



Scrutiny of Worklessness in the Bradford District

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**Report of the Regeneration and Economy
Improvement Committee**

July 2007

Members of the Regeneration and Economy Improvement Committee

Membership of the Regeneration and Economy Improvement Committee and Portfolio Holder during the Scrutiny

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Chair's Foreword

When we started this review the Committee was well aware that tackling the issue of worklessness is one of the keys to ensuring the economic prosperity of the District. However as we progressed through the review it became more and more clear that it is probably the most important issue facing us and that if we do not begin now to take steps to deal with some of the issues that we have highlighted in this report the district will not be in a position to capitalise upon its potential.

Whilst carrying out this scrutiny we looked at many issues and took evidence from a wide range of people and I would like at this point to give my thanks to all those people who took time to come and talk to the committee and to give us evidence and also to suggest ways forward. Some of the people we talked to were there in their professional capacity but others had come forward on an individual basis and gave evidence based on their own experience of being workless and I would particularly like to thank those specific individuals.

You will see from the report that a great deal of work went into this scrutiny over a relatively short period of time and I owe my thanks to the members of the committee for giving up their very valuable and scarce time and also to the Council officers who ably supported the work of the committee throughout.

We discovered that the pathology of worklessness is a complex area and that we could only scratch the surface of the issue and that probably further work will need to be done around this. We also discovered that the issue of worklessness is something that can not be remedied overnight and should therefore be an integral part of the relevant District strategies that are currently being developed. However we feel that there are some short term and operational steps that can be taken to resolve some of the issues raised by specific groups. We have therefore formulated a substantial number of recommendations, some strategic and some operational, in the full confidence that these will go some way to reducing worklessness in the District.

Cllr Val Slater
Chair
June 2007

Chapter 1 – Introduction

This scrutiny has been carried out in accordance with the arrangements detailed in paragraph 2, Part 3E of the Constitution of Bradford Metropolitan District Council.

The Regeneration and Economy Improvement Committee agreed Terms of Reference (**Appendix 1**) at its meeting on 7 November 2006. The aims and objectives of the scrutiny were:

- (1) To gain an understanding of the nature of 'worklessness' in the District;
- (2) To examine what is being done to address worklessness in the District;
- (3) To establish if the structures are in place to deliver an improvement;
- (4) To make recommendations which bring about an improvement in the way worklessness is tackled in the District.

On 11 November 2006 the Committee held a seminar to prepare for the scrutiny at which they received presentations providing background and contextual information from Council officers, Job Centre Plus and BCB Radio.¹

Between November 2006 and March 2007 the Committee collected evidence at eight 'hearings' sessions, conducted two focus groups and made six visits to other organisations and events. **Appendix 2** gives details of the hearings, witnesses, focus groups and visits.

In addition, the Committee commissioned two pieces of research from Leeds Metropolitan University; a review of literature associated with worklessness and a mapping exercise of worklessness initiatives. The Department of Regeneration also produced two reports; the first a detailed analysis of the nature and extent of worklessness in the Bradford District and the second, an in depth look at labour demand issues. **Appendix 3** is a log of all evidence considered. An evidence pack has been produced which in addition to the written evidence submitted to the Committee, contains summaries of the transcripts made at each hearing session and reports of our visits and focus groups².

This report presents our findings and conclusions and makes 33 recommendations for action by the Council and others.

¹ Copies of the presentations are available on request to meher.dastor@bradford.gov.uk

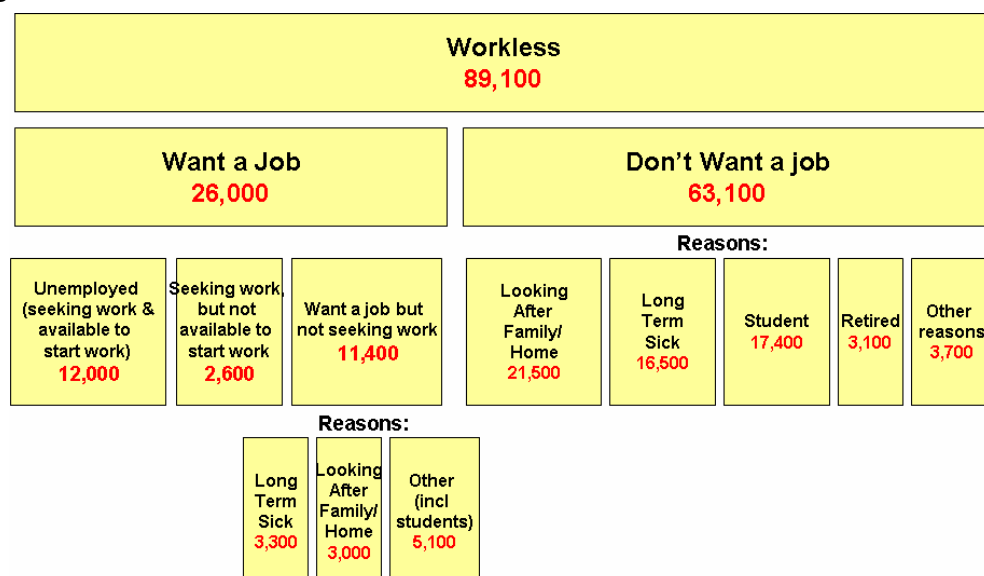
² Copies of the Evidence Pack are available on request to meher.dastor@bradford.gov.uk

Chapter 2 – Summary of Background Information

Worklessness

For the purpose of this report, worklessness is defined as those who are unemployed (that is: actively seeking work or waiting to start a job and in receipt of Job Seekers Allowance) and those of working age who are described as 'economically inactive'. 'Economically inactive' is the term used to describe those who are not in employment and are not seeking employment. This includes students and people who have retired, as well as those who do not work for reasons such as ill-health, disability or caring responsibilities. **Figure 1** illustrates this.

Fig.1³



Worklessness Facts and figures

In Bradford:

- 69% of the working age population are currently in employment, the UK average is 74.3% (March 2006);
- The employment rate is the lowest of all West Yorkshire districts and fourth lowest of the 21 districts in the Yorkshire and Humber region;
- The unemployment rate is 5.7% compared with 5.2% in Yorkshire and Humber and 5.1% nationally;
- 89,100 people or 31% of the working age population are workless, a higher proportion than regionally and nationally (March 2006);
- 71% of all workless people **do not** want a job;
- 26,000 people not in work **do** want a job.

³ Source: 'Worklessness in Bradford', prepared by the Strategy Team, Department of Regeneration, City of Bradford Metropolitan District Council p. 7

Characteristics such as gender, age, ethnicity, disability and qualification levels are significant when considering the workless population.

- 60% of the workless population are female;
- 31% of workless males are over 50 and 40% are aged 16-24;
- A disproportionate percentage of the ethnic population are workless (higher in Bradford than elsewhere);
- 43% of workless males and 36% of workless females are disabled;
- 37% of workless people have no qualifications (41% of females) compared with 19% for all Bradford residents.

Groups of people at risk of worklessness include:

- Lone parents;
- Minority ethnic groups;
- Older workers;
- Offenders and ex-offenders;
- People with low or no qualifications;
- Young people, particularly those who are not in education, employment or training (NEETs).

Barriers to employment that cut across groups include:

- Recruitment practices of employers;
- Access to transport;
- Access to information and social networks
- Skills gaps

A key characteristic of workless people is multiple-disadvantage; that is where individuals face more than one barrier to employment.

Labour Demand

The supply and types of jobs and vacancies, known as 'labour demand' also impacts on worklessness in an area. In Bradford:

- The rate of growth in jobs and businesses has not kept pace with growth at regional or national rates, but is predicted to grow at more than 9% over the next 10 years – the highest rate of growth in the region;
- Job density (number of filled jobs in an area divided by the resident population) is low;
- Significant employment sectors in Bradford include retail and the public sector;
- Manufacturing accounts for 16.2% of jobs compared with 11% nationally;
- The majority of businesses in Bradford are small – less than 1% employ more than 200 people;
- Occupations such as admin, plant & machinery operatives and elementary occupations are more significant in the District compared with Yorkshire and Humber and GB;
- Self-employment is below regional and national averages, but the trend is upwards;
- Wage levels in Bradford remain well below regional and national averages and the gap is widening.

Skills and training

- Only 59% of employers offered workplace training in the last 12 months, compared with 65% nationally, the lowest of the West Yorkshire districts;
- Where training is offered, 61% of employees are trained, the lowest in West Yorkshire;
- In 2003, 34% of employers surveyed had experienced recruitment difficulties in the last 12 months.

Policy Context

As part of the scrutiny a report was produced by Leeds Metropolitan University which reviewed the literature associated with worklessness and provided an overview of policy at national, regional and local level⁴. In addition, a number of reports and strategies emerged during the course of our work and are summarised below.

Policy context - national

Local Government White Paper: Strong and Prosperous Communities

In October 2006 the Government published a local government white paper outlining a number of proposals for reform. These include mechanisms intended to enhance local community leadership, changes to the performance management framework and a strengthening of powers to enable scrutiny of most local public services.

Leitch Review of Skills

The Leitch Review of Skills (H.M. Treasury 2006) announced the creation of the Commission for Employment and Skills to rationalise the existing system by merging the National Employer Panel and the Sector Skills Development Agency. The creation of a new universal adult careers service with an integrated objective of sustainable employment and progression is also to be developed.

Reducing dependency, increasing opportunity: options for the future of welfare to work - Freud Report

Early in 2007 the Department of Work and Pensions published an independent report which considered how welfare to work programmes should evolve in order that the most disadvantaged people can be helped into work. The report highlighted the effects of 'multiple disadvantage', where individuals face a number of barriers to employment simultaneously, and made recommendations for service delivery and benefit reform.

Respect agenda

The 'Respect' agenda is part of the Government's strategy to tackle anti-social behaviour which seeks to address its underlying causes. Initiatives include intensive work with families and parenting programmes, funding constructive activities for young people and measures to improve school attendance and address poor behaviour. Bradford District has been selected as one of the first wave of forty Respect Areas.

⁴ Executive Summary and Full Report available on request to meher.dastor@bradford.gov.uk or see www.bradford.gov.uk/scrutiny

Policy context - local

Bradford District Sustainable Community Strategy

Consultation is currently taking place on Bradford District's Sustainable Community Strategy which will set out the strategic vision for the District. One of the five key aims of the current 2006-2009 Strategy is to 'create a vibrant economy and a prosperous District'. Specific targets focus on securing sustainable employment for young men and people on incapacity benefit.

Bradford District Local Area Agreement (LAA): 'Connecting people and places to economic prosperity'

Local Area Agreements are the mechanism by which local authorities and their partners working together negotiate with Central Government to agree plans focussed on local needs. The LAA is divided into four blocks, the fourth of which focuses on economic development and enterprise.

Local Enterprise Growth Initiative (LEGI)

The aim of the LEGI is to transform deprived areas under the brand 'be enterprising'. It will seek to increase entrepreneurial aspirations, increase business start-ups and business growth and increase investment and jobs in deprived areas. Funding of £21.4million has been secured over a three year period (2006-09) with the possibility of a further £45.2million extending the programme to ten years. The work involves collaboration between the Council, the private sector and other sectors and agencies.

Bradford District Economic Strategy

The Strategy, produced by the Council and its partners (including the private sector) is currently at draft stage and is expected to be launched in July 2007. It will set out an economic vision for the District around the themes 'people', 'business' and 'place'.

Local Development Framework (LDF)

The LDF is a new planning structure which will set out the guidelines for spatial development in the Bradford District in conformity with the Regional Spatial Strategy. The LDF must also seek to implement the spatial aspects of the Sustainable Community Strategy and will impact on worklessness through such factors as transport and business location.

Chapter 3 – Conclusions and Recommendations

Whilst carrying out this scrutiny we looked at many issues and took evidence from a wide range of people. We found however that the issues fell broadly into the following categories, around which we have clustered our recommendations. Some of these are strategic and others operational in nature:

- Council's role:
 - As a community leader, connector and shaper;
 - As a commissioner and procurer of services ;
 - As an employer;
 - In attracting, influencing and keeping businesses.
- Understanding and auditing the pathology of worklessness in Bradford District
- Recognising the needs of specific groups:
 - Young people;
 - 50+;
 - Offenders and ex offenders;
 - BME;
 - Self employed
- Issues for bodies external to Bradford.

Council as a community leader, connector and shaper

Throughout the course of our scrutiny, we have become convinced that strong and effective leadership is required if we are to make a significant impact on the numbers of workless people in Bradford District. As the White Paper: 'Strong and Prosperous Communities' states: *'the quality of local leadership is crucial in developing strategies that reflect the reality of local economies'*⁵ and we believe that the Council has a key role to play as a community leader and connector, ensuring that strategies are aligned, appropriate targets are set, and that action is focussed and coordinated among all the many players who need to be involved.

We have developed the idea of the Council as a 'hub'; leading assertively at every appropriate opportunity; through strategy and policy development, facilitating learning, championing best practice, and encouraging innovation and creativity. This should be fed into the review of partnerships taking place in Spring/Summer 2007.

Recommendation 1

The Council, should strengthen its community leadership role, and should become the hub of efforts to reduce worklessness in the District.

Recommendation 2

Reducing worklessness should become a key priority in the Sustainable Community Strategy. The Sustainable Community Strategy should include targets to reduce the number of workless people in the district.

⁵ DCLG (2006) *Strong and Prosperous Communities* p. 9

Recommendation 3

The District Economic Strategy should identify specific actions needed to achieve the targets identified in the Sustainable Community Strategy to reduce worklessness.

Concerns were raised about the mismatch in activity and timing of the development of the Economic Strategy and that of the Local Development Framework Core Strategy

Recommendation 4

The Local Development Framework Core Strategy should be aligned with the District Economic Strategy, so that it makes a clear contribution towards reducing worklessness.

Council's role as a commissioner and procurer of services

Research carried out for this Scrutiny has mapped in excess of £14 million of funds for initiatives to address various aspects of worklessness. We are concerned that activity should not be wholly 'funding-led'; the considerable resources coming into the District must be targeted strategically and in line with locally identified priorities. The Council should take the lead and bring together key commissioning agencies in order to make this a reality.

Recommendation 5

The Council should lead a strategic funding group which ensures that commissioning by key agencies is focussed on services to deliver the targets identified in the Sustainable Community Strategy and avoids overlap.

With regard to its own commissioning activity and when working in partnership with other bodies the Council must clearly identify and separate its various roles and responsibilities - an issue previously raised by this Committee. We would once again emphasise that account must be taken of the Authority's own Accountable Body Guidance Manual.

Recommendation 6

We recommend that clear definitions are drawn up regarding specific roles and responsibilities involved in commissioning process. Account should be taken of the Accountable Body Guidance Manual when services are developed.

Council's role as an employer

During our evidence gathering, we heard from Yorkshire Water about their 'Clearly the Best' project' which successfully piloted new methods of attracting candidates such as jargon-free job adverts and community-based recruitment. Significantly, these approaches are delivering real outcomes on diversifying their workforce, increasing applications and cutting the resignation rate. Poverty of information among workless people has been highlighted as a challenge for the District, as a witness told us:

'There are job opportunities but people who are not in work are not aware of them and I think that's a key thing here'.

As a major employer and procurer, the Council should lead by example and exploit and develop opportunities to 'grow our own' through for example, traineeships, apprenticeships and placements. If we are to maximise our impact a bold approach is required, if necessary testing the boundaries of equalities legislation. Available data should be used to inform targeted recruitment activity and career opportunities within the Local Authority and should be more proactively promoted to our own young people via the introduction of a more strategic and coordinated approach to placements.

Recommendation 7

The Council should:

- Develop a strategy to significantly increase the numbers and enhance the experience of the young people it hosts on placements each year;
- Use data to identify areas of the District where the numbers of residents employed by the Council are low;
- Target innovative recruitment activity appropriately, including consideration of traineeships, apprenticeships, sponsorships and career progression routes;
- Be innovative in its approach to the implementation of equalities legislation.

Council's role in attracting, influencing and retaining Business

The need to build a strategic relationship with business and business leaders in the District has been highlighted repeatedly throughout our work. Business and job growth in Bradford has not kept pace with elsewhere in the country and although predictions for the future show our growth outstripping that of our West Yorkshire neighbours, we consider that the Council has a key role in ensuring that not only is Bradford seen as an attractive location for business, but that it is Bradford residents who benefit most from the expected growth.

Initiatives such as Fair Cities, and NUCA (a Community Alliance delivering services in a deprived area of Sheffield) explicitly align their inputs to the needs of employers, for example by identifying and matching specific skills for existing or imminent vacancies. While we welcome this approach, and closer working with employers, we also find that there is sometimes a need to challenge business practice. Provision and uptake of workplace training in the District is below what we would expect and hope to find and, as we heard from West Yorkshire Employer Coalition, there are sometimes mixed messages from employers regarding their requirements and expectations of prospective employees. The District has a number of attractive 'unique selling points' (such as our demographics) which the Council and its partners should actively promote in order to attract and retain business, but it must also give due consideration to ways in which it can act to bring about across the board improvement in recruitment practice, retention and training.

Recommendation 8

The Council should consider in its engagement with private sector organisations the following:

- Acting as a conduit for the sharing and promoting of good practice in training, recruitment, retention etc. by establishing, leading and sustaining employer networks;
- Using 'business dinners' and other initiatives to engage with the business sector on an ongoing basis;
- Promoting the work of the West Yorkshire Employer Coalition;
- Involving Colleges and Bradford University in engagement activity with the business sector;
- Actively promoting Bradford's unique selling points such as our demographics and international connections, beyond the District in order to attract inward investment including attracting and retaining new businesses;
- Consider the scope and mechanisms for business engagement in skills and training development and delivery.

Understanding and auditing the pathology of worklessness in Bradford District

The nature of worklessness, and the ways in which it affects individuals and communities in our District, as elsewhere, is complex. In spite of the limited time and resources available to us, we hope that we have gone some way to contributing to a better understanding of the issue. In particular, we commissioned research (in the form of a database) to map initiatives that aim to address worklessness. However, we are concerned that our work should form the basis of continued activity to understand service provision and connectivity. Alongside research being undertaken elsewhere in support of strategy development, it must be built upon and used by policy makers and leaders, not as static information, but dynamically and as intelligence rather than as simple data. We also recommend benchmarking worklessness in Bradford District against that in other comparable local authority areas as a mechanism for supporting continuous improvement, identifying where our good practice exists and monitoring progress.

Recommendation 9

We recommend that the Council continue to improve its understanding of worklessness and the ways in which it is being tackled in Bradford District and develop a comprehensive data set so that any gaps in current provision can be identified and addressed.

Recommendation 10

We recommend that the database provided as part of the research to this scrutiny be maintained and updated and that responsibility for this should be specifically allocated within the Council.

Recommendation 11

We recommend that the information provided by this database be used by the Council and its partners as an intelligence base.

Recommendation 12

All efforts should be made to benchmark worklessness in Bradford against other appropriate local authorities.

We highlight in our recommendations where our research has pinpointed gaps in provision or a need for additional targeting in respect of specific groups or areas. However, as a recent report commissioned by Government stresses, there are weaknesses in an approach to tackling worklessness which only targets specific 'client groups'; it states that '*the extent to which disadvantages work together and reinforce each other is striking*⁶ and illustrates this by showing how having no qualifications, when combined with other disadvantages such as lone parenthood or disability, make the chances of being in employment even lower. The report goes on to suggest that '*the current regime will have to evolve further...it will need to move from a traditional approach based on client groups and specific symptoms to one based on individual needs*⁷. To an extent, our findings mirror that of the report; many adults and children may experience a range of difficulties which will impact on their ability to take up employment now, or, in the case of children and young people, in the future.

An example of the complexity of meeting individual needs was powerfully illustrated to us by one witness:

We've got a Young People's Project and a worker there became concerned about the behaviour of a particular child. Talking to the learning mentor at the school, this child had also started causing problems in school. What they did was talk to the Family Support Worker, they know the family, went and visited, the relationship had broken down between the parents, the mother was drinking heavily, she wasn't getting up, the kid wasn't getting up for school and the kid's behaviour was disruptive and also their whole lifestyle. We contacted a community transport project that picked the kid up for school in the morning, took him to the school to the breakfast club so he got his breakfast, the learning mentor escorted him from the breakfast club into the school, one of our youth workers escorted him from school to the Young People's Project and then took him home and the Family Support Worker worked with the mother to actually deal with her issues.

We therefore also recommend that additional work be done to address the needs of those experiencing multiple disadvantages.

Recommendation 13

The review identified the need for targeting and that insufficient initiatives were targeted at addressing the needs of the following:

- White working class males
- People in rural areas
- Asian women
- People who face multiple disadvantage

And therefore additional work needs to be done in these specific areas

⁶ DWP (2007) *Reducing Dependency, increasing opportunity: options for the future of welfare to work* p.3

⁷ As above p. 5

We also believe that the development of comprehensive ward profiles is one of the tools most needed to help ensure that appropriate targeting of resources and service provision takes place. We were impressed by the ward profile information that some of the South Yorkshire Councils (for instance Rotherham) had developed and made freely available on their websites. As well as ward-level data (such as qualification levels, occupation, housing tenure, crime statistics etc.), the profiles should include all information available by Super Output Area (SOA). SOAs are small geographical areas used to present data such as Indices of Deprivation and Department of Work and Pensions indicators e.g. types of benefits being claimed. One of the main reasons we highlight the importance of this data is because *'it is well suited to identifying smaller pockets of deprivation that may well be averaged out over large wards'*⁸. Ward profiles should be made widely available in order to assist all those, including communities themselves, who are seeking to bring about the regeneration of the District.

Recommendation 14

Comprehensive Ward Profiles (including all relevant information from held by Council and its partners down to Super Output Area) should be developed and made available on the internet and their existence publicised to elected members, interested parties and communities.

As we have identified, data at SOA level may reveal important information essential to tackling worklessness effectively which simply would not emerge at a District, or even Ward level analysis. In addition, as one of our witnesses told us, detailed knowledge of a specific geographical area may reveal, at an early stage, trends and changes yet to be picked up by official statistics and data collection, which may then be used to inform the development of strategies and improve targeting of resources and initiatives. A number of our witnesses also spoke of issues such as 'generational' worklessness (where no one in a multi-generational household is economically active), 'poverty of information' and lack of the informal networks which often assist individuals into employment. We believe that our capacity to tackle these complex issues will be greatly assisted by deepening our understanding of how worklessness affects neighbourhoods in particular geographical settings and therefore recommend that this approach be piloted.

Recommendation 15

Pilot projects should be undertaken at appropriate Super Output Levels to explore and tackle the nature of worklessness, in small communities, such as rural areas and outlying estates using a very focused and local approach.

As part of our work we focused on and heard from a number of specific groups who had been identified as being at particular risk of being workless and this next section outlines specific findings and recommendations in respect of these groups.

Young People

As a result of some of the work of the Council and its partners, the numbers of young people in the District who are not in education, employment or training (NEET) has been falling since November 2005. This is against a sub regional and national picture of static or rising rates, and it is encouraging to see that some of Bradford's work is being seen

⁸ http://www.rotherham.gov.uk/graphics/YourArea/Rotherham+Census+Profiles/_2004wardprofiles.htm

and used as best practice sub regionally. And the committee would like to commend all those involved.

However, lack of qualifications is still a key characteristic of NEET young people and, as evidence shows, poor basic skills such as literacy and numeracy are key barriers to employment throughout peoples' lives.

We have learnt of projects such as the Bradford Parental Involvement Programme which operates mostly in primary schools and seeks to improve attainment by providing support for parents / carers and children. Evaluation of the programme has shown improvements in literacy, numeracy and science attainment, improved attendance and a positive impact on families' attitudes and aspirations. It is encouraging to note that the biggest benefit appears to be felt by some of the most vulnerable families⁹.

The need to address the issue of basic skills attainment of our young people is of great importance to the District and we are impressed by the evidence we have received of intervention at an early stage. However, we are concerned that this work has taken place in only a small number of the District's schools and therefore recommend that the Young People and Education Improvement Committee further investigate and identify good practice and ensure that evidence is widely disseminated in order to influence strategy development and practice.

An additional concern of the Committee was the apparent lack of inspirational role models for young people.

Recommendation 16

We recommend that as low levels of literacy and lack of basic employability skills are one of the main barriers to employment for young people that Young People and Education Improvement Committee be asked to investigate the good practice that has emerged in some of Bradford's primary schools in tackling this at a very early stage. This good practice should be disseminated to other schools as part of long term strategy for dealing with young people's worklessness.

The 'Respect Agenda' represents part of government's approach to addressing anti-social behaviour. In January 2007 Bradford District was designated as a 'Respect Action Area'; key local priorities have been identified:

- Parenting support provision;
- Intensive family support;
- Challenging unacceptable youth behaviour;
- Behaviour in schools;
- Building respect in neighbourhoods.

As the example of the Bradford Parental Involvement Programme shows, we believe that much of the activity around this agenda will have the potential to impact on worklessness in our District and therefore strongly recommend that appropriate links are made to ensure that every opportunity is exploited. Similarly, activity to improve basic skills attainment should be built in to engagement activities (such as summer schools) for young people, most especially for those who may be at risk of offending.

⁹ See Report to the Young People and Education Improvement Committee (14 March 2007) 'The Bradford Parental Involvement Programme' Appendix B *Headlines from an external evaluation of the Bradford Parental Involvement Programme Autumn 2006*.

Recommendation 17

Appropriate links with regard to addressing worklessness and barriers to employment should be made to the emerging Respect agenda action plan.

Recommendation 18

We recommend that summer schools and other year-round engagement activities targeted at young people should include elements of basic skills instruction. In particular these should be targeted at young people at risk of offending

As we have identified, many of those most at risk of worklessness face multiple barriers. Alongside lack of basic skills, conditions such as dyslexia are a key characteristic of young people who are NEET, and also those who have contact with the Youth Offending Team. We believe that consideration should be given as to how best to address the specific needs of these young people.

Recommendation 19

The Council work with the Strategic Disability Partnership Action Group and relevant Council Departments to address the needs of young people with dyslexia or other learning disabilities.

On many occasions during our scrutiny, we examined the issue of 'employability'. As these comments from two of our witnesses illustrate, this is a key issue:

'What we're talking about amongst our 45% who are economically inactive are people who may have three generations out of work, who don't understand that you don't go and talk to somebody with a cap on or in your scruffy clothes, that you have to present a certain image, you have to write a CV, you have to be able to articulate'

'...there are a lot of people in Bradford who would like to work but don't have the first clue about how to get into employment...some of the work that we've done has demonstrated that while somebody might have a degree, they don't necessarily know about the mechanics of getting a job, so they don't know where to look for the job opportunities, they don't know how to present themselves at interviews'

We are pleased to note that both Fair Cities and Bradford College have identified this need and are putting in place mechanisms to address it. We wish to see this extended and recommend that the Council look at ways of providing 'employability skills' provision more widely.

Recommendation 20

We recommend that the Council give consideration to extending the idea and provision of 'finishing schools' which would provide 'employability skills' e.g. Fair Cities, Bradford College.

50+

While many older people who are 'economically inactive' do not wish to work or have taken early retirement, there is a recognised desire among many workless people in their 50s and 60s to find employment. Recent research commissioned by Age Concern (undertaken by Arete Business Services) highlighted employers' attitudes and the 'job seeking system' as key barriers. These findings were echoed by participants in our focus

group who described their experience of ageism and also some problems they had found when attempting to access existing mainstream services:

'Job Centres do not have capacity to give the level of support required for the individual'

'Waiters are young'

'If you don't know to ask, you don't know what you are entitled to get or go on'

We also heard from the 50+ Employment and Enterprise Group who are currently seeking resources to produce a strategic approach to meeting the needs of people who are 50+. Resources would be used to develop 'concrete costed and evidenced proposals for tackling worklessness in 50+'¹⁰ which would be fed into the District's Economic Strategy.

Our findings show that, in contrast to the national trend, over the last year there has been a rise in the numbers of 50+ people who are economically inactive in the District. We have reached the conclusion that many people in this age group would not only greatly benefit from, but also welcome the opportunity to enter employment. We therefore support the 50+ Employment and Enterprise Group's proposals and recommend that resources be made available.

Older participants in another of our focus groups raised concern about difficulties they had experienced during training courses which were also attended by young people. We therefore recommend that this issue be further investigated by Skills at Work (as a major provider) and that consideration be given to separating provision.

Recommendation 21

Resources should be provided to enable the formation of a 50+ employment service along the lines of that proposed by the 50+ Employment and Enterprise Sub-Group.

Recommendation 22

Skills at work be asked to examine current practices regarding combining development opportunities for younger people and take steps to provide these separately so that disruption to the learning of 50+ or indeed single parents is minimised

Offenders / Ex-offenders

As part of our scrutiny investigation, we received written evidence from the National Offender Management Service (NOMS) and made visits to the Unpaid Work Unit (perhaps better know as Community Service) and the Bradford District Youth Offending Team (YOT).

One in four men over the age of 25 has a conviction and ex-offenders are 13 times more likely to be unemployed than anyone else. Evidence shows that employment reduces the risk of re-offending by between a third and a half. It is apparent therefore that addressing the employment, training and educational of this group would be of great benefit, not only to individuals, but to the District as a whole and we therefore strongly recommend that the needs of ex-offenders are explicitly considered in the District Economic Strategy.

¹⁰ 50+ Employment and Enterprise Sub Group (Dec 2006) *Worklessness and Older People* p. 4

We also include in our recommendations specific actions which we would like to see the Council undertake in its role as an employer and contractor and also through its relationship with business and other employers in the District, by for example, promoting the NOMS toolkit. We found for instance that the Unpaid Work Unit had difficulty finding suitable community projects in partnership with the Council, as there were often a number of different departments to liaise with. We found that a number of organisations were not aware of the help that the Unpaid Work Unit could offer and we also found that for many employers a prison record was a barrier to employment.

Recommendation 23

The needs of ex-offenders should be explicitly considered in the District Economic Strategy.

Recommendation 24

The Council should consider ways in which it can contribute towards addressing worklessness among ex-offenders in its role as an employer and through its links with private sector employers and other agencies and partners in the District. This could include the following:

- Publicising and circulating the Employer Engagement Toolkit Issued by the National Offender Management Service (NOMS);
- Developing an arms length organisation to acquire, renovate and dispose of properties in partnership with both Unpaid Work Unit and also other organisations such as Youthbuild.

Recommendation 25

The Council should ensure it makes maximum use of unpaid worker schemes. Consideration should be given to initially holding an event for all Departments of the Council at which the unpaid work service can showcase what they can offer and further consider setting up a central liaison point between the Council and the unpaid work service.

BME

As we have highlighted earlier in our recommendations, we have concerns that there may not be adequate provision of services to assist Asian women into employment. We heard about the outcomes of the B-Equal programme, which sought to address the recruitment and employment barriers for targeted ethnic minority groups, which included women. However, we were concerned to find that, although many of the projects initiated by B-Equal have since been successful in either becoming self-funding or have securing funding from elsewhere, a number have not been fully taken forward (for example the BECAS project) and we therefore recommend that these are re-visited with a view to their reinvigoration.

Addressing the needs and raising the aspirations of Asian women in our District was the subject of much discussion during our scrutiny inquiry. At an early stage we received evidence from the 2001 Census that Asian women, particularly those of Pakistani and Bangladeshi origin were significantly more likely to be economically inactive and that anecdotally, it would appear that many are not claiming benefits. While it is acknowledged that many may be caring for family or have other reasons for not seeking

employment, Members did feel strongly that this was an area which should be the focus of significant attention; most especially with regard to aspiration. Concern was expressed that there may be some stereotyping of Asian women with regard to provision which may limit career goals, and that there was a need to promote appropriate role models.

Recommendation 26

Bradford Vision should be asked to re-examine some of the initiatives targeted at Asian Women as part of B Equal, which have not been taken forward, with a view to reinvigorating these.

Recommendation 27

Create innovative ways of raising the employment aspirations of Asian people, especially women and ways of addressing stereotypes in the District should be investigated, for example use of the Big Screen, DVDs, role model initiatives etc .

Self-Employed

The £21.4m of funding that the Local Enterprise Growth Initiative (LEGI) will bring into the District is a tremendous opportunity for local people to be able to access support to make their entrepreneurial aspirations a reality and to contribute to business growth and a reduction in worklessness. We are concerned that access to this support must be as open and straightforward as possible if we are to ensure that the initiative is to maximise its success and therefore recommend that every effort is made to bring this about.

Recommendation 28

We recommend that, where unnecessary obstacles are identified (such as ‘gatekeeping’ by agencies), which prevent individuals or organisations gaining easy access to various aspects of the LEGI programme that steps are taken to ensure that these are removed.

Recommendations to other bodies

On many occasions throughout our scrutiny, we have come across issues and concerns that need to be addressed at a regional or national level. A number of the recommendations we make below seek to ensure that some of the unique characteristics of our District are considered in strategy development; others reflect our conclusions for improvement or policy development at a national level.

- **Learning and Skills Council (LSC)**

We have already highlighted the need to ensure that learning provision for older people is appropriately planned and delivered. As a major commissioner in this area, we recommend that the LSC ensure that this is the case.

Recommendation 29

The LSC should ensure there is a positive focus on the specific needs of Bradford residents for Lifelong Learning with regard to policies and training provision, including the need to separate the provision for younger and older people.

- **Jobcentre Plus**

Our evidence supports that of Age Concern, that older workless people sometimes felt that *'Jobcentre Plus employees were insufficiently trained and too young to be able to understand and meet their needs'*¹¹ and we therefore recommend that Jobcentre Plus act to address this.

Recommendation 30

Jobcentre Plus should ensure that the services they provide are appropriate for older service users and in particular should consider the age appropriateness of the job advisors working with this particular group.

- **Yorkshire Forward**

Recommendation 31

Yorkshire Forward, when drafting the revised Regional Economic Strategy, should take into account the special and unique needs and requirements of Bradford with its growing young population and that Bradford is still playing 'catch-up' economically.

- **Regional Assembly Scrutiny**

The Yorkshire and Humber Assembly have been undertaking a scrutiny review of employment in our region. The scrutiny was considering:

- What employer-base will this region have in the future?
- What are we doing to prepare our future workforce?
- Are we funding the right initiatives now to equip us for the future?
- What do you think are the key issues for employment in the region?

This Committee has already submitted interim evidence to the Assembly, and recommends that its final report and recommendations also be considered. The Assembly's final report will be approved at its meeting on 12 July 2007.

Recommendation 32

That due consideration be given by the regional scrutiny team of the evidence and recommendations of the Regeneration and Economy Improvement Committee's enquiry.

- **Home Office and Department of Work and Pensions**

We have identified a concern amongst those who are seeking to address the employment, education and training needs of offenders and ex-offenders that there are currently insufficient mechanisms in place to adequately follow-up and monitor the outcomes of initiatives and programmes. We therefore recommend that research is undertaken at a national level to establish how this may best be achieved.

Recommendation 33

Appropriate Ministers should ensure that research is undertaken into the need to track and evaluate initiatives focussed towards reducing worklessness amongst offenders and ex-offenders.

¹¹ Age Concern (2006) *'Not ready for the scrapheap' Looking for work after 50* p. 8

Terms of Reference

Scrutiny of Worklessness in Bradford District Terms of Reference Adopted by Committee – 7 November 2006

See Part 3E paragraphs 2.1 to 2.11 of the Constitution of the Council

1. Subject of Scrutiny

Worklessness in Bradford District

The scrutiny will examine worklessness in Bradford District.

In particular, the scrutiny will seek to:

- a. Gain an understanding of the nature of 'worklessness' in the District
How many people are workless? Who are they? Where are they? Why are they workless? What are the trends?
- b. Examine what is being done to address worklessness in the District
What projects / schemes / initiatives are in place? How are they funded? Are they sustainable? Are they effective? Are there gaps in provision?
- c. Establish if the structures are in place to deliver an improvement
Are current approaches sufficiently strategic? Are initiatives 'joined-up'? Is there sufficient communication between key agencies? How is performance information currently collected and disseminated? How is this information used to bring about an improvement?
- d. Make recommendations which bring about an improvement in the way worklessness is tackled in the District.
How can local strategy and partnership working be improved? What are the priorities for action?

2. Possible Interested parties

Name	Organisation / body / department
Cllr Andrew Mallinson	Portfolio Holder
Alan Mainwaring	Strategic Director, Regeneration
Mark Carrilline	Strategic Director, Children and Young People (Skills for Work)
	Job Centre Plus
	Chamber of Commerce
	Careers Bradford
	Colleges
	Learning and Skills Council

Name	Organisation / body / department
	Schools
	Fair Cities
	Workless and formerly workless people
	Bradford and Airedale Teaching Primary Care Trust
	Strategic Director, Adult Services
	Town and Parish Councillors
	Ward Councillors

3. **Methodology**

The Committee (or nominated sub group) may undertake some or all of the following as appropriate:

- a. Hold “hearings” ie. meetings in public. Invited “Interested Parties” to give a brief presentation (with a previously submitted written submission) to be followed by questioning by the committee
- b. Invite written evidence from selected “Interested Parties”
- c. Commission research
- d. Hold open meetings at which members of the public or interested organisations can present their views and evidence
- e. Visit other relevant organisations to obtain evidence.

4. **Indicative Timetable**

Date	Event	Comments
October 2006	Member Seminar	
November 2006	Committee agrees Terms of Reference	
November 2006 – February 2007	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Public hearings: invited witnesses to give evidence - Gathering of written evidence - Commissioned research (mapping of initiatives, literature search) 	
March 2007 – April 2007	Committee presents its findings and recommendations	

Log of evidence considered

Number	Title	Comments
1	Report: "Worklessness in Bradford"	Prepared by Regeneration Department. Presented at hearing on 29 November 2006
2	Report: "Labour demand issues in Bradford"	Prepared by Regeneration Department Presented at hearing on 7 February 2007
3	Review of worklessness	Prepared by Leeds Metropolitan University Policy Research Institute Presented at hearing on 28 February 2007
4	Mapping of worklessness initiatives	Prepared by Leeds Metropolitan University Policy Research Institute Presented at hearing on 28 February 2007
5	Executive summary of DWP report 'Reducing dependency, increasing opportunity: options for the future of welfare to work' (also known as Freud Report)	Presented on 14 March 2007 as part of the evidence pack presented to the Committee
6	Transcript summary: LEGI	Summary of hearing on 7 November 2006
7	Transcript summary: Local Area Agreement 4 th Block, Economic Development and Enterprise	Summary of hearing on 21 November 2006
8	Transcript summary: Worklessness presentation / West Yorkshire Employer Coalition	Summary of hearing on 29 November 2006
9	Transcript summary: Fair Cities / Older People's Partnership / Careers Bradford	Summary of hearing on 9 January 2007
10	Transcript summary: Bradford Labour market / B-Equal / Bradford Council's Employment Equality Initiatives	Summary of hearing on 7 February 2007
11	Transcript summary: Chief Executive CBMDC	Summary of hearing on 20 February 2007
12	Transcript summary: Report on commissioned research / Yorkshire Water / Netherthorpe and Uppertorpe Community Alliance	Summary of hearing on 28 February 2007
13	Transcript summary: Government	Summary of hearing on 14 March 2007

	Office	
14	Worklessness and older people	Written evidence submitted by the Older People's Partnership 50+ Employment and Enterprise Sub-group to the hearing on 9 January 2007
15	Recommendations to the Bradford scrutiny on worklessness	Written evidence submitted by TAEN, the Age and Employment Network to the hearing on 9 January 2007
16	Written evidence from the National Offender Management Service (NOMS)	Written evidence submitted to the hearing on 9 January 2007
17	Report; Age Concern England "Not ready for the scrapheap: looking for work after 50". Arete Business Services	Written evidence submitted to the hearing on 9 January 2007
18	Written evidence from Ian Jones, Bradford Council Organisation and Workforce Development	Written evidence submitted to the hearing on 7 February 2007
19	B-Equal project outcomes	Written evidence submitted to the hearing on 7 February 2007
20	Yorkshire Water Diversity Progress	Written evidence submitted to the hearing on 28 February 2007
21	Rotherham Metropolitan Borough Council Ward Profiles	Written evidence submitted to the hearing on 14 March 2007
22	Report: "Young people in Bradford not in education, employment or training (NEETs)"	Written evidence submitted by Bradford Council Children and Young Person's Improvement Committee, presented at their meeting on 28 February 2007
23	Visit to the Bradford Youth Offending Team	Report on the visit made on 1 February 2007
24	Visit to Unpaid Work Unit	Report on the visit made on 1 March 2007
25	Visit to Digitalife	Report on the visit made on 8 March 2007
26	Evidence from the Yorkshire and Humber Assembly Employment Scrutiny Public Discussion	Report of key points from the Public Discussion on 28 February 2007
27	Grey Panther Focus Group (ESF funded project to support older men back into employment) University of Bradford	Summary of the discussions of the group on 22 February 2007
28	Jobs@ / Skills for Work Focus Group	Summary of the discussions of the group on 8 March 2007

Hearings, witnesses, visits and focus groups

Introductory session

Wednesday 11 October 2006, Committee Room 5, City Hall, Bradford: Overview.
Mark Clayton, Economic Partnership Co-ordinator, Department of Regeneration, Bradford Metropolitan District Council, **Alison Knight**, Business Development Manager, Job Centre Plus, **Mary Dowson**, Director, BCB radio.

Hearings

Tuesday 7 November 2006, Committee Room 5, City Hall, Bradford: Local Enterprise Growth Initiative
Robert Campbell, Manager, Bradford Local Enterprise Growth Initiative Programme.

Tuesday 21 November 2006, Committee Room 5, City Hall, Bradford: Local Area Agreement, 4th Block
Kate McNicholas, Senior Programmes Development Officer, Department of Regeneration, Bradford Metropolitan District Council

Wednesday 29 November 2006, Committee Room 5, City Hall: Analysis of Worklessness / Employers
Kate McNicholas, Senior Programmes Development Officer, Department of Regeneration, Bradford Metropolitan District Council, **Anj Handa**, West Yorkshire Employer Coalition

Tuesday 9 January 2007, Committee Room 5, City Hall, Bradford: BME Communities/ Older People/ Younger People
James Murgatroyd, Director, Fair Cities, **Craig Williams**, Bradford Older People's Partnership 50+ Employment and Enterprise Sub-Group, **Mark Clayton**, Economic Partnership Co-ordinator, Department of Regeneration, Bradford Metropolitan District Council **Keith Nathan**, Chief Officer, Bradford and District Age Concern, **Jane Campbell**, Careers Bradford

Wednesday 7 February 2007, Committee Room 5, City Hall, Bradford: The Bradford Labour Market, Bradford Council Equalities
Mark Clayton, Economic Partnership Co-ordinator, Department of Regeneration, Bradford Metropolitan District Council, **Abu Bashir**, Policy Manager, Equalities Service, Bradford Metropolitan District Council, **Ian Jones**, Senior HR Officer, Department of Human Resources, Bradford Metropolitan District Council

Tuesday 20 February 2007, Committee Room 5, City Hall, Bradford Chief Executive
Tony Reeves, Chief Executive, Bradford Metropolitan District Council

Wednesday 28 February 2007, Committee Room 5, City Hall, Bradford Presentation of Commissioned Research, Private and Community Sector Best Practice
David Devins, Policy Research Institute , Leeds Metropolitan University, **Fiona Watson**, Policy Research Institute , Leeds Metropolitan University, **Richard Neville**, Employee Relations Manager, Yorkshire Water, **Laura Moynahan**, Chief Executive, Netherthorpe and Uppertorpe Community Alliance, Sheffield

Wednesday 14 March 2007, Committee Room 5, City Hall, Regional Perspective
Simon Walker, Head of Local Government Team, Government Office for Yorkshire and the Humber

Visits

Monday 29 January 2007, Visit to Groundwork Wakefield
Darren Holmes, Manager, Groundwork Wakefield

Thursday 1 February 2007, Visit to Youthbuild
Will Jennings, Manager, Youthbuild Bradford

Thursday 1 February 2007, Youth Offending Team
Paul O'Hara, Manager, CBMDC Youth Offending Team, **Carol Lightowler**, Personal Advisor, CBMDC Education, Training and Employment

Wednesday 28 February 2007, YHA, Leeds
Yorkshire and Humber Assembly Employment Scrutiny Public Discussion attended by Cllr Val Slater

Thursday 1 March, Visit to Bradford Unpaid Work Unit
Christine Milner, Head of Unpaid Work Unit, **Craig Walker**, Deputy Head of Unpaid Work Unit, **Rachael Batchelor**, Reducing Re-offending Team, National Offender Management Service (NOMS), **Maggie Culkin**, Assistant Chief Officer, Probation Service

Thursday 8 March, Visit to Digitalife
Gweneth Balson, Manager, Digitalife

Focus Groups

Thursday 8 March Jobs@ / Skills for Work Focus Group
Claire Power, Jobs @ CBMDC and **Avril Austerberry**, Skills for Work, CBMDC

Thursday 22 February 2007, Grey Panther Focus Group
Anne Weston, Grey Panther Project, University of Bradford

Copies of all written and transcript evidence are included in the evidence pack available on request to meher.dastor@bradford.gov.uk