



The purpose of this Report is to record the Family Voice Meeting of Ventnor Residents held on Monday 3 October at St Catherine's Church as a basis for Members to comment on it and its outcomes.

NO. DETAILS.

1) BACKGROUND

- a) The Family Voice project, based on the recognition of the importance of the voices of residents directly impacted by the deprivation and poverty of parts of the town being heard directly, originated from the Town Council's participation in the government's Our Place Programme in 2015.
 - b) It was revived in 2019 with the aim of using focus groups to provide the basis for more structured discussions providing anonymised narratives and usable data reflecting the lived-experience of residents at the centre of the town's deprivation.
 - c) The project moved on to become based on the commissioning of a documentary by the experienced local film and documentary maker Utility Films.
 - d) Both Babybox and the Food Bank agreed to circulate a leaflet on the project to all their users and Assistant Clerk Alison Killick followed up her contact with voucher recipients by asking some of them if they would be prepared to be interviewed for the documentary with an assurance of anonymity.
 - e) The completed 15-minute documentary was shown to the Town Council meeting of 12 September when it was unanimously agreed to show it to as many appropriate audiences as possible, starting with a publicised meeting for the town's residents.
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2) FAMILY VOICE MEETING

- a) The meeting was arranged for 6pm on Monday 3 October at St Catherine's Church and widely publicised through 120 direct email invitations, the Clerk's Column, our web site, the Chronicle and On the Wight.
 - b) The town's interest in and support for the project was evidenced by the more than 80 people that filled the Church for the event.
 - c) After introductions by the Mayor and Tony McCarthy the viewing of the 15-minute film fed into 30-minute discussions by 12 groups gathered round tables with the task of identifying three priorities for the town's response to the accounts of poverty by those residents actually now living with it and in the certainty that it is going to get worse and draw many more into it.
 - d) Post-it notes and A4 response sheets were on all the tables for individuals to record their own responses as a basis for future planning.
 - e) Thanks are due in particular to the amazing residents who were willing to record their experience for the film, Utility Films' David and Jill George for a remarkable documentary record and the team at St Catherine's Church who supported us throughout the event in every respect.
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3) NEXT

- a) Before releasing the link to the internet the staff team are planning a series of viewings of the documentary with interested groups, some of which have already requested one.
 - b) Feedback on Monday's meeting is still being received – and is very welcome - and, together with the post-it notes and response sheets from Monday's meeting, will take some time.
 - c) The responses from the actual meeting in the form of the three action priorities identified by the discussion groups are attached to this Report.
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Family Voice Meeting Response Priorities

<u>Table Number</u>	<u>First</u>	<u>Second</u>	<u>Third</u>
1	Promote Community Awareness ie: reach out to people & how to find them?	Provide / Expand Community Spaces.	Stimulate Local Sponsorship ie: 2nd home owners / businesses.
2	Community Groups.	Fund Raising.	Advice on Benefits.
3	Communication about what's available & where to get help. Form filling. Digital access. Help with digital poverty & learning difficulties.	Value of social interactions. Social isolation. Impact of poverty on mental health.	Transport costs.
4	Get the ideas of people in poverty - dialogue.	Raising awareness of what's available locally for all our volunteers.	Local 'Our Place' - in a church hall as per Freshwater.
5	Ensure current provision continues, but is increased 10% for inflation & energy costs being double what they were a year ago.	Free breakfast for all children - this will help with school attendance which will help with education & will lead to better paid jobs.	Holiday homes to be discouraged or prohibited. This will encourage year round households to keep Ventnor economy going.
6	Local: advice, benefits, budgeting, employment, awareness of help, Footprint Trust.	Coordinate the various venues so they do not compete	Support extra venues. Social Club. British Legion.
7	It's happening now. Campaign for volunteers.	Make it easier to donate. Warmer spaces. Colaboration with Housing Associations.	Cookery & finance management. Outreach - more development of the Green Room.
8	Set up a facility in Ventnor for help in finding details of support available. (Citizens Advice but less formal).	Look at our wardrobes and see what we don't need. (Baby Box takes adult clothes).	Tighten up on ruthless absentee landlords and get rents reduced.
9	Communication. (Lack of info).	Food (Foodbank. Future of Pantry). Can it become charity?	Fuel Poverty. (Warm Spaces)?
10	Community Driving.	Skills Bank.	Encourage young people back into the community.

Family Voice Meeting Response Priorities

11	Identifying under 4's and give provisions. Particularly Upper Ventnor.	Teenagers - youth services. Co-op car park. Go to where the litter is and make friends, they need somewhere to hang out.	Mental Health Services. We need a dedicated service to come into Ventnor.
12	Education - identify the pitfalls. Support - paperwork. Fiscal claim assistance. Benefits - budgeting.	Mental Health awareness - identify issues before they escalate.	Networking with other local groups. Wider network of support. Other agencies to offer support. Identify people who may be falling into the poverty trap.