



Cheshire and Warrington
**Sustainable and Inclusive
Growth Commission**



Case Study

 **Inclusive Economy**

Cheshire West Poverty Truth Approach

Cheshire West and Chester Council's 'Poverty Truth' initiative aims to tackle poverty and influence policy decision-making to promote a sustainable and inclusive economy within the region.



In Cheshire West and Chester:

- 25,000 people live in the most deprived ten per cent of neighbourhoods in England
- Two of these neighbourhoods, in Lache and Winsford, are in the two per cent most deprived.
- Over 7000 children live in absolute poverty

The Cheshire West Poverty Truth approach is based on a co-production model, where Community Inspirers (people with lived experience of poverty) and Civic & Business Leaders (people with influence) in the West Cheshire area, work together to tackle poverty. It creates safe spaces for Community Inspirers to share their stories and opportunities for those making and influencing decisions to act upon what they hear.

Cheshire West and Chester hosted two Poverty Truth Commissions before taking the decision to embed the Poverty Truth approach as a core part of how the Council does business.

As part of this approach, a multi agency Poverty Truth Advisory Board has been established to enable stakeholders and Community Inspirers to work collaboratively to develop a range of solutions and recommendations to help improve the lives of those affected by poverty. A ten year Fairer Future Strategy has been co-produced and is being implemented.

Our ambition is to drive a significant reduction in the number of people in the borough experiencing poverty and financial hardship. If everyone plays their part, including the Council, local partners, business, residents and central government, by 2032 we aim to halve the number of children living in absolute poverty.

“A Fairer Future leaves no-one behind, no matter their status, no matter their ability, so everybody is able to prosper, making Cheshire West the best place to live.”
Antony (Community Inspirer)



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Theme:



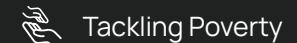
Inclusive Economy

Location:



Cheshire West & Chester

Challenges addressed:



Tackling Poverty



Influencing decisions
and policy through
lived experience



Key objectives

- To facilitate collaborative working between stakeholders including elected Members, business leaders, staff, and people with lived experience of poverty to identify improvements to policy and service design.
- To build relationships across a range of stakeholders and people with lived experience of poverty.
- To achieve the aims of the Fairer Future Strategy which seeks to halve the number of children in absolute poverty by 2032.
- Our Fairer Future Strategy is underpinned by a detailed action plan, with measurable targets.

To deliver the three pillars of the Fairer Future strategy;

- Voice – hearing the voices of people experiencing poverty and acting to address the issues they raise.
- Alleviation – delivering urgent action to tackle the immediate consequences of poverty.
- Root cause – transforming our economy and society to address the underlying causes of poverty. This includes developing a fairer economy that benefits everyone and working more closely with communities to find local solutions to problems.

Outcomes

Cheshire West and Chester Council successfully hosted two Poverty Truth Commissions.

An independent evaluation of the second Poverty Truth Commission identified that for every £1 spent on West Cheshire Poverty Truth Commission, there was a return of £9.17 (a social value of over £1.6m).

Influenced a range of policies, strategies and services including:

- The local allocation of Household Support Fund to target those most in need.

- Improved access to services for people experiencing poverty including investment in additional face to face support, the implementation of a free phone number for the local welfare assistance service (HELP scheme) and housing helpline.
- Influenced the Inclusive Economy Strategy and raised awareness of key issues for example in work poverty.
- Impacted strategy across a range of issues including rough sleeping, domestic violence, health improvement.

Designed and developed poverty awareness training with people with lived experience of poverty using the short film **How We Live** which was co-developed with young people to tell their story of poverty.

Find more information about the work of the Council on tackling the poverty emergency [here](#).



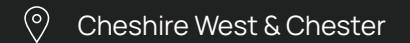
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