

NORTHAMPTON BOROUGH COUNCIL
OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY



SCRUTINY PANEL 1 – FOOD POVERTY
CORE QUESTIONS – EXPERT ADVISORS

CORE QUESTIONS: NPH RESPONSE

A series of key questions have been put together to inform the evidence base of the Scrutiny Panel:

Definition

The Department of Health defines food poverty as:

‘The inability to afford, or to have access to, food to make up a healthy diet.’

Food poverty means that an individual or household is not able to obtain healthy, nutritious food, or cannot access the food they would like to eat. Food poverty and economic poverty are linked. Rent, tax and debts are fixed costs; food is the 'flexible' budget item, and families and individuals pay the price.

1. In your opinion, what are the main impacts of food poverty?
 - a. Households cannot secure adequate food that is nutritious. This can lead to:
 - i. Poor health
 - ii. Chronic illness
 - iii. Poor mental health
 - iv. Crime
 - v. Obesity
 - vi. Diabetes
 - vii. Heart condition
 - viii. Poor education

2. How widespread do you understand food poverty in the borough to be?
 - a. More widespread than is likely to be recorded – it will be hidden by many families out of embarrassment and also many people will not recognise that they are in food poverty.
 - b. A report, compiled by the End Child Poverty coalition, shows that 13,633 children are living in poverty in Northampton

3. In your opinion does food poverty differ across the borough of Northampton and what are the reasons for this?
 - a. Yes it will be more prevalent in areas of deprivation.

4. What strategic approaches are you aware of to tackle food poverty?
 - a. NBC has recently agreed a new Anti-Poverty Strategy which will (should) include food poverty.

5. What approaches are in existence to reduce people's dependency on food aid, such as Food Banks?
 - a. Restore (crisis support including food)
 - b. Northamptonshire Food Poverty Network
 - c. Hope Enterprises
 - d. Elsie's cafe

6. How do you understand food poverty is being addressed?
 - a. It is nationally recognised, and a multi-agency response will be required
 - b. By charitable organisations including
 - i. NPH
 - ii. Northamptonshire food poverty network
 - iii. HOPE centre – cookery workshops and food awareness courses
 - iv. Northampton food bank – faith community venues around Northampton

7. How can the Borough Council, together with its partners, can collectively respond to food poverty?
 - a. By working collaboratively with all organisations

8. In your opinion what are the specific issues relating to food poverty?
 - a. Economic – ie low incomes and cost of healthy food.
 - b. Access to low cost food

- c. Inadequate cooking facilities
 - d. Lack of education
9. Are you aware of the existence of “holiday hunger” and what is its impact?
- a. Yes – where when children of families who qualify for free school meals – do not eat well when schools are closed.
 - b. In addition we are aware of the motion presented to NBC’s full council meeting on 3rd June 2019 (Councillor Emma Roberts) to establish holiday clubs where children could receive social activities and food to ensure no child goes hungry (it was defeated by 3 votes)
10. Please supply details of the support that your organisation or group offers?
- a. NPH Operate a food bank through its wholly owned subsidiary Happy to help (A Community Interest Company)
 - b. NPH (Happy to Help) are in the process of looking to set up a social supermarket.
11. Please supply details of your thoughts on suggested solutions regarding food poverty.
- a. Education
 - b. Availability of fresh food at low costs
 - c. Waste (out of sell by date) from supermarkets
 - d. Food recycling
12. Are you aware of the number of people who are registered for pupil premium?
Please supply details.
- a. NO
 - b. We are aware that the pupil premium is additional school funding for disadvantaged children. It is paid directly to the child's school to improve the quality of their education. A child may be entitled to pupil premium funding if they receive one of the following benefits:
 - Income Support
 - Income Based Job Seekers Allowance
 - Child Tax Credit Only (with income up to £16,190) with no element of Working Tax Credit
 - National Asylum Seekers Support
 - Guarantee Element of the State Pension Credit
 - Employment and Support Allowance (income related)
 - Universal Credit (income dependant)

13. Do you have further information or comments regarding food poverty which you would like to inform the Scrutiny Panel?

a. No