



All in - To End Child Poverty

Perth and Kinross
Child Poverty
Action Report

Progress Report
November 2020 - May 2021



November 2020 – May 2021

Notes to the 3rd Edition of the Local Child Poverty Action Report

This 3rd Local Child Poverty Action Report (LCPAR) is a brief progress report which follows on from the 2nd Local Child Poverty Action Report which covered the period May 2019 - November 2020. The normal reporting cycle was interrupted by the need to respond to the COVID-19 pandemic – and the Scottish Government have now requested that Local Authorities and Health Boards resume the previous reporting schedule. The timeframe for this progress report is therefore November 2020 - May 2021.

We have not revisited the Child Poverty (Local) Indicators Data Set in this report as the statistics used have not been updated in the last 6 months and these were fully reported in the 2nd Report in [Measuring Child Poverty, Perth and Kinross Local Child Poverty Action Report 2020](#). Instead, we have provided Issues Maps which provide an understanding of the interlinking issues affecting Child Poverty across Perth and Kinross.

The Child Poverty Programme is cross-cutting and involves all Council Services and Community Planning partners. It is currently organised around 4 Workstreams - each with its own delivery plan and targets. The Workstreams are:

- *Maximising Income from Employment*
- *Reducing the Cost of Living*
- *Maximising Income from Social Security and Benefits in Kind*
- *Breaking the Cycle of Poverty will be established*

Governance for the Child Poverty Programme is provided by a multi-agency Child Poverty Working Group involving personnel from Perth & Kinross Council and NHS Tayside.

The Child Poverty (Scotland) Act 2017 requires Local Authorities and Health Boards to report jointly each year on activity they are taking and will take to reduce child poverty.



Contents

Introduction	4
The Perth and Kinross Offer for Families Affected by Poverty Equalities,	5
Section 1	6
<i>Understanding Local Data Around Child Poverty in Perth and Kinross</i>	6
<i>Priority Families</i>	7
<i>Financial Hardship and Vulnerability in Blairgowrie and The Glens</i>	8
<i>Impact of COVID-19</i>	10
<i>Service Delivery Areas Impacting on Child Poverty</i>	13
Section 2	17
<i>Progress: November 2020 - May 2021</i>	17
<i>Workstream 1 - Income from Employment</i>	18
<i>Workstream 2 - Reducing the Cost of Living</i>	19
<i>Workstream 3 - Income from Social Security and Benefits in Kind</i>	21
Section 3 - Workstream Plans 2021/2022	23
<i>Workstream 1 - Income from Employment</i>	24
<i>Workstream 2 - Reducing the Cost of Living</i>	25
<i>Workstream 3 - Income from Social Security</i>	30
<i>Workstream 4 - Breaking the Cycle</i>	33



Introduction

Child poverty and the impact that it has on the lives of our children now and their future prospects is the wicked problem of the age. Sometimes it seems that no matter how hard we try - things don't improve.

This last year has been especially difficult - and the challenge facing us has dramatically increased. Child Poverty was already on the increase in Perth and Kinross before the advent of the COVID-19 pandemic. Early indications and economic and social forecasts suggest that the impact of COVID-19 on people in poverty will be severe. There will be many who will find themselves living below the poverty line for the first time.

We know that local authorities do not have the power to end child poverty - but there is much we can do to make the lives and life chances of those living in poverty better and brighter.

We have considerable influence as a local authority. We can create and persuade others to create good jobs that pay fair wages. We can strive to close the attainment gap in education to ensure the next generation of children don't live with poverty as their parents had to do. We can help to put more money in the pockets of families in poverty through affordable rents, energy efficiency and welfare rights. We can work with our communities to ensure that no child goes hungry, ever. We can ensure that every child, no matter their background, gets the chance to learn, to live well and to fully engage in their own development as fully rounded persons, cultured and active citizens.

This is what *“Giving every child the best start in life”* means and it is at the front and centre of the Perth and Kinross Offer for children and families affected by poverty.

The Perth and Kinross Offer is an ambitious plan for Perth and Kinross which is being developed through consultation and engagement with our communities, individual citizens, partners and businesses.

The Offer will build upon existing success and, progress work that is already happening across Perth and Kinross in partnership with our communities, our businesses and citizens. The plan recognises that we need to listen more to families affected by poverty and create greater opportunities for all to get involved in tackling child poverty and delivering broader opportunities for all regardless of family circumstances.

We believe that everyone has something to offer and we can all play our part in making Perth and Kinross a fairer place for all. By working together in partnership, we can give every child the best start in life.

An outline of the Perth and Kinross Offer for children and families affected by poverty is included in this report - and we are currently working with families with lived experience of poverty to develop this work in progress.



Signatory for Perth & Kinross Council



Signatory for NHS Tayside



The Perth and Kinross Offer for Families Affected by Poverty

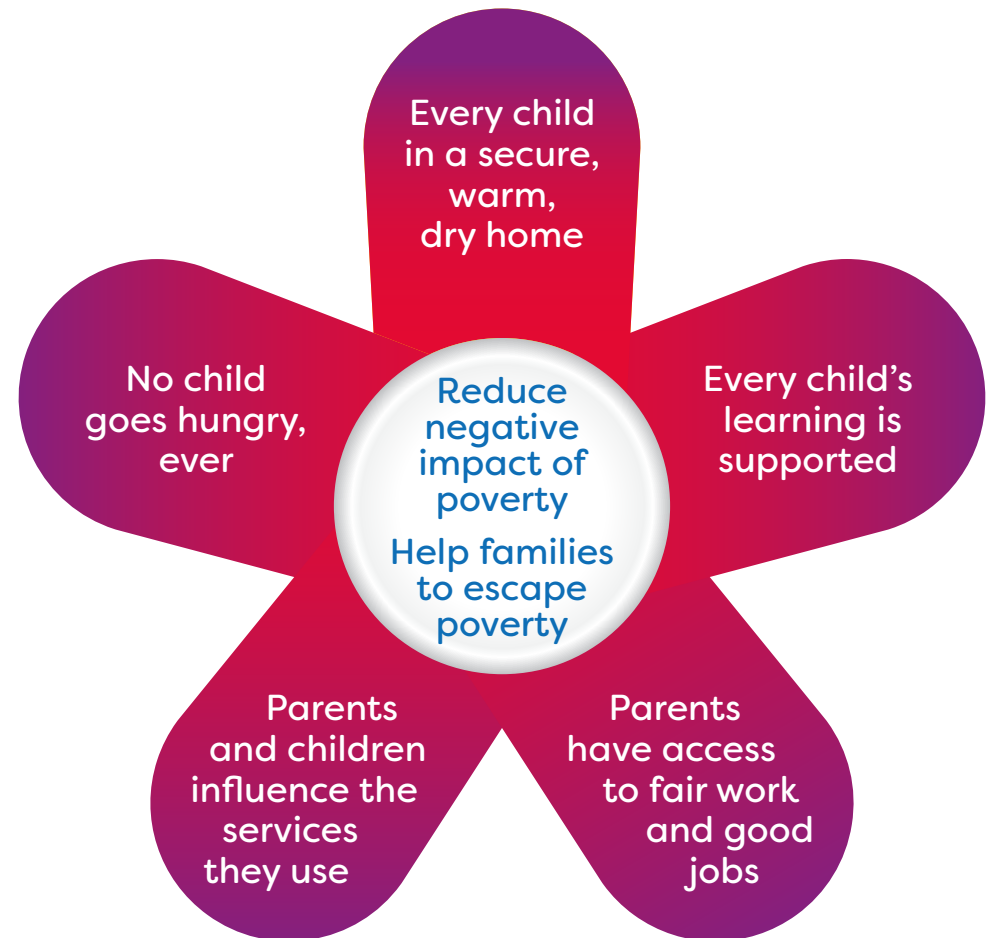
We want to work with our partners and communities to tackle inequality and provide better outcomes for individuals, building stronger more resilient communities.

- *We will redesign services based around what we hear from communities.*
- *We will work more closely in communities and strive to deliver a one Council approach to Child Poverty.*
- *We will empower more decision making in communities with budgets and resources.*

This first iteration of the Perth and Kinross Offer for Families Affected by Poverty has been informed by initial consultation. We will deepen our engagement with families affected by poverty and with the community organisations which currently support them.

The Offer will develop over time as communities, businesses and citizens engage in our crusade against child poverty.

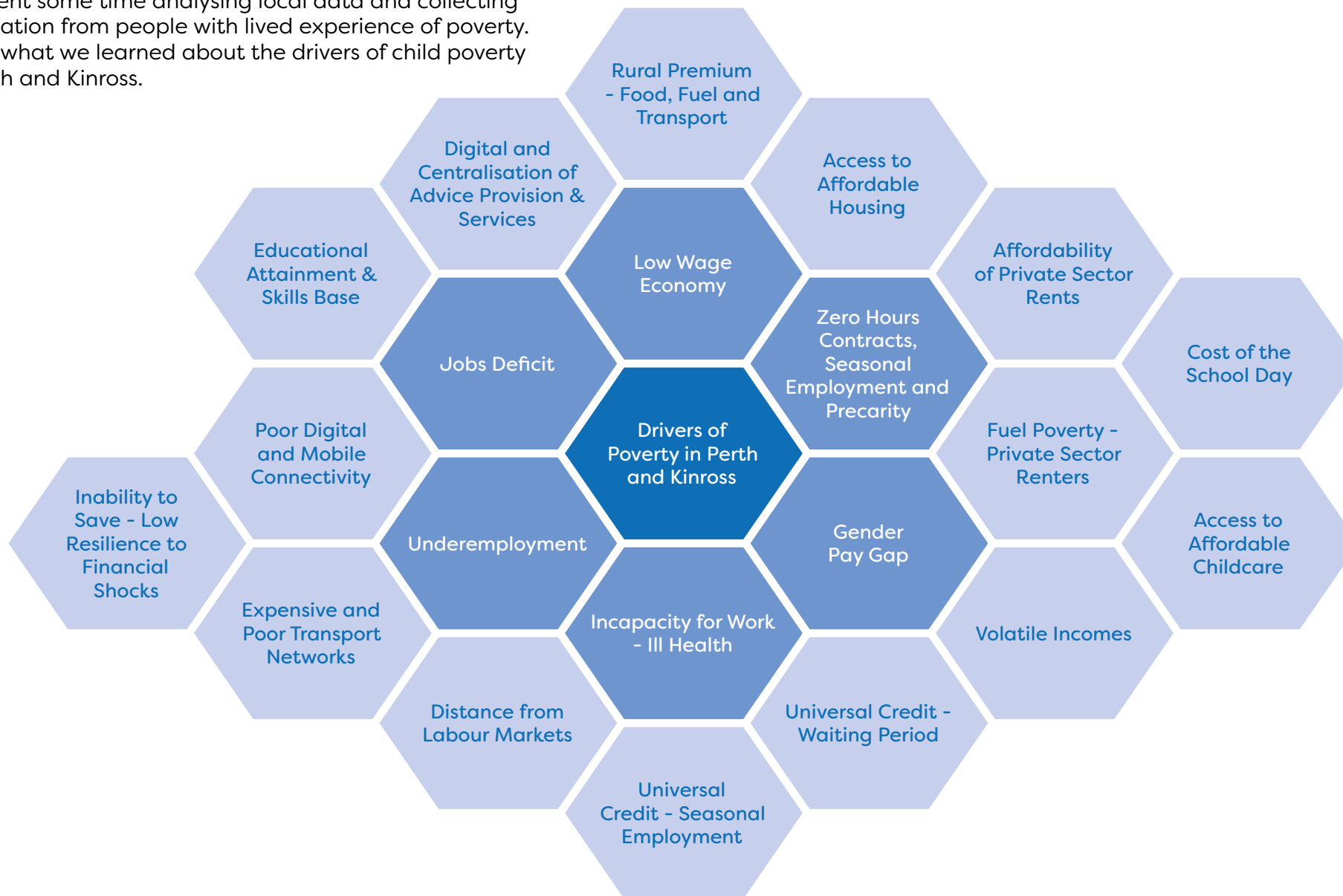
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has something to offer



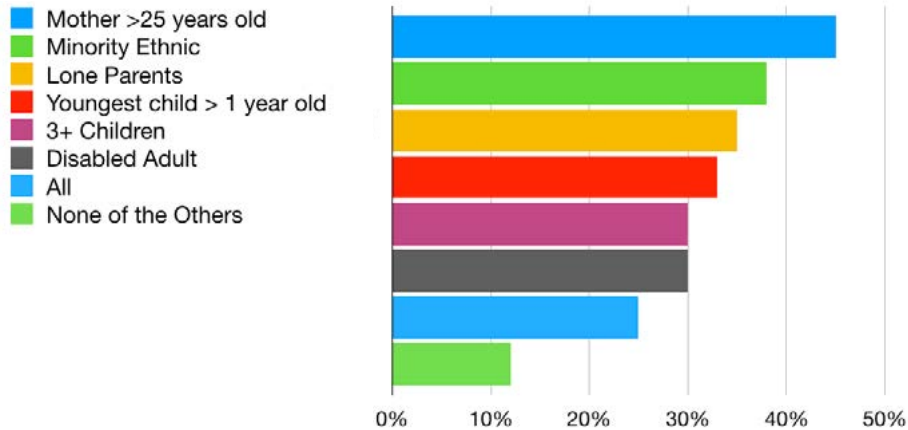
Section 1

Understanding Local Data Around Child Poverty in Perth and Kinross

We spent some time analysing local data and collecting information from people with lived experience of poverty. This is what we learned about the drivers of child poverty in Perth and Kinross.



Priority Families



Child Poverty was increasing - even before COVID-19 and the lockdowns.

The latest Child Poverty figures for Perth and Kinross show that Child Poverty increased by 2.7% between 2015 and 2020 increasing the numbers of children living in poverty from 4,869 to 5,515 (22.6%). These are pre-COVID-19 figures and are likely to underestimate the number of children currently affected by poverty across Perth and Kinross¹.

¹ Child poverty in your area 2014/15 – 2019/20 – End Child Poverty

Priority Families

The challenges facing some families are greater than others - and we know that Priority Families are more likely to be affected by poverty:

- Nearly 1 in 5 parents report a limiting long-term physical or mental health condition which is higher than for Scotland as a whole (1 in 6).
- 1 in 20 first-time mothers is aged 19 and under.
- 1 in 25 households is headed by a lone parent compared with 1 in 20 for Scotland as a whole.
- 1 in 25 households have 3 or more children compared with 1 in 20 for Scotland as a whole.
- 313 families have had their benefits capped (167 - Universal Credit) and 153 (Housing Benefit).
- 3.3% of people in Perth and Kinross were from BAME backgrounds in 2011 (Census). Perth and Kinross has a number of migrant families from Eastern Europe many of whom are affected by poverty.

We have focussed on including BAME and migrant families in our Children's Scorecard project as local data for these families is lacking.

Migrant populations include a combination of seasonal migrant workers and new migrants. They are working in critical sectors of employment which in Perth & Kinross is agriculture, tourism, hospitality, food processing and the care sector for example. A number of these sectors of employment have been particularly affected by the coronavirus crisis.



Financial Hardship and Vulnerability in Blairgowrie and The Glens

This research by the University of Lancaster, Scotland's Rural College and the Impact Hub Inverness investigated how people in Blairgowrie and The Glens experienced and negotiated poverty and vulnerability. It found that:

- structural changes to the rural economy mean fewer jobs in land-based activities and manufacturing with most people now employed in services such as education, health, tourism and retail;
- much local employment is precarious, low paid or seasonal with volatile, unpredictable incomes creating financial vulnerability;
- Universal Credit is unable to deal fairly with the volatility and irregularity of rural incomes, making household budgeting hard and increasing the risk of debt and destitution;
- inadequate broadband and mobile coverage and loss of public transport makes centralisation of advice and support services difficult to access;
- these difficulties are exacerbated for people without digital and literacy skills and for those with poor mental health;
- the Cost of Living in rural areas is substantially higher than in towns and cities - distance to services and larger shopping centres, costs of heating off-grid homes which are less well-insulated.



“Certainly here, it is seasonal work. It’s low paid work, zero hours contracts and a lot of it is in the tourism/hospitality sector.”

“You don’t get work around here, not if you want to work out and about and in the hills. You don’t get work until you know people. And until you’ve met somebody in the pub or you’ve gone and done some door knocking around the gamekeepers’ houses and that sort of thing. There just isn’t the work out there.”

“This is the first time I have seen such a dramatic difference between really, really very rich people and people just below zero.”

“I think that lack of advocacy and support to get your benefit is very lacking. People are not going to go down to Perth, and not everybody is comfortable with doing it on the phone. It is quite an intimate and personal thing to do. So I think that lots of people struggle and lots of people will not be getting their benefit.”

“My assessment was just after Christmas. But during the run up to that, it wasn’t stressful at first, but then as it got closer and closer, it got really bad, having to fill out the form with all the stuff. I was panicking. It was just horrendous. A lot of places are too busy to go through the whole form because it’s so big and complicated.”



The report highlights some policy challenges arising from its finding and these will be considered and incorporated within our action plan:

- *Many rural residents are at risk of poverty, while poverty is perceived as an urban issue.*
- *The welfare system is not well-adapted to rural lives.*
- *Much rural work is not 'good work', with incomes often volatile and irregular.*
- *There are barriers to entering self-employment and developing rural small businesses.*
- *It is challenging for organisations to 'reach' into rural areas.*
- *It remains difficult for financially vulnerable groups to access suitable, affordable housing.*
- *Framing narratives of place and change are important to the wellbeing of rural communities.*
- *There is an imminent crisis in rural social care delivery².*










²*Rural Lives: Understanding financial hardship and vulnerability in rural areas.*
Shucksmith, Chapman, Glass and Atterton, Rural Policy Centre, Scotland's Rural College, March 2021



Impact of COVID-19



Sources

-  *Weathering the Financial Storm: Strengthening Financial Security in Scotland Through the COVID-19 Crisis. Stratham, Parkes & Gunson. IPPR Oct 2020*
-  *Rural Lives: Understanding financial hardship and vulnerability in rural areas. Shucksmith, Glass and Atterton, Rural Policy Centre, Scotland's Rural College, March 2021 - Findings - Blairgowrie and The Glens*
-  *ONS, ASHE Tables, Dec 2020*
-  *Framework for Local Authorities Supporting Gypsy Travellers. SG & COSLA Dec 2020*
-  *DWP: Employment & Labour Market Stats, People Not in Work, Dec 2020*
-  *Strengthening Financial Security in Scotland Through the Ongoing COVID-19 Crisis, IPPR 3 Scotland*
-  *The effects of coronavirus on workers. "The Resolution Foundation & Sector Shutdowns during the coronavirus crisis - which workers are more exposed?" Institute of Fiscal Studies*
-  *Scottish Welfare Fund and Self-Isolation Support Grant Monthly Management Information Jan 2018 - Sept 2020*
-  *Inequalities in home learning and schools' provision of distance teaching during school closure of COVID-19 lockdown in the UK. Baykrader & Guvcell Institute of Social & Economic Research, June 2020*



It will be some time before we fully understand the impact of the COVID-19 Pandemic. However some proxy indicators suggest that families across Perth and Kinross were experiencing significant financial stress as a result. Preliminary Research undertaken by IPPR Scotland³ indicated that some groups were particularly vulnerable:

➤ **Parents and Carers**

Nearly half (49%) of families with children reported that they were struggling to make ends meet or were in serious financial difficulty. Across Scotland's workforce parents are more likely to have sustained a fall in pay of 20% or more during the pandemic than non-parents.

School closures and shielding and lockdown meant that many grandparents who would normally provide care were unable to do so. There has been a significant transfer of care of children from the state onto parents and carers.

➤ **Lone Parents**

Lone parents were more exposed to financial insecurity coming into the COVID-19 crisis. They face additional pressure in balancing paid and unpaid work - this often restricts their earning capacity in terms of hours worked, type of work they can take on and opportunities to progress.

➤ **Young People**

Economic modelling by IPR suggests that there could be 100,000 young unemployed young people in Scotland in 2021 - and this could rise to 140,000 in a worst-case scenario. Young people's jobs disappeared faster than others, and they were more likely to be working in industries (hospitality, catering, tourism) that were affected by lockdown measures. They are also more likely than older workers to be on zero hours contracts or working in the gig economy.

➤ **Disabled People**

Before the pandemic struck disabled people were 37% more likely to be struggling financially and were more likely to report being behind on their bills.

There is some evidence for increased costs for disabled people during the pandemic associated with increased bills for fuel, food, equipment costs, the costs associated with accessible transport and charges for social care services.

➤ **Renters**

Renters are more likely to have been furloughed than homeowners who are paying off a mortgage - meaning those at greatest risk of experiencing a drop in income or job loss have less in the way of a financial buffer and cannot take advantage of mortgage payment holidays.

➤ **Self-Employed**

41% of HHs that included a self-employed person were unsupported by Government Schemes and self-employed people were over 50% more likely than employees to face a fall in pay.

Perth & Kinross Council were made aware of the specific needs of local minority ethnic communities during lockdown. In particular, community members faced travel restrictions and no local Chinese traditional food supplier existed. Although a small local Halal producer does exist, it had limited capacity to meet increased demand.

Perth & Kinross Council provided culturally appropriate food parcels and put in place procurement arrangements to meet the needs of minority ethnic communities across Perth and Kinross.

Local businesses operated by owners from minority ethnic communities also provided free meals to those in need from the wider Perth and Kinross area.

An audit of need and support to the Gypsy/Traveller community was conducted to ensure the specific needs of this community were addressed. Provision ranged from food and fuel to digital devices, advice and cash support.

³ "Weathering the Winter Storm: Strengthening Financial Security in Scotland through the ongoing COVID-19 Crisis." Statham, Parkes and Gunson, IPPR October 2020



In Perth and Kinross:

- 🕒 **17,500 HHs** - (1 in 4) are estimated to be in Serious Financial Difficulty or Struggling to Make Ends Meet; Before COVID, 4,092 HHS said they were “not managing well” financially.
- 🕒 **8,500 HHs** - (1 in 8) are estimated to be struggling to pay for food and essentials.
- 🕒 **5,000 HHs** - (1 in 14) are estimated to be in arrears with mortgage or rent payments.
- 🕒 **6,500 HHs** - (1 in 11) are estimated to be in arrears with unsecured credit or car finance.
- 🕒 **24,500 HHs** - (1 in 3) are estimated to have no savings or less than one months' savings; Before COVID the figure was 13,618.

COVID-19 Impact Indicators

- 🕒 1 in 6 jobs was lost to the local economy.
- 🕒 The number of people on out of work benefits doubled - and now stands at 4,195.
- 🕒 105 families with 3 or more children had their benefit capped.
- 🕒 Between December 2019/2020 there was a 92% increase in the amount paid out in Crisis Grant.
- 🕒 The number of households on Universal Credit increased by 237%.

Snapshot - COVID-19 and Poverty in Perth and Kinross



Service Delivery Areas Impacting on Child Poverty

The following tables show where Perth & Kinross Council's service delivery is focussed on mitigating the impact of poverty on families and children.

Workstream 1 - Income from Employment	
Education & Children's Services	Adult Health & Social Care Partnership
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ <i>Developing the Young Workforce - Employability and Career Ready Programme</i> ➤ <i>Services for Young People @Scott Street - Employability and Drop-In Service for Young People; Youth Programme for No-One Left Behind</i> ➤ <i>Youth Base Programme</i> ➤ <i>1140 Project - PESF for ELC job opportunities</i> ➤ <i>Criminal Justice System Employment Support</i> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ <i>Employability Service (Parents)</i> ➤ <i>Employment Support Team - employability programmes for people with brain injuries, mental health issues, on the autistic spectrum and carers, or in receipt of services from the Drug and Alcohol teams</i> ➤ <i>Carers Support Service for Young Carers</i> ➤ <i>Employability - No-One Left Behind and Parental Employment Support Fund</i> ➤ <i>Rural Employment Initiative</i> ➤ <i>Scottish Government Youth Job Guarantee</i> ➤ <i>Digital Skills Participation (Community Planning Team)</i> ➤ <i>Skills Passport - Grants to Support Employability</i> ➤ <i>Futures for Families</i> ➤ <i>ESF - Positive Futures and Employability Pipeline</i> ➤ <i>UK Kickstart Programme</i>



Workstream 2 - Reducing the Cost of Living

Communities	Education & Children's Services	Corporate & Democratic Services
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Affordable Rent Scheme ➤ Increased Provision of Socially Rented Housing ➤ Warm Homes Programme ➤ Tackling Fuel Poverty Measures including investment in heating systems, renewable energy, insulation and triple glazing ➤ Good Food Co-ordinator and Support for Food Share Network, food banks and community larders 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Breakfast Clubs ➤ Provision of Free School Meals ➤ Provision of Clothing Grants ➤ Provision of Devices and Data Packages for Digital Inclusion ➤ Reducing the Cost of the School Day ➤ Out of School Care 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Customer Care Centre - 1st point of contact - operates signposting and referral system ➤ Procurement Support for Living Wage and Community Benefits ➤ Financial Assessment Team maximise income and reduce costs for adults needing care



Workstream 3 - Income from Social Security and Benefits in Kind

Education & Children's Services	Communities	NHS Tayside
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ School Nurses - Referral to food banks and other sources of in kind support (school uniforms) ➤ Holiday Activities - provision of programme of summer activities linked to summer food programme ➤ Distribution to all parents of information about food banks, community larders, give and take boxes etc during summer months 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Welfare Rights Team - 2,000 Priority Families to be provided with Welfare Rights check ➤ Scottish Child Payment take-up campaign 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ FNP referral to food banks, and other sources of in kind support (school uniforms, baby clothes) ➤ Welfare Rights Advisers embedded in Doctors' Surgeries and Community Health Centres ➤ Welfare Advice provision in Carseview Centre, Dundee for all mental health patients ➤ Midwife Project - to provide child poverty and financial inclusion support and embed this in maternity services, health visiting, family nurse partnership and early years education settings ➤ Pilot money and employment section in core nursing admission and discharge documentation enabling referral to welfare benefits and money advice services for all patients at Perth Royal Infirmary ➤ Financial Inclusion added as a referral option which GPs can deploy for patients with money worries



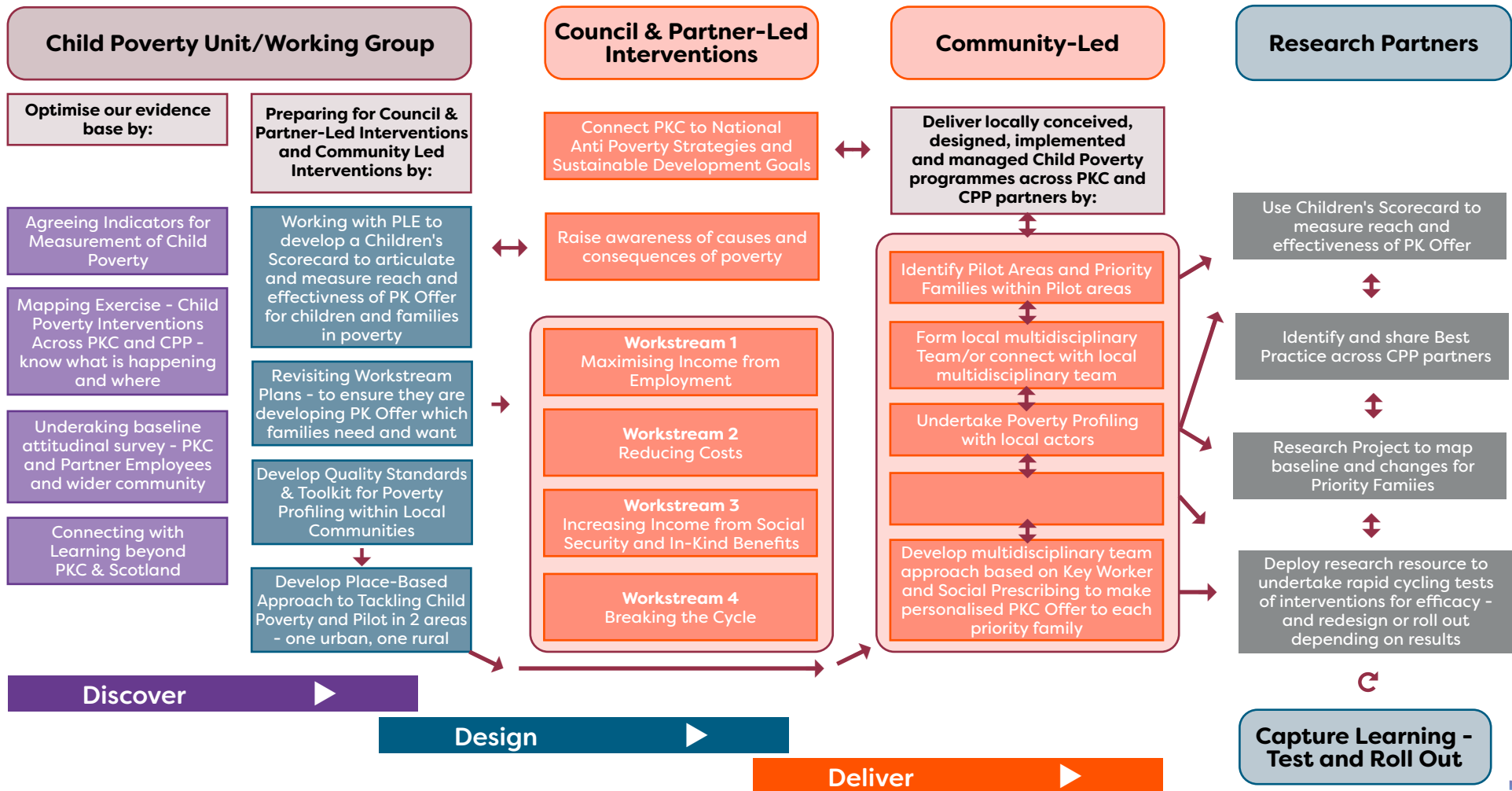
Goals

- To raise awareness about the causes and consequences of child poverty
- To foster social cohesion and reduce the stigma surrounding poverty for children and families
- To reduce the negative effects of living in poverty for children and families
- To enable children and families to prepare themselves for a life free from poverty

Outcomes

- PKC Offer for Priority Families and children living in poverty
- To be identified through SPIRU Action Research Project

Critical Path



Section 2

This section of the report provides an update on progress made between November 2020 and May 2021.

Children's Scorecard

We have teamed up with The Scottish Poverty and Inequality Research Unit at Glasgow Caledonian University and parents from Priority Families.

These parents are helping to co-produce a Children's Scorecard to measure the reach and effectiveness of the Perth and Kinross Offer for children and families affected by poverty.

The Perth & Kinross Offer for Struggling Families

A Perth and Kinross Offer for Struggling Families has been developed and will shortly be reviewed in the light of the feedback received from the Children's Scorecard Project. It covers food, housing, education, work and engagement.

Social Needs Screening Project

A Working Group involving frontline workers and service managers from across Perth & Kinross Council, NHS Tayside and our Community Planning Partners has been established to test the feasibility of establishing a Social Needs Screening Project to identify unmet need and connect families not currently on our radar to the help and support they need.

The Working Group are developing a Social Needs Screening Toolkit and will establish a pilot project to test the impact of Social Needs Screening and whether it results in better delivery and engagement with families in need of additional support.

Child Poverty Training Programme

A Child Poverty Training Programme for frontline workers and service managers is in production. The 5 modules will cover:

- › *Understanding Poverty*
- › *Poverty and Inequality*
- › *The Experience of Poverty*
- › *Social Needs Screening*
- › *Alleviating Poverty*

The course aims to inform those who deliver and plan services about the particular challenges facing children and families living in poverty and to equip them with the skills and confidence to embark on co-production and multi-agency collaborative working on innovative new approaches to alleviating poverty.

Good Food Network and Strategy

We are supporting the development of a Good Food Network and Strategy which aims to bring a broad range of stakeholders from the public, private and third sector together to tackle food poverty, food insecurity, to support food for health and wellbeing and sustainable food across Perth and Kinross.

Feeling the Pinch - Winter Information and Awareness Campaign

An information campaign aimed at families who were struggling with the increased costs of winter was run. It provided information on how to access welfare rights, housing, heating and mental health support and reached 250,000 people.



Feeling the Pinch Winter Campaign

Are you feeling the pinch this winter?



Between December 2020 and March 2021, the “Feeling the Pinch” campaign sought to mitigate the financial impact of the COVID-19 pandemic and public health measures by raising awareness of the range of support available from council services and our community partners.

Are you feeling the strain this winter?



The advice covered welfare benefits, housing and heating and mental health and wellbeing.

By using multiple channels and targeted methods of communication we aimed to ensure that everyone who needed help knew where to find it.

Are you feeling the cold this winter?



The campaign was widely covered in the local press, videos and social media messages.

Overall the campaign reached was 258,482 - Perth and Kinross has an overall population of 151,000.

Workstream 1 - Income from Employment

The Futures for Families Programme, which is funded via the Parental Employment Support Fund, has been launched. So far 10 parents have been signed up and 10 more are waiting for their registration to be confirmed.

Elev8 Training Grant has been provided to 2 parents - one of whom has used it to access a Teacher Training Diploma course and has been provided with office equipment for her studies.

Case Study - Parental Employment Support Fund

Without the support of the Parental Employment Support Fund - Futures for Families Elev8 Grant and the help, support and advice received from Rebecca Hogg, then my dream to be able to apply for the PGDE Primary Teaching course with Perth College UHI would still be a dream.

I am 39 years old and have four children who are 12, 11 and 6 years old as well a baby of 10 months. The last 4 years has been an incredible journey, which has been very challenging, especially the last year due to the current COVID situation and home schooling. I have just managed to finish my BA Honours Education (Primary) Studies degree with the Open University. To move forward I needed to have National 5 Maths as well to be able to continue on the path of becoming a primary school teacher and this qualification was all that was holding me back as I could not afford the course fees.

My tutor had saw the Parental Employment Support Fund - Futures for Families Elev8 Grant advertised when she was having her COVID vaccination and emailed me the details!

I then contacted Rebecca and the support and advice I have received since then has been amazing. I can now continue with my dream and know I still have the support from Rebecca throughout my journey. I am so very grateful and feel so lucky that I have been provided with the amazing support from Rebecca and the fund, as without it I could never have progressed any further.



Workstream 2 - Reducing the Cost of Living

Good Food Co-ordinator

A Good Food Co-ordinator has been appointed to establish a governance structure for the Food Share Network and establish a permanent food hub in Perth. This will help struggling families to access reduced price or free surplus foods donated by local retailers and producers and reduce food waste at the same time.

Schools

Schools have been concentrating on supporting pupils to recover from lockdown and continue to promote free school meals and the Welfare Rights Service to all families. School uniform rules have been relaxed as it is accepted that many families whose income has been adversely affected as a result of the COVID pandemic will struggle to provide new school uniforms.

Public Health Tayside worked closely with the Family Nurse Partnership to identify families who may be affected by digital exclusion. Using funds provided through the Connecting Scotland fund, they were able to provide 32 families across Tayside with a laptop or tablet and free Wi-Fi. Recipients were supported to use their device by NHST Digital Friend volunteers.

Affordability Analysis

Annual income required to be able to afford a Perth and Kinross property by size

Property Size	PKC Current Rents	25% Income to Rent	30% Income to Rent
Bedsit	£47.18	£9,813	£8,178
1 Bedroom	£64.25	£13,364	£11,137
2 Bedroom	£69.45	£14,446	£12,038
3 Bedroom	£77.59	£16,139	£13,449
4 Bedroom	£84.01	£17,474	£14,562
Average	£69.04	£14,360	£11,967

£	=	£14,942 Minimum Wage (25+)	£16,380 Living Wage	£14,942 Average UK Pension Income
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Case Study - Affordable Rents Toolkit

Reducing the Cost of Living is an important way of mitigating poverty. One of the most significant outlays for families are housing costs. There is no set definition of what rent affordability would look like, however, the Housing Needs Demand Assessment says that a rent is considered affordable if a household is contributing no more than 25% of their income. Elsewhere most households will spend between 25-35% of their income.

Perth & Kinross Council has developed an Affordable Rents Toolkit for Local Authority tenants. The aim of the toolkit is to allow Perth & Kinross Council to assess the affordability impact of current and proposed rent levels on households living in Perth and Kinross.

The Perth & Kinross Council Toolkit uses up-to-date Income Data and an Equivalised Income Factor. This enables household income to be recalculated to take account for differences in household size and composition, eg:

- larger households will need a larger income to achieve the same standard of living as households with fewer members;
- living costs for adults are greater than those for children.

The end result being that we can assess the % of income spent on housing costs for individual household types, property size and income type as outlined in the table below. The toolkit can also be used to forward project affordability levels based on anticipated rent and income levels over for example a three-year period. All of this allows Perth & Kinross Council to make sure that targeted support can be provided to certain localities or households who may be disproportionately impacted on as result of their income level.

- Perth & Kinross Council delivers lower rents for tenants than neighbouring Local Authorities.
- Our rents are on average 23% lower than comparator Registered Social Landlords operating in Perth and Kinross.
- Our rents are on average 110% lower than the market rents for similar properties across Perth and Kinross.
- Perth & Kinross Council rents are 64% lower than the Local Housing Allowance rate. This means that Housing Benefit covers the full cost of the rent for Council tenants.
- The toolkit has enabled PKC to ensure that families with children pay between 13% and 22% of their income on rent. This frees up much-needed cash for other essentials like food, childcare and transport.



Workstream 3 - Income from Social Security and Benefits in Kind

800 families have received £90,639 in Child Payments provided by Perth & Kinross Council. Families with a child under 6 who were in receipt of Council Tax reduction were provided with a one-off payment of £80 per eligible child.

A take-up campaign was organised to raise awareness of the new Scottish Social Security Child Payments. This included text messages sent to 3,000 Council Tenants and 6,000 Council employees and a social media campaign in English, Polish, Bulgarian and Romanian.

Over £147,000 was distributed through a Financial Insecurity Fund set up to provide financial assistance to households:

- *with no recourse to public funds;*
- *with priority debts including fuel debt;*
- *where help was needed to pay for broadband debt or data packages;*
- *where help was needed to meet essential costs of children under the age of 2; and*
- *to help with the additional costs of rural living.*

£80,000 was provided to augment the Scottish Welfare Fund and Discretionary Housing Fund to ensure that the needs of residents were met.

129 Winter Payments for Early Learning Centres and some additional funds were provided to Pink Saltire to assist with hardship payments for LGBT+ community members.

Agreement was reached that Perth & Kinross Council would be part of the Scottish Child Disability Payment pilot with two other local authorities (Dundee City Council and the Western Isles Council). The pilot focussed on data sharing to improve the customer journey in advance of the roll out of this scheme across Scotland.

NHS Tayside have established a referral pathway for Primary Care Clinicians to use to refer patients for specialist support, this includes a referral mechanism for welfare rights and financial inclusion. This will compliment co-located welfare advisers attached to GP practices:

http://eds.tayside.scot.nhs.uk/Internet01/WorkingWithUs/ReferralHelpSystem/PROD_344478

Brooksbank Centre and Services have been awarded 1-year funding by NHS Tayside to deliver in-patient debt and benefit advice within the Carseview Centre in Dundee. This will enable the integration of financial support with care planning. The new service will benefit patients from Perth and Kinross.

Following the successful evaluation of the Angus Midwifery Pilot, NHS Tayside has secured additional funds to support maternity services which have recruited a project midwife to work closely with Public Health to address child poverty and financial inclusion. The postholder will be responsible for working alongside key universal services and colleagues across Maternity Services, Health Visiting, Family Nurse Partnership and Early Years education settings.

Perth Royal Infirmary are piloting inpatient admission and discharge documentation which includes questions on money worries and employment. This will enable patients to be referred for welfare rights and financial inclusion support. Public Health colleagues will support the roll-out of the documentation, which will include training on how to raise the issue of money worries and employment and referral pathways to advice services.

The Tayside Regional Improvement Collaborative has funded a range of measures aimed at providing a universal holistic income maximization service to ensure families can access their full benefit entitlement. This has been implemented through the strengthening of relationships and referral pathways between Welfare Rights Teams and health and social care professionals involved in pre-birth and early years.



A series of workshops was co-delivered by Public Health and Perth & Kinross Council Welfare Rights Service to Health Visitors and Family Nurse Practitioners on the topic of Child Poverty and Financial Inclusion Advice. The training was provided to over 100 colleagues.

All midwives in Tayside now use BadgerNet which enables them to refer clients and access a single point of contact within each Local Authority Welfare Rights Service. All areas are now regularly referring pregnant women for income maximisation and benefit support. Health Visitors and Family Nurse Practitioners are using a similar system (EMIS) to refer clients to Local Authority Welfare Rights services.

Case Study - Couple Under 25

A young couple, both under 25 and both with mental health issues, were being supported by the Family Nurse Partnership and Welfare Rights Team and Social Worker to cope with their first tenancy and the arrival of their first child.

The Welfare Rights Team were asked to step in when the couple were subjected to a benefits sanction. The Welfare Rights Team helped them to secure a Community Care Grant which provided a cooker, fridge/freezer and living room carpet. They were given a Best Start Grant Pregnancy Payment and Best Start Food Card, Child Benefit, Council Tax Reduction, Personal Independence Payment, a Carer's Allowance was awarded to the partner. They received a Financial Insecurity Fund Payment, Perth & Kinross Child Payment and a Scottish Child Payment and saw their Universal Credit increase by £47 a week.

In total, the client financial gain over a 12-month period amounted to £17,956.

Case Study - Lone Parent with a Disabled Child

A lone parent and her 3 children under 8 were living in private rented accommodation. The client was subject to the Benefits Cap and was in receipt of Discretionary Housing Payments to help cover her rent of £650 pcm. Her eldest son suffers from behavioural and sensory issues and had been referred to CAMHS but was awaiting assessment. She was advised not to claim Disability Living Allowance for her son until he had received a diagnosis. The Welfare Rights Team encouraged her to challenge this and to make the claim and helped her to complete the Disability Living Allowance Form.

6 weeks later the client was awarded the Middle Rate of Care for her son which was backdated. She received a payment of £420 in respect of arrears with £240 paid every 4 weeks in Disability Living Allowance.

Her Child Tax Credit increased by £66 per week and the Team helped her to claim Carer's Allowance which was also backdated - as a result her weekly income increased by a further £37. She will also receive the Scottish Carer's Supplement which amounts to £462.00 each year.

As she has now been awarded Disability Living Allowance for her son, the Benefits Cap has been lifted and she will have her full rent covered by Housing Benefit.

The Client Financial Gain over a 12-month period was assessed as £9,620.



Section 3 - Workstream Plans 2021/2022

Workstream 1 - Income from Employment

Target Issues/Areas					
<i>Parental Employment and Closing the Gender Pay Gap, Living Wage, School Leaver Attainment Gap</i>					
Actions/Deliverables in 2021/22	Who is action carried out by?	Resources Allocated	How impact has/will be assessed	Timescale for Action	Target Groups - Priority Families and Protected Characteristics
Delivery of Futures for Families (PESF) Programme and Elev8 Training Grants	Skills & Employment Initiatives Team	Project Funding from Scottish Government	48 total number of parents on Future for Families Programme Outcomes for employed parents 24 (50% of total) in work support Outcomes for unemployed parents 24 (50% of total) 10 Wage Incentives @ £4,000 per incentive over 52 weeks 20 (min) Elev8 Employment & Training Grant	March 2022	Priority Families and families affected by a member having a Protected Characteristic Lone parent Person with a disability 3+ Children Minority groups Youngest Child < 1 Parents aged < 25
Delivery of No One Left Behind Programme	Employability Officer in SEI Team	Project Funding from Scottish Government	93 new programme participants engaging for ongoing support from Key Workers 48 young people supported through Activity Agreements 10 individuals progressing onto vocational training 43 entering employment or self-employment of which 24 sustaining employment 7 commencing Modern Apprenticeship posts	March 2022	People of all ages with at least 1 barrier to employment



Workstream 1 - Income from Employment

Target Issues/Areas					
<i>Parental Employment and Closing the Gender Pay Gap, Living Wage, School Leaver Attainment Gap</i>					
Actions/Deliverables in 2021/22	Who is action carried out by?	Resources Allocated	How impact has/will be assessed	Timescale for Action	Target Groups - Priority Families and Protected Characteristics
Young Person's Guarantee	Skills & Employment Initiatives Team	Project Funding from Scottish Government	<p>170 total number of young people aged 16-24 being supported outcomes breakdown as follows</p> <p>145 - Participants progressed to Vocational Training</p> <p>56 - Participants achieved qualification</p> <p>45 - Participants entered FE/HE/Training</p> <p>77 - Participants commenced employment</p> <p>16 - Participants commenced Modern Apprenticeship</p> <p>80 - Participants commenced on a supported activity programme</p> <p>58 - Participants sustained employment or self-employment (75% of those commencing employment)</p> <p>60 Wage Incentives @ £4,000 per incentive over 52 weeks of which</p>	March 2022	Young people 16-24 with at least 1 barrier to employment
REI - Rural Employment Incentive	Employability Officer in SEI Team	Project Funding PKC	23 new jobs created in rural communities for rural residents.	March 2022	
Futures for Families (PESF)			Gather data and testimonies on the impact of the UC taper on parents moving into employment and the outcomes that can be delivered in terms of moving out of poverty.	March 2022	



Workstream 2 - Reducing the Cost of Living

Target Issues/Areas					
Affordability - Housing, Childcare, Energy, Food, Public Transport, Debt and Cost of the School Day					
Actions Deliverables in 2021/22	Who is action carried out by?	Resources Allocated	How impact has/will be assessed	Timescale for Action	Target Groups - Priority Families and Protected Characteristics
Collaborative Review of 'Reducing the Cost of the School Day' to identify outcomes, effectiveness and lessons learned.	Workstream 2 Lead	WER	Evidence of positive parental and learner feedback for the Cost of the School Day programme. Evidence of delivery of Cost of the School Day programme. Lessons learned.	June 2021	Children and young people affected by poverty
We will relaunch the Cost of the School Day programme by providing all schools with a video and training materials which can be used to raise the awareness of School Leadership teams, teachers, pupils and their parents.	Workstream 2 Lead	WER	Number of schools participating in Cost of the School Day, sharing and learning examples of good practice, reduction in the Cost of the School Day. Evidence of positive parental and learner feedback for the cost of the school day programme. Evidence of delivery of cost of the school day programme. Lessons learned.	December 2021	Children and families affected by poverty



Workstream 2 - Reducing the Cost of Living

Target Issues/Areas					
<i>Affordability - Housing, Childcare, Energy, Food, Public Transport, Debt and Cost of the School Day</i>					
Actions Deliverables in 2021/22	Who is action carried out by?	Resources Allocated	How impact has/will be assessed	Timescale for Action	Target Groups - Priority Families and Protected Characteristics
<p>Ongoing reducing Cost of the School Day including uniform, travel, school trips, eating, school clubs, fundraising and events, home learning, attitudes to poverty.</p> <p>Reduce cost of practical subjects in secondary</p> <p>Investigate uniform recycling programme</p>	Workstream 2 Lead	WER	<p>Schools have action plans relevant to their context.</p> <p>Priority Families and families affected by a member having a Protected Characteristic are the focal point of this evaluation.</p>	November 2021	All pupils affected by poverty
We will promote Big Energy Savings Week with our CPP Partners.	Workstream 2 Lead	WER	Take-up rates and client financial gains.	February 2022	Priority Families and families affected by a member having a Protected Characteristic are the focal point of this evaluation



Workstream 2 - Reducing the Cost of Living

Target Issues/Areas

Affordability - Housing, Childcare, Energy, Food, Public Transport, Debt and Cost of the School Day

Actions Deliverables in 2021/22	Who is action carried out by?	Resources Allocated	How impact has/will be assessed	Timescale for Action	Target Groups - Priority Families and Protected Characteristics
<p>Wider ongoing engagement with local social housing providers.</p> <p>Discussions to be scheduled with RSLs to share information gathered through affordability model and further discussion to promote affordable rents.</p>	Workstream 2 Lead	WER	Increased awareness within the social sector and greater focus placed on affordability by RSLs.	Ongoing	Priority Families and families affected by a member having a Protected Characteristic
Private Landlord Forum to be planned, to raise awareness of child and fuel poverty within the private sector.	Workstream 2 Lead	WER	Session with private sector landlords on fuel poverty and energy efficiency.	June 2021	Priority Families and families affected by a member having a Protected Characteristic



Workstream 2 - Reducing the Cost of Living

Target Issues/Areas					
<i>Affordability - Housing, Childcare, Energy, Food, Public Transport, Debt and Cost of the School Day</i>					
Actions Deliverables in 2021/22	Who is action carried out by?	Resources Allocated	How impact has/will be assessed	Timescale for Action	Target Groups - Priority Families and Protected Characteristics
Evaluate our transport activities to ensure we can reduce the cost of travel. Identify potential for travel concessions for families during weekends, holidays and after school - Bid to Smarter Choices, Smarter Places for funding to provide some subsidised transport to be submitted.	Workstream 2 Lead	WER	We will produce an options paper with creative and new means of supporting a range of transport options which enable people from rural Perthshire to gain access to employment and educational opportunities. Travel costs reduce. Free bus travel for under 19s in place.	November 2021	Priority Families and families affected by a member having a Protected Characteristic
Option to load free transport on Young Scot cards still to be considered.	Workstream 2 Lead	WER	Travel costs reduce.	November 2021	Under 19s
Improving people's access to affordable credit and supporting financial inclusion - consider credit rating project for Local Authority tenants.	Workstream 2 Lead	WER	Increased access to more affordable credit.	October 2021	Priority Families and families affected by a member having a Protected Characteristic
Consider credit rating project for Local Authority tenants.	Workstream 2 Lead	WER	Increased access to more affordable credit.	August 2021	Families affected by poverty



Workstream 2 - Reducing the Cost of Living

Target Issues/Areas					
Affordability - Housing, Childcare, Energy, Food, Public Transport, Debt and Cost of the School Day					
Actions Deliverables in 2021/22	Who is action carried out by?	Resources Allocated	How impact has/will be assessed	Timescale for Action	Target Groups - Priority Families and Protected Characteristics
<p>Improve uptake of free school meals by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ <i>improving the application process to maximise opportunities to identify those who are eligible, reduce time and effort of application process for both applicant and staff;</i> ➤ <i>increased awareness of FSM and how to apply.</i> 	<p>Workstream 3 Lead – take-up campaign</p> <p>Workstream 2 Lead</p>	WER	Uptake levels increase.	May 2022	Priority Families and families affected by a member having a Protected Characteristic
<p>Establish a governance structure for the Food Share Network, establishing a permanent food hub in Perth in conjunction with Transform (Fareshare).</p>	Workstream 2 Lead	WER	<p>Increased access to affordable food.</p> <p>Reduction in food waste.</p>	May 2022	Priority Families and families affected by a member having a Protected Characteristic



Workstream 3 - Income from Social Security

Target Issues/Areas					
<i>DWP, SSS, HMRC and LA Benefits and Concessions</i>					
Actions Deliverables in 2021/22	Who is action carried out by?	Resources Allocated	How impact has/will be assessed	Timescale for Action	Target Groups - Priority Families and Protected Characteristics
Explore more streamlined processes for all Council concessions.	Workstream 3 Lead	WER	Work is currently underway taking a phased approach to the streamlining of Council concessions and benefits/grants administered by the LA on behalf of the DWP and Scottish Government.	March 2022	Priority Families and families affected as a result of a family member having a Protected Characteristic
To ensure Welfare Rights advice reaches target families. 2,000 families in the priority groups will receive a phone call offer of a Welfare Rights check to maximise income from social security and benefits in kind.	Workstream 3 Lead	WER	Number of individuals contacted and offered a welfare rights check. Total client financial gain. Total number of individuals helped.	March 2022	Priority Families will be targeted in information awareness campaign via tracked entry points for each specific group Families with a member having a Protected Characteristic will be targeted in information awareness campaign via tracked entry points for each specific group
Scottish Child Payment Benefit Take-Up Campaign to achieve a take-up rate of 85% of all eligible children.	Workstream 3 Lead	WER	Take-Up Rates for Scottish Child Payment.	March 2022	



Workstream 3 - Income from Social Security

Target Issues/Areas					
<i>DWP, SSS, HMRC and LA Benefits and Concessions</i>					
Actions Deliverables in 2021/22	Who is action carried out by?	Resources Allocated	How impact has/will be assessed	Timescale for Action	Target Groups - Priority Families and Protected Characteristics
<p>Health professionals will work collaboratively with Welfare Rights Teams across Tayside to increase and to maximise income from social security.</p> <p>Health professionals will routinely raise the topic of money worries by using the Public Health Scotland guidance on the CARE approach.</p> <p>Effective referral pathways will be established across universal health and educational services (ie Maternity, FNP, Health Visiting & Education).</p> <p>Develop Standard Operating Procedures (SOP) for each referral pathway.</p>	NHS Tayside	WER	<p>Financial hardship for families will be reduced and parents will have better access to the benefits they are eligible to receive.</p> <p>Support families to address poverty identified during pregnancy and at agreed key stages (0-5).</p> <p>Provision of universal holistic income maximisation service.</p>	March 2022	



Workstream 3 - Income from Social Security

Target Issues/Areas					
<i>DWP, SSS, HMRC and LA Benefits and Concessions</i>					
Actions Deliverables in 2021/22	Who is action carried out by?	Resources Allocated	How impact has/will be assessed	Timescale for Action	Target Groups - Priority Families and Protected Characteristics
<p>Recruit a Project Midwife to work closely with Public Health and partners to drive forward activity and service improvement to address Child Poverty in Tayside.</p> <p>Child poverty and financial inclusion training to be delivered by Public Health and Welfare Right Services across pre-birth and early years networks.</p> <p>Child poverty and financial inclusion activity to be feature on staff meeting agendas.</p> <p>Management receives regular data updates on referrals and outcomes for families.</p> <p>Identified leads across universal services to maintain and/or increase activity which will help mitigate child poverty.</p>	NHS Tayside		<p>% number of referrals (increase)</p> <p>% number of pregnant women and parents engaging with advice services (increase)</p> <p>% Income Generated Benefit gains (increase)</p> <p>% who would use the service again (increase)</p>	March 2022	



Workstream 4 - Breaking the Cycle

Target Issues/Areas					
<i>Affordability - Housing, Childcare, Energy, Food, Public Transport, Debt and Cost of the School Day</i>					
Actions Deliverables in 2021/22	Who is action carried out by?	Resources Allocated	How impact has/will be assessed	Timescale for Action	Target Groups - Priority Families and Protected Characteristics
Collaborative Review of the Pupil Equity Fund	Workstream 2 Leads	Within Existing Resources (WER)	Review impact of the Pupil Equity Fund on priority families and families affected by a member's protected characteristic.	June 2021	Priority Families and families affected by a member having a Protected Characteristic
Review and Learn from Midwife Project as enablers for families in poverty to access opportunities to maximise income and reduce costs.	NHS Tayside Workstream 3 Lead	WER	Lessons learned and sharing of good practice leads to increased referrals for income maximisation and benefits in kind.	October 2021	Priority Families and families affected by a member having a Protected Characteristic are the focal point of this evaluation
Research Project - Undertake a mapping exercise on child poverty interventions across Perth and Kinross. Design Impact, Outcomes and Outputs Indicators Framework for the 3 workstreams.	Child Poverty Officer	WER	Identify barriers, crossovers and opportunities for future development of child poverty programme.	June 2021	Priority Families and families affected by a member having a Protected Characteristic



Workstream 4 - Breaking the Cycle

Target Issues/Areas					
Affordability - Housing, Childcare, Energy, Food, Public Transport, Debt and Cost of the School Day					
Actions Deliverables in 2021/22	Who is action carried out by?	Resources Allocated	How impact has/will be assessed	Timescale for Action	Target Groups - Priority Families and Protected Characteristics
Develop a 'Children's Scorecard' to measure support for children living in poverty across Material Wellbeing, Mental Wellbeing, Diet and Physical Wellbeing and Skills for Life.	Child Poverty Officer	£20,000	The Children's Scorecard will be an important tool for raising awareness of the causes and consequences of child poverty. Closing the Gap Scorecard will enable PKC and its partners to track mitigation interventions to support equal opportunities. Feedback on the relevance and usage of the Closing the Gap Scorecard will be sought from people with lived experience of child poverty and CPP partners involved in service provision.	May 2021	Priority Families and families affected by a member having a Protected Characteristic
We will provide a video and training materials to be rolled out to all Perth & Kinross Council employees and offered to CP Partners for inclusion in their staff development and learning programmes. All COVID volunteers will be given access to the video and training materials.	Child Poverty Officer	WER	Perth & Kinross Council employees have an improved understanding of the causes and consequences of child poverty. Learning Outcomes will be measured using an assessment tool to be completed by everyone taking the course.	December 2021	Priority Families and families affected by a member having a Protected Characteristic



Workstream 4 - Breaking the Cycle

Target Issues/Areas					
<i>Affordability - Housing, Childcare, Energy, Food, Public Transport, Debt and Cost of the School Day</i>					
Actions Deliverables in 2021/22	Who is action carried out by?	Resources Allocated	How impact has/will be assessed	Timescale for Action	Target Groups - Priority Families and Protected Characteristics
We will develop a branded public information campaign to disseminate a series of key messages around child poverty and where parents can go to get help.	Child Poverty Officer	WER	The stigma surrounding poverty is reduced and social solidarity is increased. An opinion poll question will be purchased to measure the before and after impact of the information campaign on the public in Perth and Kinross. An attitudinal survey of COVID volunteers will be undertaken before and after the public information campaign.	February 2022	Priority Families and families affected by a member having a Protected Characteristic
We will scope out a proposal to work across all CPP partners to data share with a view to establishing a database of households where children are living in poverty and the resources available to support them to deliver a key worker for each family. The role of the key worker would be to act as a social prescriber to tailor a Perth and Kinross Offer to the specific needs of each individual family.	Child Poverty Officer	WER	Multi-Agency Task Team for Child Poverty Social Prescribing Project is established. Project Initiation Document is produced and signed off by all relevant parties.	September 2021	Priority Families and families affected by a member having a Protected Characteristic



Workstream 4 - Breaking the Cycle

Target Issues/Areas

Affordability - Housing, Childcare, Energy, Food, Public Transport, Debt and Cost of the School Day

Actions Deliverables in 2021/22	Who is action carried out by?	Resources Allocated	How impact has/will be assessed	Timescale for Action	Target Groups - Priority Families and Protected Characteristics
We will undertake a feasibility study for a Social Needs Screening Programme to identify unmet need and connect families with sources of support. This will include the provision of a toolkit, training course and pilot project.	Child Poverty Officer	WER	By the number of families who have completed social needs screening and accessed additional support as a result.	March 2022	Priority Families and families affected by a member having a Protected Characteristic



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