

Appendix 1 – The Social Progress Index

Background

- Measuring Inclusive Growth effectively is hugely important and whilst GDP needs to remain as a measure, there is a need to make the link between the economy and social progress. Because of this there is a need for another measure to sit alongside GDP.
- The Council's Economic Policy team has looked at various models, including those produced by the Joseph Rowntree Foundation, Centre for Progressive Policy and PwC, and has also worked with the University of Leeds for a potential new way of measuring Inclusive Growth.
- From this work, the Social Progress Index (SPI) is seen as potentially the most effective way of measuring progress on Inclusive Growth, alongside GDP, as it allows us to compare both internationally and to have an in-depth look at what's happening within Leeds
- The SPI is a measure that was designed by the Social Progress Imperative, a global non-profit organisation based in Washington DC. Since it first launched in 2014, the SPI has been embraced by innovative leaders from across the world, including one authority in England already (Barking and Dagenham). The SPI is a “comprehensive measure of real quality of life, independent of economic indicators” and is “designed to complement, rather than replace, economic measures such as GDP”.
- The SPI is a practical tool that would help us to identify and implement policies and programmes that will drive faster social progress. Rather than emphasising traditional measurements of success like income and investment, the SPI measures social and environmental indicators to create a clearer picture of what life is really like for people. It does not measure people's happiness or life satisfaction, focusing instead on actual life outcomes. This allows for a useful policy tool that tracks changes in society over time. The SPI divides indicators across three broad dimensions of social progress: basic human needs; foundations of wellbeing; and opportunity.
- The Leeds SPI model will allow comparison across the Leeds Ward areas, and uses a set of bespoke indicators.
- The Index is built on three themes, each of which has 4 components.
 - Basic Human Need
 - Nutrition and basic medical care
 - Water and sanitation
 - Shelter
 - Personal Safety

- Foundations of Wellbeing
 - Access to basic knowledge
 - Access to information and communication
 - Health and wellness
 - Environmental quality

 - Opportunity
 - Personal rights
 - Personal freedom and choice
 - Inclusiveness
 - Access to advanced education
- For each of the 12 components, we are selecting a set of between five and eight indicators that will provide the most indicative picture of the position for Leeds of that component. These indicators are then calculated into an index for each component, theme and overall, that will change over time so we can compare how well we are doing against social progress.

Next steps

- We have been working to populate the indicators with data for the city. At the current time, we are working to collect data against a range of indicators and we are engaging with partners on this work, including in the Health and Third Sectors, to capture feedback and act upon it. We are aiming to have a version available in March or April 2021 and a final version for this year shortly after. As part of this work, Council officers will be trained in the methodology to run the SPI so we are able to take this forward in the coming years.