



Luton's journey towards fairness and social justice –APSE 17/5/24

- Building on Luton's 'Many Voices, One Town' campaign celebrating diversity and shared values.
- Promoting strategic programmes and projects to improve equity and inclusion and strengthen community cohesion.
- Luton's 2040 vision for a town built on fairness and social justice.

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Luton
A Town Built on Fairness



OUR
JOURNEY...

INCLUSIVE
ECONOMY

NET
ZERO

POPULATION
HEALTH

CHILD
FRIENDLY

...TOWARDS
SOCIAL JUSTICE.

Luton - the place

- 225,000 (2021 ONS)
- Super diverse – 68% Ethnic Diverse Population (80% YP)
- 3rd youngest town or city in the UK - 26.6 per cent of 0-17 year-olds accounting for the population in Luton (21.1 per cent nationally)
- 12 High Schools
- Strong religious identification: 100+ churches, 37 mosques, 2 Temples, 2 Gudwaras....
- 150+ languages / dialects spoken
- Young population reflects significant in migration over the last 10 years including 11,000 students (University of Bedfordshire)
- Transient population and workforce (30-50% population churn)
- Over crowded – density higher than many London Boroughs
- Over a quarter of households can be classed as living in poverty (59th most deprived LA (out of 326) - child poverty (39%)
- Activist town rich with community organizers, a strong VCFSE, local pride and identity



IF YOU
CAN
DREAM IT
YOU MUST
DO IT



Luton in Harmony

Many voices,
one town



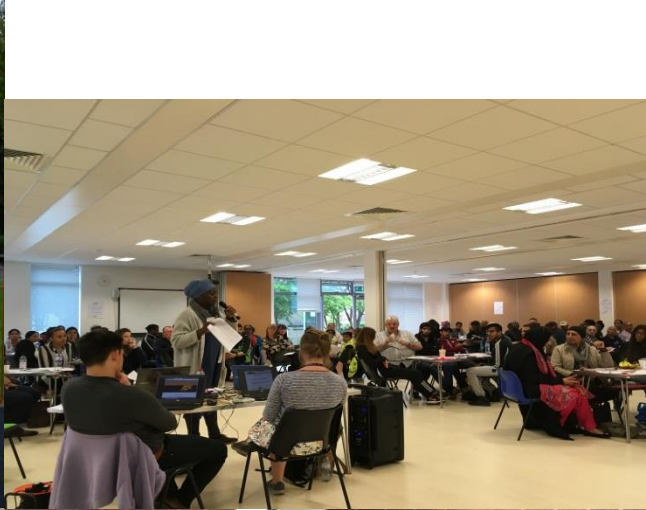
Thank you to all the local people pictured above, and others who have signed the pledge to support the campaign

Find out more at www.luton.gov.uk/harmony

www.luton.gov.uk



Luton



Case studies for driving change

BLACK LIVES MATTER

Following the murder of George Floyd in Minneapolis, local community organisers worked with councillors to table a landmark “**Black Lives Matter**” motion for annual report back. **It received cross-party support.**

As a result, responding to this voice, the council has agreed some key priorities to work on with our community, which are relevant for all residents, including:

- ✔ Strengthening the council’s EDI commitment and practice with regard to its workforce;
- ✔ Making local diversity and community central to recruitment and ensure ‘Luton Rising’ (the council’s airport company run for community benefit) is working with the airport operator to make the airport an example of this.
- ✔ Addressing challenges around how education and the curriculum reflects community and identity in Luton;
- ✔ Tackling structural discrimination and inequality in the labour market;
- ✔ Advocating against structural inequality in national policy – for instance in areas such as immigration and criminal justice;
- ✔ Promoting and enabling deeper understanding of culture and identity amongst service providers across all sectors.

We want to see more of this approach. The people talk, the council listens and, together, we find solutions.



Following widespread concerns about the disproportionate impact of COVID 19, the council commissioned the University of Bedfordshire to undertake in-depth participatory research with diverse people from across African, Black Caribbean, and South Asian communities.

With over 1,000 local participants, the research programme broke new ground in terms of community voice and evidence-based perceptions of local services. The messages we heard included:



We feel targeted and blamed.

We do not have access to healthcare.

We have to work - no choice because on low paid jobs.

We feel we are being discriminated as employees and patients and we do not feel respected.

We want to see community diversity reflected in the local workforce to help break down language barriers and promote understanding of different cultures.

The delivery of specific recommendations for change are being driven through the 2040 partnership.

These insights reinforce the importance of ensuring the development of our strategy is clearly driven by lived experience and community voice.



Luton in 2040...

A series of pocket parks opening up in the town centre.



Improved population wellbeing.



Sustainable public transport and more walking and cycling in town.

THE LUTON DART - SUSTAINABLE TRANSPORT TO LONDON FROM LUTON AIRPORT



A town built on fairness.



Additional tree planting + wildflower coverage in town.



A more resilient community - protecting our most vulnerable neighbours.

Community hubs providing support to vulnerable people.

Better and more equal health outcomes.

A disability friendly town

Citizens panels giving residents a strong voice to shape the future of the town.

Fairness and social justice at the heart of our community - Fairness Taskforce delivering equality.

The most sustainable airport in the UK - supporting economic growth + more jobs.

A net zero town.



DEVELOPMENT OF GREEN HORIZONS PARK

Money spent locally by businesses + residents





Supporting a strong and empowered community, built on **fairness**, local pride and a powerful voice for all our residents.



Building an inclusive **economy** that delivers investment to support the growth of businesses, jobs and incomes.



Improving population wellbeing and tackling **health** inequalities to enable everyone to have a good quality of life and reach their full potential.



Becoming a **child friendly** town, where our children grow up happy, healthy and secure, with a voice that matters and the opportunities they need to thrive.



Tackling the climate emergency and becoming a **net zero** town with sustainable growth and a healthier environment.



Resident-centered target outcomes:





Our community's voice

- “Just because someone doesn’t communicate in the same way you do, doesn’t mean they are less intelligent or capable to deliver a message or do a job.” (Caribbean community)
- “We feel targeted and blamed for Covid 19 and the pandemic in the town” (TLC focus grp reponse)
- “If you wear a traccie (tracksuit), you are either a drug dealer or carrying a knife. We are profiled by the police because we are young.” Young Black Person
- “I felt more safe holding my partners hand in no-go LGBTQ+ zones in Poland than I do in Luton” (LBGTQI Focus Grp)
- “*Luton is not a menopause friendly town*” and there needs to be more health and wellbeing support around this.” (Womens’ Focus Grp)
- “I talked about trying to kill myself and they dismissed me and told me to have a warm bath. We don’t even have a ****ing bath in the house”. (YP Focus Grp, white, she/her)

What our community is telling us

To understand the challenges to fairness in Luton we must listen to the community. **When you speak, we need to listen, understand and act.**

We have set up equality, diversity and inclusion (EDI) focus groups and networks across our community. These groups include over 300 residents from a wide range of identities, backgrounds, and equality characteristics.

There are some strong challenges and common themes that have already emerged from this dialogue including:

You shared a common perception that council engagement and dialogue is lacking and access is not enabled for diverse and excluded communities.



In response, we set up the Fairness Taskforce, EDI groups and networks across the community to encourage and enable everyone to get involved in making change happen.

Defining Luton in negative terms reinforces social exclusion and culture.



We're building a marketing campaign to show Luton in a truly positive light for promoting future investment and business, focusing on our community's creativity, uniqueness and talent.

You said the council's workforce needs to better reflect the community at all levels.



So we created a new People Plan, which includes a clear commitment to make EDI a foundation of our role as a recruiter and local employer.

Perception of unsafety – concerns around young peoples' vulnerability to exploitation and criminality.



We're supporting community-led approaches to safeguarding young people, tackling local criminal gangs and seeking young people's ideas on improving trust in the system.

What our community is telling us

You shared common concerns around disability and age that are creating barriers to employment and impacting income standards.



We are working with our disabled community to understand what Luton should look like as a 'Disability Friendly Town', and how we can achieve this together.

You said there is not enough access to services that support families such as early years and educational support.



We're developing family hubs and community networks across the town to provide services where they're needed and making sure community projects focused around improving the lives of children get funding.

Improve understanding of diversity and the individual needs of people across our services.



We've started EDI networks, recruited EDI coordinators and refreshed our impact assessments to support and meet the needs of our super-diverse community.

Lived experience of prejudice and discrimination is an everyday reality.



We are setting up a network for all community partners working towards 'a town built on fairness' and committing resources to ensure Luton is 'No Place for Hate'.



These themes are shaping the commitments in our strategy. We will continue to work with and develop these networks to ensure they continue to provide voice, insight and challenge to the council and all our partners.

Our strategy will ensure that these principles are the foundation and focus for our work across 3 key dimensions:

1) **Workforce and culture:** to become an exemplary employer for Luton.

2) **Community and residents:** as service commissioner and provider for our super-diverse community, meeting their needs and ensuring everyone's access;

3) **Citizens and civil society:** as community leader and partnership convener enabling shared work towards a town built on fairness and social justice for 2040.



A town built on fairness with equitable outcomes for all our residents.

Increased resilience across our community protecting and enabling the most excluded and vulnerable.

A thriving voluntary and community sector delivering on shared priorities with our residents

A welcoming and compassionate town, with respect, social responsibility and increased civic pride at its heart.

A stronger and meaningful voice for all our residents to shape the vision and direction of our town.

OUR STARTING POINT

WE HAVE TO COMPLY WITH EQUALITY AND HUMAN RIGHTS LAWS AND DUTIES.

WE MUST RECOGNISE THAT WE DON'T ALL HAVE THE SAME ACCESS TO OUR LEGAL RIGHTS.



SENSE OF BELONGING

SHARED VISION

THEN WE CAN MULTIPLY THE POSITIVE IMPACT OF THESE LAWS WITH...

RESPECT

EQUALITY

DIVERSITY

TO CREATE...

SOCIAL COHESION

IF RESOURCES ARE INVESTED STRATEGICALLY



WE WILL SEE INCREASED SOCIAL INCLUSION...

OUR EQUITY TREE

OUR GOAL OF SOCIAL JUSTICE BECOMES POSSIBLE

SOCIAL JUSTICE

... ACTIVE CITIZENSHIP

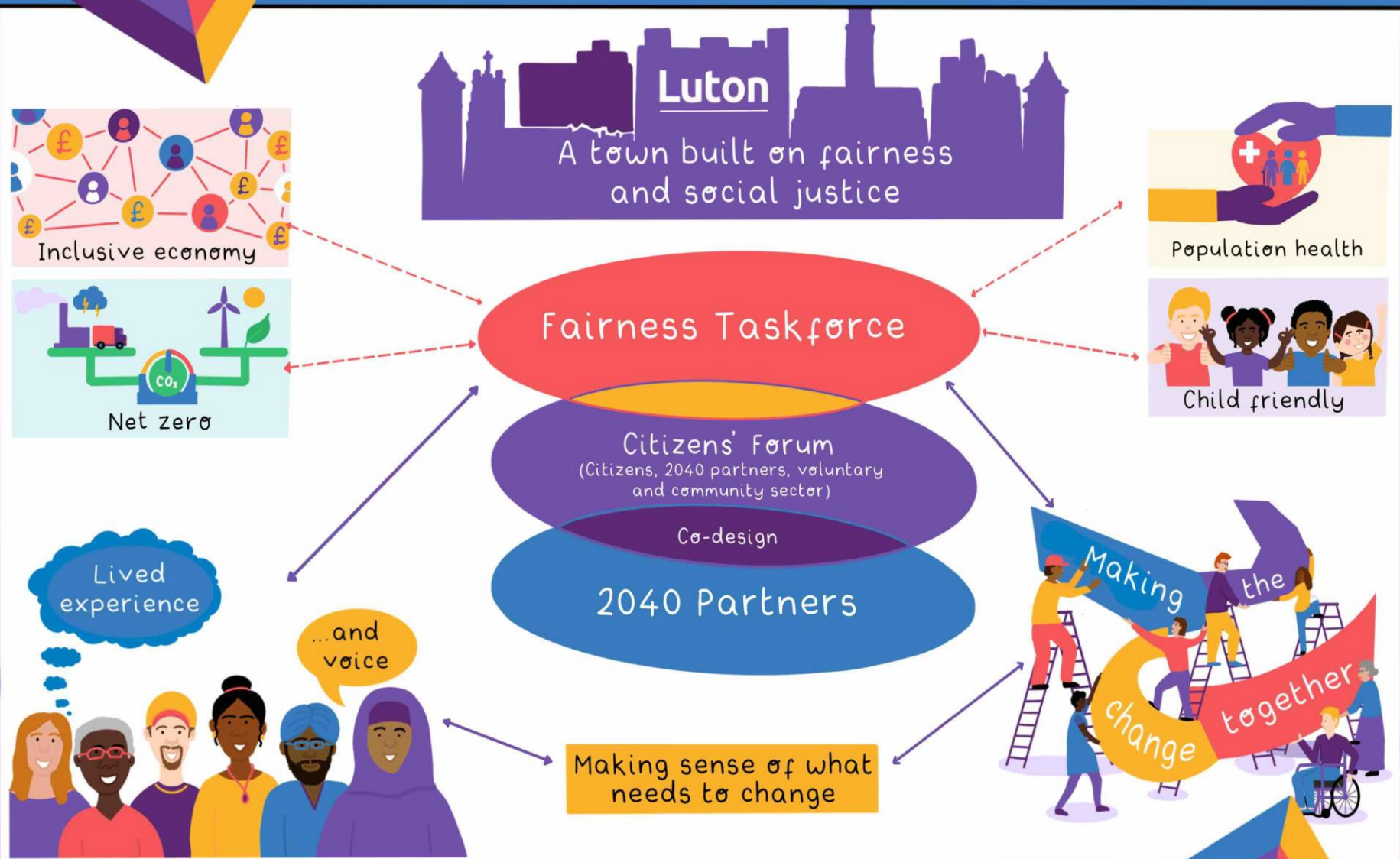
... AND SYSTEM CHANGE FOR EQUITY.





[HTTP//2040](#)

Luton 2020-2040: A place to thrive



Luton's Fairness Taskforce: Creating the force for change.

LUTON'S FAIRNESS TASKFORCE

you are the Luton Taskforce. Everyone in this room and everyone who wants to be part of it.

The Luton Taskforce has three key guiding principles:

1. Start with lived experience
2. Understand that experience and what needs to change
3. Make change happen collaboratively.

THIS IS YOUR TOWN. THE UNIVERSITY OF BEDFORDSHIRE IS YOUR UNIVERSITY.

THE TASKFORCE WAS ASKED TO FOCUS ON THREE KEY AREAS:

- 1 HOUSING
- 2 MONEY & DEBT
- 3 THE ESSENTIALS (FOOD, ENERGY, etc)

We've seen a **140% increase** in requests for food bank vouchers. I'm concerned about those who won't or can't access our services.

How can we say that Black Lives Matters when our carbon emissions are destroying black lives around the world?
- Jeremy Williams

WHAT DOES "ALLYSHIP" MEAN FOR THE LUTON FAIRNESS TASKFORCE?
WHAT WILL IT LOOK LIKE IN REALITY?

BLACK LIVES MATTER MOTION HAS BEEN PASSED IN LUTON. WE CAN HOLD THE COUNCIL TO ACCOUNT ON THIS

Culture talk can blind us to the structural reasons why people are living the way they are.

We need a **REVOLUTION** of **LOVE** **COMPASSION** and **KINDNESS**

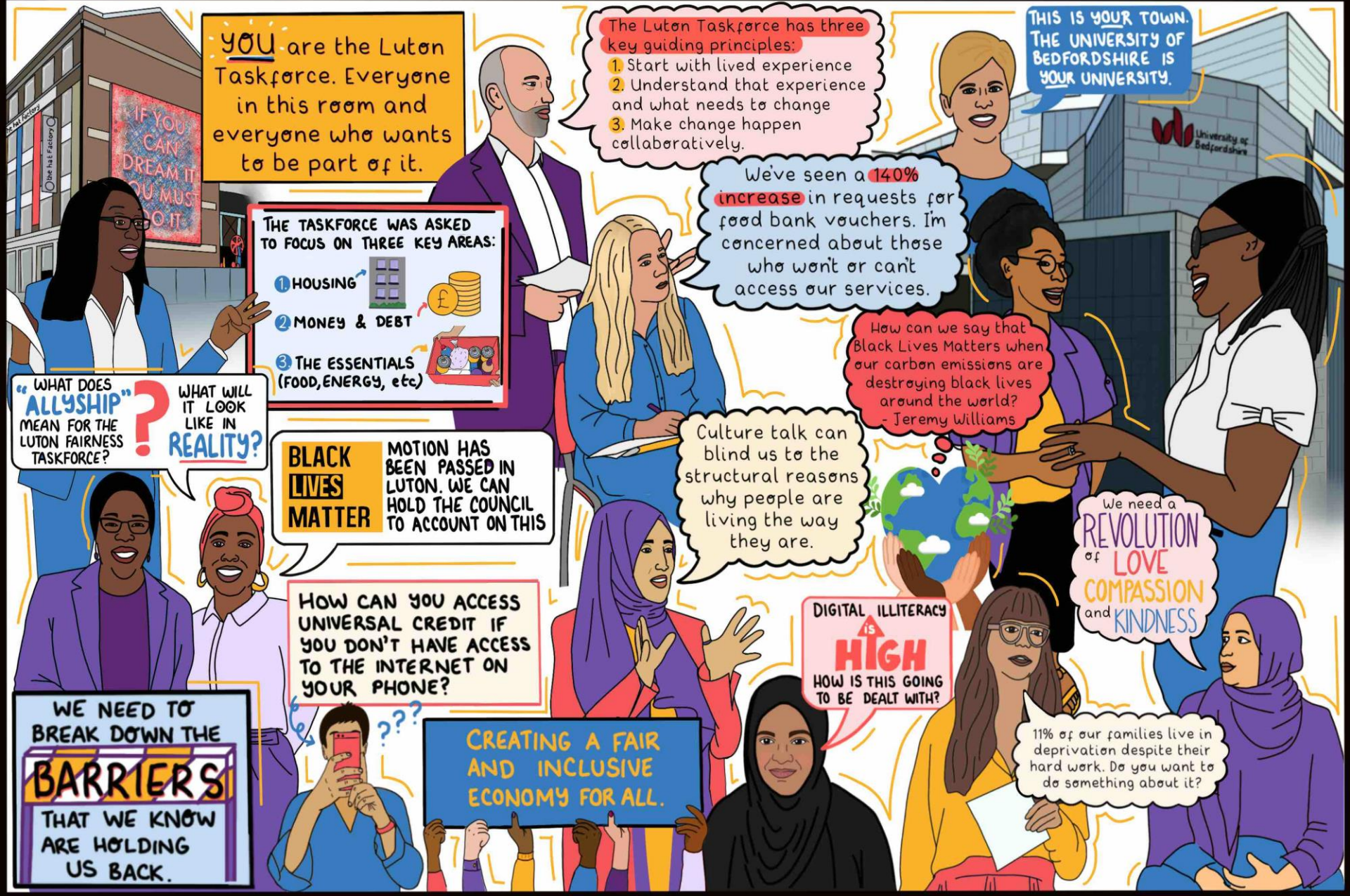
HOW CAN YOU ACCESS UNIVERSAL CREDIT IF YOU DON'T HAVE ACCESS TO THE INTERNET ON YOUR PHONE?

DIGITAL ILLITERACY **is HIGH** HOW IS THIS GOING TO BE DEALT WITH?

WE NEED TO BREAK DOWN THE **BARRIERS** THAT WE KNOW ARE HOLDING US BACK.

CREATING A FAIR AND INCLUSIVE ECONOMY FOR ALL.

11% of our families live in deprivation despite their hard work. Do you want to do something about it?



LUTON'S FAIRNESS TASKFORCE

ATTENDEES WERE ENCOURAGED TO SHARE THEIR THOUGHTS AND IDEAS TO MAKE LUTON A FAIRER PLACE.

BY 2040 WE WILL HAVE ERADICATED POVERTY IN LUTON

Here are some of the ideas they shared...

AS A TOWN WE'VE BEEN CONTINUALLY ENRICHED BY OUR MANY COMMUNITIES.

MAP WHAT OPPORTUNITIES THERE ARE AND WHERE THEN SHARE.

RAISING AWARENESS THAT ADULTS CAN STILL PURSUE THEIR CAREER GOALS.

CENTRAL SKILLS HUB WITH CROSS-SECTOR LEADERSHIP BUY-IN.

Change **MUST** HAPPEN

MANY VOICES. ONE TOWN.

THANK YOU FOR YOUR **COMMITMENT CHALLENGE** AND **SUPPORT**

COMMUNITY LEADERS ARE TRYING TO WORK WITH CONDITIONS AND BARRIERS THAT FEEL OUTSIDE THEIR CONTROL.

THERE'S A PROBLEM WITH ENGAGEMENT. ESPECIALLY POLITICALLY.

DISABILITY DOES NOT DISCRIMINATE

I HIT A GLASS CEILING DESPITE MY QUALIFICATIONS & EXPERIENCE, SO I HAD TO TAKE A RISK... NOW I'M SUCCESSFUL.

WE HAVE TALENTED PEOPLE HERE IN LUTON SO WHY ARE THEY NOT GETTING LOCAL JOBS?

WE BELIEVE THAT, IN DIVERSITY & INCLUSION THERE'S **PHENOMENAL UNTAPPED POTENTIAL**

YOU ARE **DELUDED** TO THINK WE THE EXCLUDED **INCLUDED** WITHOUT CHANGE

THERE ARE TWO OVERARCHING ISSUES:

- 1 **RACE**: PEOPLE OF COLOUR ARE TWICE AS LIKELY TO BE UNEMPLOYED
- 2 **CLASS**: DISCREPANCY IN RESOURCES AVAILABLE TO PEOPLE

MY DISABILITY WAS IGNORED

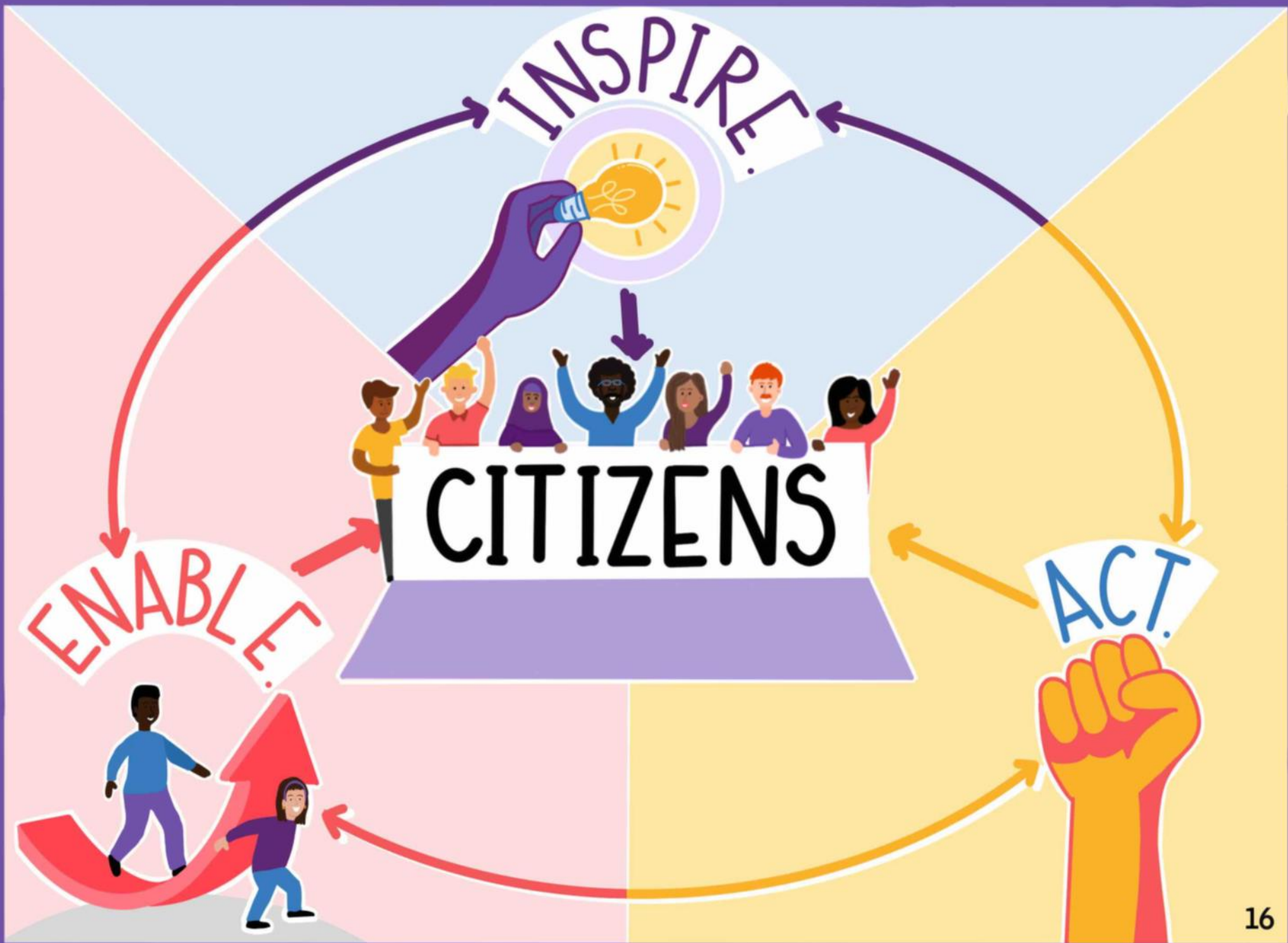
WE NEED SUSTAINABLE FUNDING. WE ARE FIRE FIGHTING FOR SURVIVAL. MY CHALLENGE TO LUTON IS TO ENCOURAGE MORE FULL COST FUNDING.

THERE'S A PERCEPTION THAT LUTON IS BORING & LACKS OPPORTUNITIES.

ATT10TIVE

ATT10TIVE

WHERE DOES **POWER + PRIVILEGE** SIT WITHIN LUTON?



LUTON'S FAIRNESS TASKFORCE: 14th June 2023

The focus of today: Fairness and equity in the Criminal Justice System

Disproportionality remains across the police force in terms of how they work with different young people.

NOBODY knows everything but **TOGETHER** we know a lot more.

The first contact sets the tone.

The only way to move away from being a talking shop is to **ACT**.

Luton is a **GREAT** town. We just don't shout about it enough.

We started running English as a second language courses and discussed domestic abuse as part of it.

Community safety and security is at the heart of Luton's 2040 strategy.

In the same meeting I am being that that I am both too **AGGRESSIVE** and not assertive enough. I am being **GASLIT!**

I felt like an invisible victim as a black woman in Luton.

She did the one thing that no other police officer had done in 20 years. **SHE LISTENED.**

Coppers & Communities:

A research project exploring the perceptions of young people and the police in Luton.

LACK OF TRUST between police and young people is **NOT** going to do anything to help reduce crime.

VERU Collaboration project:

We conducted research into young people's perception of the police...

400 Young people age 13-25 years old took part.

55% did **NOT** trust the police.

WHY?

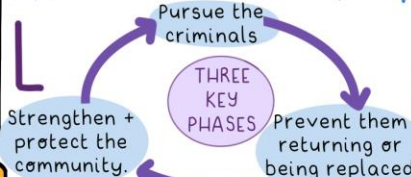
Personal experience



Stop and search

If you see police only as **PUNISHMENT** you won't ask them for help.

In June 2021 a Luton schoolboy was killed by a boy of a similar age. It shocked the local community. Dallow Cares was created in response.



No-one is born with hatred in their heart.

During Brexit I was told online to, "Go back to Africa and die on a plane." I have lived in Luton all my life.

"Without feedback you cannot improve."



<https://FTF/>

Shared community leadership

- 
- ✓ Understand and respect cultural competency
 - ✓ Self-awareness of unconscious bias;
 - ✓ Bring diverse communities together around a common vision and shared values;
 - ✓ Model integrity that builds trust;
 - ✓ Promote zero tolerance across the community; actively countering prejudice, hatred and extremism;
 - ✓ Engage and proactively challenge institutions and communities on discrimination and uncomfortable issues;
 - ✓ Understand and enable community organisation as an asset and equal partner in positive social change;
 - ✓ Support the principles of equity and equality of opportunity for all – a clear commitment to the values of social justice.

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Luton 2020 - 2040 A place to thrive



Many Voices
One Town
Fair for All