

# EXTERN'S RESPONSE TO THE DRAFT ANTI-POVERTY STRATEGY

Extern welcomes the vision to eradicate poverty and supports the three pillars – Minimising Risks, Minimising Impacts, and Exiting Poverty.

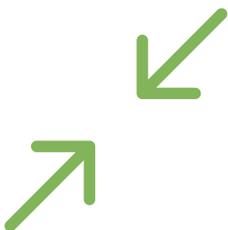
We urge a human rights-based approach that reflects intersectionality and lived experience to protect dignity, equality, and accountability.

- **Trauma-informed services:** Poverty is often rooted in trauma. Education, health, housing, and social services must embed trauma-informed practice.
- **Lived experience involvement:** People affected by poverty should be represented in decision-making and governance.
- **Long-term funding & clear timelines:** Actions need realistic budgets, costed plans, and transparent reporting to avoid becoming aspirational only.
- **Intersectional data:** Monitor progress with data disaggregated by disability, ethnicity, gender, age, rural/urban location, and justice involvement to avoid masking inequalities.

## CROSS CUTTING PRIORITIES



## MINIMISING RISKS



- **Early support:** Fund trauma-informed services in schools, health, and family settings to build childhood resilience.
- **Vulnerable groups:** Offer tailored housing, education, and employment pathways for care-experienced young people and those leaving custody to cut homelessness and reoffending.
- **Digital inclusion:** Provide affordable broadband, devices, and digital skills, while keeping essential services accessible offline.
- **Youth voice:** Set up youth-led panels to let young people shape anti-poverty policies and programmes.
- **Inclusive services:** Deliver culturally competent outreach to migrant and minority families to tackle hidden poverty and access barriers.

Extern supports all outcomes but calls for ambitious, well-resourced action:

- Treat poor mental health as both cause and consequence of poverty. Expand inclusive, trauma-informed community support, cut waiting times, and link services to education and employment.
- Introduce rent controls, enforce private rental standards, and speed up social housing investment, especially for rural and vulnerable groups. Prioritise homelessness prevention, rapid rehousing, and wraparound support.
- Reduce higher costs for low-income households on energy, transport, credit, and insurance.
- Offer discounted energy rates for low-income households to cut fuel poverty and improve health.
- Provide free period products in all schools and public buildings.
- Launch a cross-departmental strategy with free public Wi-Fi and support for older, disabled, and low-income people.

## MINIMISING IMPACTS



## EXITING POVERTY



Extern strongly agrees with the focus on employment and education but urges:

- **Justice-informed employment pathways:** Tailored training and job programmes for people leaving custody or youth justice settings to break cycles of poverty and exclusion.
- **Inclusive apprenticeships and skills development:** Ensure programmes are accessible to care-experienced young people, people with convictions, and those with additional needs.
- **Community-based enterprise:** Provide funding and mentoring for local social economy projects to create jobs and retain wealth in deprived areas.
- **Transport poverty:** Offer subsidised or free transport for people accessing training, education, or employment, especially in rural areas.
- **Childcare access:** Expand affordable, flexible childcare to enable parents to work or study.

### Extern's Call to Government

- Establish an independent Anti-Poverty Commission for oversight.
- Publish costed action plans with clear deadlines and milestones.
- Provide sustained investment to ensure the strategy delivers real, lasting change.