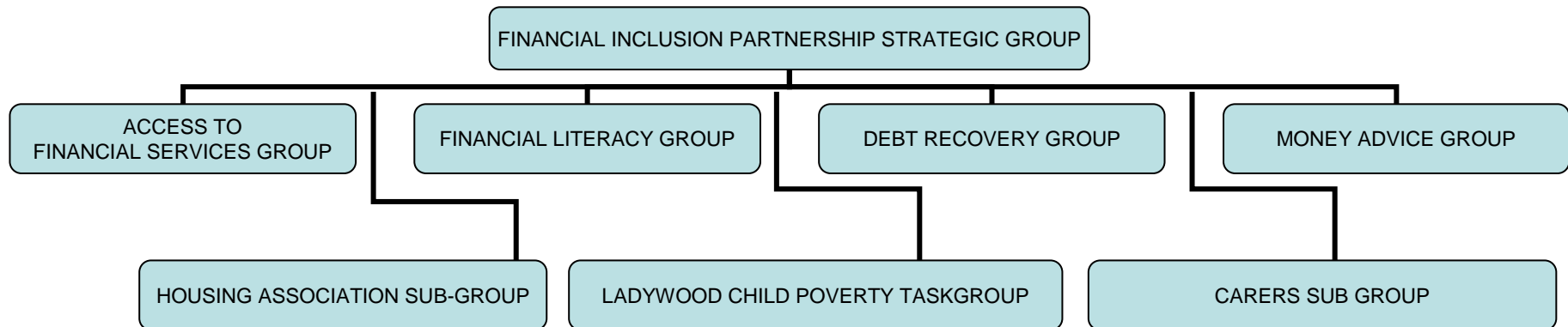




Financial Inclusion Partnership

Structure

- Following a report by the Overview and Scrutiny Committee a Financial Inclusion Partnership was established late 2006 to address the issues of those who are financially excluded and to help deliver the Governments key goals of ensuring that everyone has access to appropriate financial services, enabling them to manage their money on a day to day basis.
- The aim of the Partnership is to promote financial inclusion in the city by coordinating efforts to address
 - debt recovery
 - access to financial services including financial literacy
 - prevention of problem debt
 - provision of money advice.
- The work of the Financial Inclusion Partnership is delivered through four thematic working groups. More recently due to the overwhelming demand of RSLs wishing to be part of the Access to Financial Services group, it was decided by the partnership to introduce a sub-group which would work on specific areas of work promoting the benefits of Credit Unions to RSL residents.



Working Groups

- The **Access to Financial Services** group's primary objective is to:
 - Increase the number of Junior Savers
 - To develop and implement a strategy to promote responsible borrowing, including increased access to appropriate banking and affordable credit including Credit Unions and help to eliminate illegal money lenders.

- The **Debt Recovery** group's primary objective is to:
 - Develop a debt protocol document

- The **Money Advice** group's primary objective is to:
 - Increase the availability of free face-to-face debt advice services across Birmingham
 - Target individuals who are excluded from mainstream financial services.

- The **Financial Literacy** group's primary objective is to:
 - Develop a programme to ensure Children and Young Adults have a better knowledge of financial literacy.

Working Groups

- The **Housing Association sub-group's** primary objective is to:
 - Bring housing associations together to provide an efficient consortia approach to addressing issues around financial exclusion experienced by social housing tenants and residents and to promote the benefits of Credit Unions
- The **Ladywood Child Poverty Taskforce** group's primary objective is to:
 - Identify ways in which child poverty in Ladywood can be alleviated
 - Supporting the educational needs of both child and parent
 - Access to affordable credit – child trust funds, credit unions, saving gateway
 - Securing funding for breakfast clubs in the most deprived areas
 - Promoting financial literacy
- The primary objective for the **Carers Sub group** is to:
 - To develop a (electronic) referral mechanism for agencies promoting a one visit approach to meet the needs of the client
 - To promote a robust referral mechanism between service providers

Key Achievements - 2007 to date

Access to Financial Services



1. Successful pilot: Partnership working JCP, CU, & BCC Debt Advice Team
2. CU are listed on Benefit Forms
3. Mapping exercise completed highlighting areas of deprivation, School Banks, Primary/Secondary Schools, Credit Union locations, unemployment,
4. Housing Association sub-group has been established
5. Launch of the Financial Inclusion Partnership web site www.birmingham.gov.uk/financialinclusion

Debt Recover



1. Draft Corporate Debt Protocol
2. Partnership working BCC Revenues & CU's
3. Some Credit Unions receive rate relief
4. Credit Unions are working in partnership with the City's bailiffs to recover Credit Union bad debt

Housing Association Sub Group



1. Sharing good practices and opportunities in relation to FI projects to their customers
2. Mystery customer exercise – to establish credit union service delivery and to identify areas of need and improvement

Key Achievements - 2007 to date

Money Advice Key



1. Financial Advice and Services Event Saturday 1st Nov 2008
2. Financial Independence Day Saturday 4th July 2009
3. Making the Most of Your Money Leaflet
4. Funding was secured for 2 Apprenticeship posts
5. Lite Lunch Forum group has been established
6. Handy tips 2010 poster and coaster campaign
7. Money Makeover event has been scheduled for Saturday 26th June 2010
8. A student from the University of Birmingham is conducting a short research study to examine the effectiveness of face to face debt advice.
9. A money advice step by step self help pack has been produced
10. A draft Birmingham on a Budget has been produced

Financial Literacy



1. Making the Most of Your Money training has been incorporated into BCC inductions for new starters
2. Making the Most of Your Money training has been provided to other service departments
3. Credit Unions have been promoted on the BCC payslips and have also been promoted in the Brighter Futures Magazine produced by BCC Children, Young People and Families Directorate.
4. The Financial Inclusion Junior Web page has been launched
5. 'My Money Week' took place from 29th Jun – 3rd Jul 09
6. 'My Money Week' has been scheduled to take place from 28th Jun 2010 – 2nd Jul 2010

Key Achievements - 2007 to date

Ladywood Child Poverty Taskforce



1. Money and debt advice sessions have been delivered to various organisations within Ladywood such as the Karis Centre, Community Offices, Birmingham Christian Centre, Deaf Cultural Centre and Ladywood Community Centre to provide individuals and families with information on money/debt, welfare advice and fuel efficiency.
2. Ladywood 'Money Matters' Week – A week of events was arranged at local venues from 24-28th November 2008.
3. Festive Party – The Birmingham Institute for the Deaf hosted a party for up to 50 local children in December 2008.
4. A carol service was organised by the Birmingham Christian Centre. This service was held for the local residents and took place outside the Ladywood Community and Health Centre
5. Festive Party - The Birmingham Institute for the Deaf hosted another successful Christmas party in December 2009.
6. December 2008 -In partnership with Birmingham City Mission, Birmingham Christian Centre based in Ladywood, set a target to deliver up to 1000 food parcels to disadvantaged families. The taskforce agreed to support this by contributing food items and toys and providing names and addresses of local families.
7. Partnership working with Tesco's plc - to promote affordable school uniforms
8. Edgbaston Community Chest are to fund school uniforms for primary/secondary schools within the local area
9. A constitution document is being drafted for the group to have charitable status

Carers Sub group



1. This is a recently formed group – updates will be provided shortly

Partners

The Financial Inclusion Partnership is working with:

- Citizens Advice Bureau
- Consumer Credit Counselling Service
- Birmingham City Council Revenues and Benefits
- Trading Standards
- Severn Trent Water Authority
- Birmingham City Council Planning & Regeneration
- Birmingham Credit Unions
- Birmingham City Council Illegal Money Lending Team
- Irish Welfare and Information Centre
- Mercian Housing Association
- Birmingham City Council Debt Advice Team
- Birmingham City Council Housing
- Pertemps People Development Group
- Birmingham City Council Neighbourhood Advice
- Birmingham Young Carers
- BCC Older Adults and Communities
- Big Issue
- Financial Services Authority – Financial Capability
- DWP: Now Let's Talk Money
- Birmingham Settlement
- Birmingham City Council Legal Services
- Birmingham City Council Children, Young People & Families
- Birmingham City Council Libraries
- Personal Finance Education Group
- Schools
- NPower
- Payplan
- Birmingham City Council On the Move
- Birmingham City Council Carers unit
- Help the Aged
- University of Birmingham
- Freshwinds
- Birmingham Social Housing Partnership
- Tesco's plc

Strategic Achievements

- **Partnership with Birmingham Credit Unions** With the demise of BCUDA (Birmingham Credit Union Development Agency), it gave Birmingham City Council the opportunity to review its work with Credit Unions. As a result a strong working partnership was established so that together the Financial Inclusion Partnership could help to reduce financial and economic exclusion in the city.
- **Draft Financial Inclusion Strategy Document**
- **DWP Champion initiative for the West Midlands**
- **Economic Downturn Taskforce group** The primary aim of the taskforce is to work in conjunction with the City's approach to addressing the economic downturn. The group have organised a series of advice surgeries which will take place in various locations in and around Birmingham. Each advice surgery provides opportunities for members of the public to gain free, impartial and confidential advice and information which will help them to address the issues surrounding the recession.
- **Corporate Debt Protocol**
- The **Ladywood Taskforce group** was established in 2008 in response to the report 'The Campaign to end Child Poverty' which highlighted that 81% of children in Ladywood in Birmingham were fighting for financial survival. The taskforce now meets regularly to discuss and implement a rolling programme for the residents of Ladywood.
- **Chamberlain Award** short listed to the final 3
- **Apprenticeship** In March 2009 the Financial Inclusion Partnership secured an apprenticeship post for one year. The apprentice had been assigned to complete individual training programmes with a number of the Financial Inclusion partners, including, the City Council's Debt Advice Team, Trading Standards Money Advice, Citizens Advice Bureau, Mercian Housing Association and Citysave Credit Union. In March 2010 the Apprentice secured a permanent position within BCC.
- **Future Jobs Fund** The Financial Inclusion Partnership have successfully gained funding to employ 4 Community Financial Advisors through the Future Jobs Fund.
- **University of Birmingham** The University of Birmingham has secured a small amount of funding to research children's view of money matters, this piece of research will be conducted with primary age children. Based on the outcomes of this report it is hoped further funding will be secured to extend the research into areas around financial capability from 'primary to pension'.
- **Credit Unions** have been advertised on the Housing Benefit Application Forms