

18 August 2010

**Child Poverty – report on and response to formal consultation on draft statutory guidance covering Child Poverty Act 2010 local duties**

Today the Coalition Government has published its report on and response to the formal consultation on draft statutory guidance covering Part 2 of the Child Poverty Act 2010. The formal consultation ran from the 26<sup>th</sup> March to 18<sup>th</sup> June 2010 and built upon earlier, informal consultation undertaken earlier in the year. Part 2 of the Act which received Royal Assent on 25<sup>th</sup> March and which came into force on 25<sup>th</sup> May places duties on local authorities and other named bodies in England to cooperate to tackle child poverty in their local areas, produce local child poverty needs assessments, and develop local child poverty strategies.

This Government is committed to ending child poverty by 2020. This remains a bold ambition but one which is at the heart of our drive to tackle the root causes and consequences of social injustice, poverty and deprivation, and to protect the most vulnerable groups in our society.

Clearly Government at national level cannot do this alone, nor would we wish it to – local authorities and their networks of state, voluntary, community, and business partners are best placed to understand and prioritise how to tackle child poverty locally. Part 2 of the Child Poverty Act provides opportunities for local partnerships to come together to identify the nature and scale of the challenges faced locally, to debate local priorities on tackling child poverty, and to agree what needs to be done collectively and individually.

We welcome the opportunity the Part 2 duties will have on strengthening and focusing local collaborations in tackling child poverty. But this Government is also committed to freeing local government from central and regional control, promoting decentralisation and democratic engagement, and ending top-down direction, prescription, and control. That is why we will not be issuing formal statutory guidance on Part 2 of the Act, nor will we be laying regulations detailing the requirements of local child poverty needs assessments.

Informal and formal consultation responses show there is clear demand for expert information, advice and support to enable local authorities and their partners to take full advantage of the opportunities presented by Part 2 of the Act. We intend therefore to work with and through sector-led bodies such as Local Government Improvement and Development (LGID) and the Centre for Excellence and Outcomes

in Children and Young People's Services (C4EO) to ensure the availability of appropriate data, case study material, expert advice and guidance and other support identified in consultation responses as important for enabling positive responses to the Part 2 duties.

Although we will not now issue formal guidance or lay regulations, we acknowledge that there remains a new burden on local authorities in responding to the Part 2 duties and in particular developing their needs assessments and strategies in 2010-11 to build momentum behind their ongoing work to tackle child poverty. We propose therefore to make a funding transfer to each responsible upper tier authority in England during this financial year, in accordance with the new burdens assessment discussed with the LGA earlier this year, to support them in leading this cooperation.



**Sarah Teather MP**  
**Minister of State for**  
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**Maria Miller MP**  
**Minister for**  
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**Justine Greening MP**  
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