

DECISION-MAKER:	CABINET
SUBJECT:	SOUTHAMPTON FAIRNESS COMMISSION REPORT AND RECOMMENDATIONS
DATE OF DECISION:	18 NOVEMBER 2015
REPORT OF:	CABINET MEMBER FOR COMMUNITIES, CULTURE AND LEISURE

CONTACT DETAILS

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STATEMENT OF CONFIDENTIALITY

None.

BRIEF SUMMARY

The Southampton Fairness Commission is an independent and entirely voluntary body. It was set up in December 2013 to gather evidence and inform priorities on how to make the city a fairer place to live and work. It is due to formally publish its key findings and recommendations in its Final Report in late November 2015.

Southampton is the one of the largest cities in the South East and has huge economic potential. However, not all local people enjoy the benefits. There are huge differences in life chances, experiences and outcomes between our more affluent residents, neighbourhoods and communities and the most deprived, as well as between some areas in the city and regional or national averages.

For example:

- According to Nomis (2015), the best-paid jobs in the city are held by in-commuters. In 2014, the average gross weekly pay by residence was £487.40 per week compared to £547.00 by workplace. The average annual gross earnings of resident workers in Southampton was £24,913 in 2014. This is lower than for England at £27,500 and the South East at £29,903.
- A recent Crisis report (March 2015) identified benefit sanctions for Jobseeker's Allowance (JSA) claimants are particularly prevalent in Southampton. The local Job Centre is in the top three in the UK for highest use of sanctions, with 11.9 sanctions per 100 claimants in March 2014. Only Test Valley and Richmondshire have higher rates at 12% and 15.4 respectively.
- HMRC data identifies nearly a quarter of children (9,830) live in poverty in the city and this figure rises to almost 40% in one of our most deprived wards.
- There are significant health inequalities in the city. People die earlier in the most deprived areas of Southampton – men by 6.7 years and women by 3.2 years.

The Southampton Fairness Commission has considered a range of evidence and developed a set of recommendations aimed at making Southampton a fairer city. It urges key partners, including the city council, to work together in affirming commitments to the delivery of the recommendations.

RECOMMENDATIONS:		
	(i)	The Cabinet supports the recommendations of the Southampton Fairness Commission and commits the City Council to work with Southampton Connect and other partners to implement them.
REASONS FOR REPORT RECOMMENDATIONS		
1.	The Southampton Fairness Commission was set up at the request of Southampton City Council and has built on and brought a new perspective and expertise to work in tackling poverty, inequalities and community cohesion.	
2.	One of the key principles of the Southampton Fairness Commission was that 'consensus and innovation among Southampton's public, private and voluntary sectors should bring about lasting solutions to inequality'. Therefore its recommendations require a multi-agency, city-wide approach of which Southampton City Council is a partner.	
ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS CONSIDERED AND REJECTED		
3.	To not support the recommendations of the Southampton Fairness Commission - this is not recommended as Southampton City Council is an identified partner, and it initiated and supported the establishment of a Fairness Commission in the city.	
DETAIL (Including consultation carried out)		
4.	The commitment to establish a Fairness Commission for Southampton was included in the 'Southampton Transition Plan: The first 100 days (May 16th 2012- August 2012)' and was endorsed by Cabinet on 18 th June 2013.	
5.	The Southampton Fairness Commission is an independent and entirely voluntary body. It was set up in December 2013, to look into how to make the city a fairer and more equal place to live and work. The Commission has undertaken an extensive programme of consultation and engagement over 2014/2015. It has used a range of methods including; collection and analysis of 'fairness' data, (and commissioning additional research where there were gaps), visiting local groups, undertaking face to face interviews and surveys, attending discussions, debates and events and holding a series of public meetings covering key themes.	
6.	The Commission has worked with a wide cross-section of contributors including; community representatives and advocates, local agencies and specialist workers, experts and academics and most importantly - residents of Southampton. It has used a range of methods to gather evidence, inform priorities and test its recommendations. The Commission considered the wider structural issues and made a conscious decision to focus on those areas where it can make the biggest difference at a local level. The Commission also recognises there is much good work already under way in the city to improve the lives of those who are most disadvantaged, and has assumed this will continue.	
7.	The Commission has identified 13 recommendations covering the following themes: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Fairer Employment • Fairer Living 	

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Fairer Organisations and Fairer Communities.
8.	<p>Fairer Employment:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> Create a 'Great Place to Work' city with commitment from employers, including the promotion of the Living Wage (set by the <i>Living Wage Foundation</i>) and recognise achievements at an annual award ceremony. Establish a comprehensive support service designed to help people deal with involuntary self-employment, fairly and safely - e.g. dealing successfully with HM Revenue and Customs (HMRC), insurance, cash flow, credit control and VAT. Establish a tactical fund to address urgent skills shortages in the local labour market; to be allocated by a representative group of employers and employee representatives, to be financed by pooled contributions from strategic funders – Skills Funding Agency (SFA), Solent Local Enterprise Partnership (LEP), Department for Work and Pensions (DWP) and their contracted providers.
9.	<p>Fairer Living:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> Increase the availability of affordable and good quality housing by using alternative funding mechanisms outside public sector constraints to build new homes and exploit under-used resources such as empty properties, self-build and container conversions. This should also provide local employment opportunities. Encourage our citizens to take individual responsibility for healthier lifestyles and all agencies to take collective action to support this through citywide campaigns to reduce smoking, drinking and obesity. All health and social care commissioners should ensure that contracts with providers require them to demonstrate that they have taken action to achieve equity of outcomes. The Health and Wellbeing Board must monitor inequalities and take actions to address them. Improve access to, and awareness of financial services for all by building capacity in community finance institutions and initiatives e.g. Credit Unions and user-friendly local banking. Improve the ability of people to manage money better by: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> Promoting and providing learning modules for debt and money management in schools and colleges. Developing and implementing a programme to increase awareness of and fair access to welfare entitlements, particularly linked to key life-transition points. Improve accessibility to integrated transport by actively: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> Supporting social enterprise solutions to improve local transport, particularly in non-commercial routes. Taking a more strategic approach to market failures in transport, particularly bus routes and frequency of key bus services.
10.	<p>Fairer Organisations and Fairer Communities:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> Organisations, in procuring goods and services, should maximise local economic and social outcomes through improved application of the Social Value Act to: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> Increase employment and skills of local residents. Use local supply chains to develop capacity in local organisations with a long term commitment to the city.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ii. Promote zero tolerance of bullying, hate crime and discrimination, by increasing awareness in the city of reporting mechanisms and organisations improving their responses and support for victims. iii. Support individuals and communities to take responsibility for improving the quality of their lives and their environment through funding of small community-run preventative projects to reduce inequality. iv. Set up a 'Southampton Fairness Fund', an 'employee giving' scheme matched by employers and allocated in a transparent and democratic way by an independent voluntary sector organisation to promote fairness.
11.	<p>One of the key principles of the Southampton Fairness Commission was to bring about lasting solutions to inequality, through a multi-agency, city-wide approach. In particular, the Commission requests:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The leaders of public, private and voluntary sectors to ensure, when making difficult decisions, they are fair and do not inadvertently foster inequality. • Southampton Connect, the City Council and key organisations to influence outcomes, by using their resources, powers and voice in a cohesive and unified way to campaign regionally and nationally for better outcomes for Southampton residents.
12.	<p>The Southampton Fairness Commission has been working with organisations named in its Final Report in affirming commitments to the delivery of the recommendations and is currently working with a range of partners to identify detailed actions and timescales for delivery. The Commission will continue to work with partners over the next 3 years, to develop a performance management framework to measure progress towards Southampton becoming a fairer city, and will develop monitoring reports during this period to review and update progress annually.</p>
13.	<p>The formal public launch of Final Report - with key findings and recommendations will be on 1st December 2015.</p>
RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS	
<u>Capital/Revenue</u>	
14.	<p>It is intended that the recommendations will influence existing and future work programmes. As such they are not considered likely to initially present any additional financial commitments. In addition, the Commission plans to set up a 'Southampton Fairness Fund', an 'employee giving' scheme matched by employers and allocated in a transparent and democratic way by an independent voluntary sector organisation to promote fairness. This will be used to develop recommendations identified as requiring any additional resources.</p>
<u>Property/Other</u>	
15.	None.
LEGAL IMPLICATIONS	
<u>Statutory power to undertake proposals in the report:</u>	
16.	<p>There are no legal implications arising from this report. There will be legal consequences in the development of any proposals, which will be fully</p>

	considered at the appropriate junctures. Any actions that the Council may undertake in the future can be pursued under specific legislation or by virtue of the general power of competence in Section 1 of the Localism Act 2011.
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Other Legal Implications:

17.	None
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POLICY FRAMEWORK IMPLICATIONS

18.	Delivery of the Southampton Fairness Commission will assist the council in meeting the overall aims of its policy framework including the Southampton City Council Strategy 2014 - 17.
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KEY DECISION?	Yes
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WARDS/COMMUNITIES AFFECTED:	All
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SUPPORTING DOCUMENTATION

Appendices

1.	None
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Documents In Members' Rooms

1.	Southampton Fairness Commission Final Report
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Equality Impact Assessment

Do the implications/subject of the report require an Equality and Safety Impact Assessment (ESIA) to be carried out.	No
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Privacy Impact Assessment

Do the implications/subject of the report require a Privacy Impact Assessment (PIA) to be carried out.	No
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Other Background Documents

Other Background documents available for inspection at:

Title of Background Paper(s)	Relevant Paragraph of the Access to Information Procedure Rules / Schedule 12A allowing document to be Exempt/Confidential (if applicable)
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1.	None
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