsically connected as levers to promote equality and fairness.

This work culminated in the creation of an approach that we felt was ambitious but practical and, following its passage through our governance processes, the Socioeconomic Duty was formally adopted by the Executive Cabinet on 26 October 2022.

Our thanks go out to Greater Manchester Poverty Action and everybody else who helped us to get to this point. We are confident that the Socioeconomic Duty will stand as a major weapon in our arsenal as we work to help our residents through the difficult months ahead.

Stop press

Last week we held the closing event of the Tameside Poverty Truth Commission.

Look out for a full write up of the event and details of the recommendations coming out of the Commission in the final newsletter of 2022 (December 14th).

In the meantime, you can read Commission report [here](#)

**POVERTY
TRUTH TAMESIDE**

Greater Manchester Real Living Wage Campaign Update

Living Wage Week 2022 took place from November 14th - 20th and as usual there were a number of activities in Greater Manchester throughout the week.



Octagon Theatre Chief Executive Roddy Gauld, being given their Living Wage Accreditation by GM Mayor Andy Burnham.

Events kicked off on Monday November 14th at the Octagon Theatre Bolton with the launch event for Living Wage Week in Greater Manchester. It was held at the Bolton Octagon to celebrate the theatre becoming the 500th Real Living Wage Accredited Employer in GM. The Octagon Chief Executive Roddy Gauld was presented with their accreditation certificate by Mayor Andy Burnham. They are the first theatre in the North West to become an Real Living Wage Accredited Employer. GMPA's John Hacking and Graham Whitham attended the event along with a large number of partners from across the city region. The new Real Living Wage rate would normally be announced at the start of Living Wage Week but given soaring inflation rates, the new rate of £10.90 per hour was announced in September to encourage employers to pay staff the increased rate as soon as possible.

Tuesday 15th saw an event at the Manchester City Art Gallery celebrating Manchester becoming a Living Wage Place. The event was very well attended and saw speakers including Bev Craig, the Leader of Manchester City Council, Patrick Dawd from [Caritas](#), Debra King the CEO of [Brighter Sounds](#) and Thomas Waring from [Macc](#).

[Pro-Manchester](#) held an event on Wednesday 16th entitled Exploring the Business Case for the Real Living Wage. Speakers included Mayor Andy Burnham and Ian McArthur from the GM Good Employment Charter.

On Thursday 17th an event was hosted by [Salford CVS](#) in conjunction with Mustard Tree and Loaves and Fishes which looked at the ongoing progress that Salford is making as England's first city working to become a truly Living Wage Place. There was a presentation on the Living Hours Campaign and how it connects to the Real Living Wage.

During the week there was significant amounts of coverage on social media and GMLWC promoted much of the activity through its social media accounts and it's use of #GMLivingWage on Twitter.

To find out about other Real Living Wage Accredited Employers in GM please visit our [website](#). There is information about becoming an accredited Living Wage Employer [here](#). The Real Living Wage can play an important role in addressing low pay and boosting household income.

More information about the local campaign can be found on GMPA's website [here](#).



Best Wishes,
[John Hacking](#)
Greater Manchester
Living Wage Campaign Coordinator



Policy and Research updates

We are providing a summary of the latest news and policy developments to keep you up to date with what is happening across the UK.



There are calls for an urgent government investigation into children missing school due to the cost-of-living crisis. One in five pupils from poorer backgrounds were [persistently absent last year](#), official figures show. [Read more.](#)

UK must act over poverty, housing and equal rights, says UN body. [Read more](#)

UK public sector workers are bearing the brunt of the cost-of-living crisis, according to official figures that show the gap between public and private sector pay growth is at its widest on record. [Read more.](#)



The [disability pay gap](#) is at 17.2% across the UK which equates to disabled workers earning an average of £3,731 less than non-disabled colleagues. As a result, disabled workers in effect work 54 days a year for free. [Read more.](#)

Just over two-fifths (43%) have either reduced or stopped saving for retirement due to the cost-of-living crisis, according to research by retirement specialist Just Group. [Read more.](#)

The polling of 6,000 adults by Survation for Britain's biggest union Unite shows 'fear of pension poverty' is a concern among a 'huge section of workers' when they consider their retirement. [Read more.](#)

Findings from a new UK study published by Heriot-Watt University, found 'overwhelming evidence' that people from Black and other minority ethnic communities face disproportionate levels of homelessness. [Read more.](#)

Some 400,000 children in Scotland are now thought to be eligible for the Scottish Child Payment. The Joseph Rowntree Foundation said if the scheme was replicated across the rest of the UK, 5.3 million youngsters in England, Wales and Northern Ireland could benefit. [Read more.](#)

The number of Britons earning less than the Real Living Wage is set to soar to 5.1 million next year, research shared with *The Independent* has found. That figure is currently around 3.5 million. [Read more.](#)

Hungry children miss out on free meals – and struggling schools cannot help. [Read more.](#)



Research developments

The Cost of a Child 2022 report produced for the Child Poverty Action Group [CPAG] by Loughborough University, finds that whereas last year these families could cover their minimum costs – helped by the temporary £20 universal credit uplift -this year, below-inflation uprating of benefits has left them 6% (£34 per week) short of a minimum, no-frills living standard. CPAG says this is the biggest annual deterioration in living standards since its annual report began in 2012. [Read more.](#)

New research from non-profit [People Like Us](#) reveals that over half of professionals from a racially diverse background surveyed say government support will not see them through the next six months. [Read more.](#)

Older people will spend a higher share of their income on energy bills this winter than other age groups but younger households are most at risk of being unable to pay bills or falling into arrears, according to new research published by the Resolution Foundation. [Read more.](#)

'It would mean so much': parents on the need to expand free school meals. [Read more.](#)

Amid rocketing rates of diagnosis for anxiety, and with 7.3 million English adults already receiving antidepressants by 2017-18, a new report from the Joseph Rowntree Foundation establishes many connections between financial insecurity and poor mental health. [Read more.](#)

The cost-of-living crisis will continue to intensify as inflation soars and government support lags. Organisations and campaigners must continue to call on the government to do more to tackle the harsh economic realities for the most vulnerable. More articles are available on our [website](#).

Women Asylum Seekers Together (Manchester): Development Manager Post Vacancy



WAST (Women Asylum Seekers Together) is a unique organisation run by and for women who are seeking asylum. This post presents an opportunity to support WAST in the next stage of its development.

Part-time: 21 hours per week. Further information and detail on how to apply can be found [here](#)

Closing date: Monday December 5th, 2022, with interviews planned for the week commencing 12 December.

This post is to support a service run by and for women asylum seekers and is therefore restricted to women. The Occupational Requirement under Schedule 9 (part 1) of the Equality Act 2010 applies.

Vacancies at Macc

Membership worker

Macc is looking to appoint a Membership Worker to play a pivotal role in helping to achieve a key element of the strategy to build a strong, diverse, engaged and connected membership. Working within the newly formed Membership Team, this role will be the first point of contact for our members and include processing all membership, training and events administration.



Working for a high-profile and well respected charity which supports Manchester's thriving VCSE sector, this role offers the opportunity to meet some amazing people who are genuinely making a difference in our society. Candidates must be IT literate, have excellent written and verbal communication skills and preferably have experience or knowledge of the VCSE sector.

The post is permanent, 35 hours per week - flexi-time system with core hours 10am-3pm . Closing date: Monday December 5th, 2022 More information and an application form [here](#)

Organisation Development workers - 2 posts

Working for a high-profile and well respected charity which supports Manchester's thriving VCSE sector, the right candidate will have previous experience and knowledge of group/organisational development, preferably in the VCSE sector:

- Voluntary sector governance – advising on identifying appropriate governance models and legal structures;
- Trustee, director and committee member roles and responsibilities and board development;
- Successful grant bid writing skills and experience;
- Knowledge, understanding and experience of the factors affecting business (organisational) sustainability and improvement.

The roles are a mixture of online and face to face work, working from home, office based and community settings. The posts are permanent, 35 hours per week. Closing date: Tuesday December 6th, 2022 More information and an application form [here](#)

For more information about Greater Manchester Poverty Action

please visit our [website](#), follow us on [Twitter](#) or visit our [Facebook](#) page.



We want to find new ways of working together, share the network's successes and provide a voice for the people living in poverty in our region but we can only do this with your help and support.

Copies of previous newsletters are available on our [website](#) If you would like to submit an article please [get in touch](#).

NB GMPA does not have full-time dedicated administrative support so please do not expect an immediate response.

Views expressed in this newsletter are not necessarily the views of GMPA. We try to fact-check all articles and events, but if you notice an error please [let us know](#) so we can correct it in a future newsletter.