

Developing Appropriate Strategies for Reducing Inequality in Brighton and Hove

Phase 1 Identifying the challenge: Inequality in Brighton and Hove

Phase 1 Report DRAFT SUMMARY
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Section 1 Summary

1.1 Introduction and context

1.1.1 In commissioning this Reducing Inequality Review, Brighton and Hove City Council and the 2020 Community Partnership (the LSP) seek to guide improvements in how the city is working to reduce inequalities amongst its population.

The review is carried out in two phases – this report is based on phase 1

1.1.2 This report is based on phase 1 of the review. We assess current data and information to see where inequality is most acute, both in terms of areas of the city and also for particular groups such as people with disabilities and people from a Black or Minority Ethnic background. We highlight the major issues arising from our research below.

1.1.3 We need to be absolutely clear on the role played by this report and phase 1. The needs analysis provided here is intended to set the scene for phase 2. As a result, we have not prioritised the issues arising from the research. We have also been careful not to draw out implications for service delivery. And we have not assessed performance of the Neighbourhood Renewal Areas. These matters will all be picked up in phase 2.

1.1.4 In phase 2 we shall review how partners across Brighton and Hove have been working to reduce inequality through strategies such as Neighbourhood Renewal and New Deal for Communities. We shall identify appropriate ways in which partners can build on existing strategies and strengthen their work in tackling inequality across the city. In particular we will be exploring how partners can better co-ordinate services where issues are cross-cutting; for example what more can be done on tackling mental health and worklessness?

Reducing inequality can meet both social and economic outcomes

1.1.5 Tackling inequality is about both social justice and economic development.

1.1.6 The social justice rationale for tackling inequality is based on developing a fairer society. Programmes here might aim to develop equality of *process* (treating people the same way), equality of *outcome* (ensuring that people have equal shares of “the cake”) or equality of *opportunity* (ensuring that people have the “substantive freedom” to do something).

1.1.7 There is also a clear economic rationale to tackling inequality. Programmes here would aim to improve productivity by making better use of Brighton and Hove’s assets: for example, through tackling low skills and other barriers to employment, along with action involving employers to improve the match between job requirements and what jobseekers have to offer.

1.2 Key information coming out of our analysis

Brighton and Hove in context

- A fast-growing population, driven by increases in working age groups
- The population profile of the city is changing: 20% of all births in 2005 were to mothers born outside the UK, and the city ranks in the top 10 LAs across England in terms of migrant worker registrations – 5,000 in 2005 alone
- A fast-growing and strong economy, but with a changing structure and high levels of inequality

Inequality in Brighton is about both deprived places and deprived people

- The city contains some of the most significantly deprived areas in England, particularly in East Brighton, Queens Park and Moulsecoomb & Bevendean. 8% of the city’s neighbourhoods are amongst the most deprived 10% in England, and 21% amongst the most deprived 20%
- Some 14 out of the city’s 21 wards contain at least one ‘Super Output Area’ (SOAs) – smaller areas defined for the Census with around 1,500 people – in the worst 20% nationally
- Concentrations are more pronounced when analysed at the more detailed Output Area level
- Trend data appears to show that the most deprived areas across the city are not “closing the gap” on important indicators of equality
- Some groups are particularly concentrated in the most deprived areas, eg, the Bangladeshi and Black African populations (though *not* minority ethnic groups overall)

- The city is home to large numbers of people experiencing inequality, however the most deprived areas in the city are significantly more deprived than the city as a whole – with levels on many indicators two or three times the city average in these neighbourhoods
- However, the majority of people facing inequality do not live in the most deprived 20% of areas across the city

There is a significant group across the city with multiple needs – concentrated in the most deprived areas

- Census data identifies a significant group of 1,500 households where people are experiencing multiple disadvantage across the city, with more than 25% in the most deprived 10% neighbourhoods
- Children in low income families and with special educational needs are even more concentrated in the most deprived areas
- There is a significant number of people with multiple needs living in social housing (with over two-thirds of households experiencing at least two out of the following dimensions of inequality: income, benefits dependency, health, crime and environment)

Worklessness across Brighton and Hove

- While unemployment levels are falling across the city, wider worklessness remains a challenge
- Nearly three times as many people (just under 13,000) are on Incapacity Benefit as on Jobseekers Allowance (JSA)
- Many more people experience unemployment than shown by the figures at the monthly count of unemployment: flows on and off benefit identify that up to 17,000 people have been on JSA over the course of the last year
- Long-term unemployment is more marked amongst older people on JSA
- Black Caribbean, Black African and Pakistani ethnic groups are more likely to be unemployed than white ethnic groups across Brighton and Hove
- Other groups with higher levels of worklessness include those with low skills, homeless, ex-offenders, drug users

Those with low skills are being squeezed out in the labour market

- Those with low skills in Brighton are facing increasing pressure in competing for work across the city through (1) scarcity of appropriate jobs; (2) competition from those with higher qualifications; and (3) competition from other groups including students and migrant workers
- As a result, the employment rate is poor for those with low or no skills (at 53%, a third lower than the Brighton average)
- Some BME groups are over-represented in low-skilled sectors, but BME groups as a whole are more likely to be working in higher status occupations than white British residents

Significant barriers are faced by disabled groups

- Disability and incapacity benefit levels are high across the city. More than 50% of all working age people on benefit claim as a result of incapacity
- Nearly 20% of all people over 60 receive disability-related benefits
- Disabled people are likely to be claiming benefit long-term – over five years for around half of IB claimants
- Disabled children are at greater risk of living in poverty
- Brighton pupils with Special Educational Needs (SEN) are less than one-quarter as likely to attain good GCSEs compared with those pupils without SEN
- Disabled people have a higher risk of experiencing hate crime

Those with mental health issues face additional barriers

- The city shows very high levels of mental health issues, and there are relative concentrations of people with mental health conditions in the most deprived SOAs
- Over half of those out-of-work due to long-term sickness have mental health problems

- Brighton and Hove has one of the highest suicide rates in the country

Violent and hate crime

- Violent crime levels are increasing, while overall crime levels are falling
- LGBT, ethnic minorities and the disabled are particularly vulnerable to violent crime and hate crime
- The highest overall crime levels in Brighton and Hove are seen in central Brighton

Groups struggling to access affordable housing

- There is limited access to affordable housing across the city
- Homeless levels have fallen (905 households in priority need in 2004/05) but remain amongst the highest in the country
- Lack of affordable accommodation can compound a range of inequalities

Children and young adults are at risk

- Nearly one-quarter of the city's children (11,000) live in 'out of work' households; of these children, 70% live in lone parent households
- Child poverty is heavily concentrated in the eastern areas of Brighton and Hove
- GCSE attainment levels are increasing but still below national and regional levels; children from low income households do significantly worse than the average across the city
- Attainment levels at Key Stage 3 across the city remain well below national and regional levels
- Young adults are most likely to commit crime, and most likely to be victims of crime
- Young people 'Not in Employment, Education or Training' (NEET) are mainly in a transitional phase (about to take up education or employment opportunities), though may be facing difficulties with housing or health
- Teenage conception levels are declining across Brighton and Hove, and are well below NRF averages (although higher than regional and national averages)
- There is a high level of bullying in schools in Brighton and Hove particularly among the LGBT community

Other matters to pick up in phase 2 of the project

- Community strength and participation
- Health inequalities
- Barriers to enterprise across the city
- Older people at risk
- LGBT groups
- Migrant workers
- Roma Gypsy and Traveller groups
- Asylum seekers