

Child Poverty Delivery Plan 22- 26

with Child Poverty Action Report 21-22 and Child Poverty Action Plan 22-23

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Introduction

This report has been jointly produced by Perth and Kinross Council and NHS Tayside and its contents reflect a deepening collaboration. It also recognises the impact of actions with wider Community Planning Partners as we take a collaborative approach to mitigate and reduce child poverty.

It is the 4th Child Poverty Action Report and with it come some changes. We decided to move to a 4-year Delivery Plan to enable us to take a more strategic and ambitious approach to shifting the dial on child poverty than is possible with annual planning cycles.

Our **Child Poverty Delivery Plan 2022 – 2026** which is included in this report aligns with **Best Start, Bright Futures, the Child Poverty Delivery Plan** of the Scottish Government which covers the same time period. The Local Outcomes Improvement Plan has tackling poverty as a strategic priority as does Perth and Kinross Council's Corporate Plan. The work on child poverty will contribute to delivering two strategic outcomes: -

- Children and young people grow up safe, respected, well-educated and confident in their ability to realise their full potential
- People and businesses thrive in an inclusive and sustainable local economy across Perth and Kinross.

We developed a Children's Scorecard which will measure our service impact on children and families affected by poverty, and we will issue an annual [Children's Scorecard](#).

No one could have anticipated the challenges that everyone is facing; emerging from a global pandemic and now facing a Cost-of-Living crisis which will put heating homes to an acceptable standard beyond the budgets of large sections of the population. The cost of food, fuel and energy has risen exponentially – and, at the time of writing, further increases are anticipated. Notwithstanding the mitigation measures put in place by the UK and Scottish Governments, many families will face a very difficult winter this year.

The average household in Perth and Kinross will see their annual budget stretched by £2,958 –for essentials like heating their home, putting food on the table, taking the bus to work, having the use of a mobile phone and broadband at home, and paying for household goods and services, clothing and footwear. For many families who are currently struggling to make ends meet, this is an impossible hill to climb.

We have taken urgent action to put in place mitigation measures for those affected by the Cost-of-Living Crisis. A Cost-of-Living Crisis Strategy was agreed by Council in September and is being implemented.

Our approach has been to:

- ensure our residents have the information they need to access all the support that is available to them.
- set aside significant funding to help households in Perth and Kinross that are struggling to meet their basic needs.
- work with partners to ensure that we are co-ordinating and maximising the impact of our collective efforts

We have created a Financial Insecurity Fund, increased investment in welfare rights, money and debt advice, increased funds available for energy efficiency advice and made additional funds available for the provision of community food.

Currently Perth and Kinross Council has committed £5.2 million to the mitigation of the Cost-of-Living Crisis for those in greatest need.

We are currently progressing with a Winter Response Plan to enable a co-ordinated approach to provide people with the support they need.

We have jointly funded a Cold Homes app commissioned by NHS Tayside to enable frontline workers to provide energy advice to tenants and residents.

We will closely monitor the situation facing families across Perth and Kinross over the coming months. We will collect data and evidence on how they are affected by poverty and the Cost-of-Living Crisis – and we will also be hosting a series of listening events in communities to find out what parents want and need from us now, in this current crisis, and for the longer term.

We will be working at locality level to form multi-disciplinary teams who can work across service and organisational boundaries to deliver a whole family, whole community approach to tackling child poverty. We will reach out to partners in the public and third sector to find out what they are doing and how to add it to our Offer for children and families affected by poverty. Ultimately, the only way to mitigate poverty and to create a level playing field for all children is to build inclusive communities where **all** children can grow, learn and thrive.

Note

The child poverty figures for Perth and Kinross which are used in this report derive from the End Child Poverty Statistics for 2020/21 which is based on the Family Resources Survey (FRS). The figures given for 2021/22 were not considered to be as robust as in former years. In 2021, several factors impacted on FRS response rates and the distribution of characteristics among FRS survey respondents, including:

- *Change in the mode of interviewing from face to face to telephone*
- *Changes in the methods used to elicit responses from survey participants as the year progressed*
- *Changes in people's behaviours and circumstances during the coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic which may have made them more or less likely to respond to a household survey*

Child Poverty Strategy

The Child Poverty Strategy was set out in the 2020 Local Child Poverty Action Plan, within this strategy Perth and Kinross Council, NHS Tayside and Perth and Kinross Community Planning Partnership adopted the following Strategic Aims:

- **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**

Since then, we have:

- agreed indicators for the measurement of child poverty in Perth & Kinross
- undertaken a mapping exercise around child poverty interventions in Perth and Kinross so that we know what is happening and where
- commissioned qualitative research with people with lived experience to find out how poverty impacts on their lives and the lives of their children, how they experience our services and what they would like us to do to help them mitigate and move beyond poverty
- used this information to develop a Children's Scorecard which measures the reach and effectiveness of our work with children and families affected by poverty
- developed and implemented 3 child poverty action plans covering increasing income from employment, reducing the essential cost of living and increasing income from social security and other in-kind benefits

Resources:

[Lived experience of child poverty in Perth and Kinross \(Nov 2021\)](#)

[Children's Scorecard 2022 - 2026](#)

[Tackling Child Poverty Action report 2019](#)

[All in to End Child Poverty 2019/2020](#)

[All in to End Child Poverty Progress Report Nov 2020 - May 2021](#)

The Child Poverty Working Group is being refreshed with new members from a broader range of stakeholder groups including the Third Sector, Community Planning members and the Chair has passed from Perth and Kinross Council to NHS Tayside. The strategic aims of the Child Poverty Strategy remain the same, however the working groups have been re-shaped and align with Best Start, Bright Futures:

- **Workstream 1** – Providing opportunities and support needed to enter, sustain and progress in work (employability and skills, connectivity and childcare, economic opportunity)
- **Workstream 2** – Maximising the support available to families to lead dignified lives and meet their basic needs (person-support, social security and income maximisation)
- **Workstream 3** – Supporting the next generation to survive and thrive (next generation)

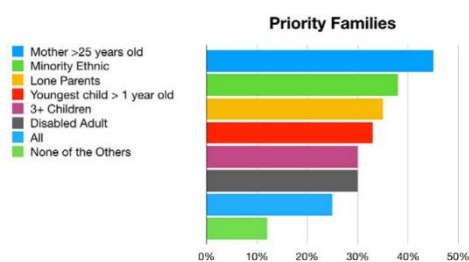
Child Poverty in Perth and Kinross

Our understanding of child poverty in Perth and Kinross has developed significantly in the course of the last year with the publication of [Lived Experience of Child Poverty in Perth and Kinross](#) and our [Perth & Kinross Children's Scorecard](#).

The Lived experience of Child Poverty in Perth and Kinross was largely based on the testimony of 22 families from the priority family groups.¹ It focused on their experience of poverty and their service needs and canvassed their experiences of accessing and utilising services. We used the research to develop a Children's Scorecard which measures the reach and effectiveness of our work with children and families affected by poverty. The Children's Scorecard reports on key areas where Priority Parents identified need for change improvements. This information was discussed with the relevant services and performance indicators agreed. The areas covered in the Scorecard – and improvement indicators that were developed as a result cover:

- Wellbeing
- Stigma
- Crisis Support
- Housing
- Education
- Childcare
- Transport

What Parents from the Priority Groups Told Us About Poverty



- **Living in Perth and Kinross is a good place to live**

On the whole, Perth and Kinross as a region, and the localities within, are

¹ Lone Parents, Families with a disabled member, ethnic minority families, large families, families with a young mother and families with a child under 1 year. (Scottish Govt Definitions)

viewed positively by families experiencing poverty. Opportunity for ready access to leisure, formal and informal, is widely appreciated.

- **Luck**

Families experiencing poverty in Perth and Kinross often used the descriptor 'luck' to rationalise positive experiences. This conveys a sense of gratitude for what they have, and an acknowledgement that others may not be as fortunate as themselves. It also suggests that a sense of rights and entitlement does not prevail.

- **Rural Perthshire trade-off**

Many families experiencing poverty accept or understand poor provision – for example in housing, or rural transport – as part of the price to be paid for where they live.

- **Intense poverty exists**

There is evidence of abject poverty in Perth and Kinross. Sometimes, such poverty is a passing intensity, which may be triggered by unforeseen circumstance (e.g., breakdown of a household appliance; loss of employment; change in family arrangements). Intense poverty may subside, rather than disappear, becoming an enduring challenge of seasonal pinch points, e.g., increased living costs during summer when children are not in school for part of the week, or in winter when energy bills are higher, and when Christmas brings additional expense.

- **Family support**

For those with access to it (which does not apply to all families experiencing poverty), the support provided by families – at critical stress points and in everyday life – is acknowledged and highly valued. Families are a key source of childcare support, and a resource that is drawn on in times of crisis.

- **Time pressure**

Time pressures are reported by many families experiencing poverty. The challenges of managing children's lives and the challenges of combining work and family life are the primary sources of this stress. Cost of living, housing, transport and food expenditure is reported to place strain on family budgets, particularly in rural areas.

- **Cumulative impacts**

Many of the challenges faced by families experiencing poverty are encountered by other families. However, the difficulties in facing these challenges on a low income – without the ability to draw on a safety net of financial resource – exacerbate these problems. Similarly, the cumulative impact and interaction of these problems impacts on family life.

- **Stigma**

Many of the families described issues related to stigma, with narratives indicating stigmatisation was even experienced when accessing support.

Priority Parents Experience of Local Services

- **Referrals work**

There is much evidence of effective cross-referral and integration of support pathways. Where this works, it is not received as being ‘passed on’, but rather as being directed to the right source. Successful referrals were reported within services, and across services. Positive impacts of this included being connected to support in a timely manner, which was critical for prevention of intensification of problems.

- **Key individuals**

Many parents experiencing poverty made reference to a key individual who provided them with critical support and/or who ‘made things happen’. These interventions were often understood as someone going ‘above and beyond’ duty, rather than delivering routine service. These sources of key support were found across a range of service areas.

- **Individuals, departments and the Council**

Although people experiencing poverty did not always praise individuals or specific departments/services, on the whole, there was much more evidence of positive than negative appraisal of services delivered. In contrast, “the Council” tended to be viewed more negatively.

- **How services are delivered**

The way in which services are delivered is important. There were several examples of people experiencing poverty reporting that staff had shown a lack of empathy toward them or had failed to appreciate the situation in which they found themselves. Poor communication was noted for some, and public information was found to be lacking.

- **Utilising local sources of information**

It was striking how many parents, turned to local sources for information about what was available to them. These local sources were not Council-led but were often informal groups that had emerged utilising platforms, such as Facebook or WhatsApp.

How we are using intelligence from Priority Parents to drive service improvements


Wellbeing - Current and Desired Performance

Indicator	Current Performance	Desired Performance
Information for Families on sources of wellbeing and mental health support	PKC Parent Portal contains information on how to support wellbeing and where to go for help; NHS Tayside CAHMS Facebook page; The Lighthouse website resources page.	Increased traffic to Parent Portal Establishment of website to provide one stop shop for parental advice by TRIC
Funding for programmes or interventions to support the mental health and wellbeing of children and young people.	£50,000 to fund Home Start support for mental health of parent and children at home. Aberlour and Barnardo's funding.	Increase support available to children and young people experiencing wellbeing challenges
Number of families with 0-2 year olds in nursery provision	38 families	Increase the number of families entitled to a place, to access a nursery provision
Evidence of family centred, multi-disciplinary working across mental health, learning difficulties, domestic violence and addiction.	Unborn Baby Multi Agency Support Group identifies pregnant women who need additional support	Increase in referrals from partner agencies outwith NHS Tayside.
Learning from social needs screening project is captured	Social needs screening is not currently undertaken. this is a pipeline project at the scoping stage with the Child Protection Committee.	Social needs screening following all child concern reports identifies and addresses the impact of poverty on those children and families about whom there has been a child concern report raised.


The Children's Scorecard reports on key areas where the Priority Parents in the Lived Experience research project identified need for change or improvements. This information was discussed with the relevant services and performance

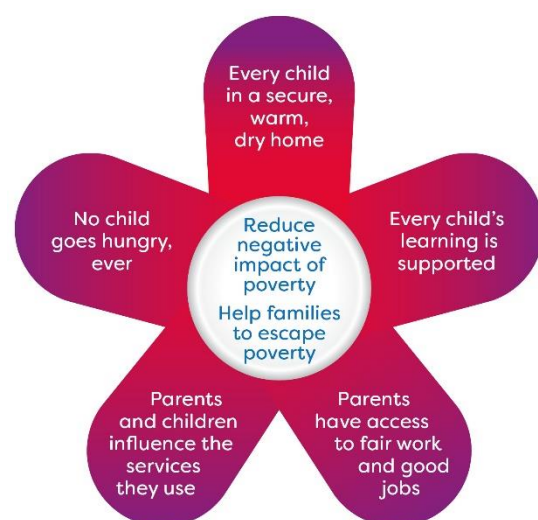
indicators agreed. The first Children's Scorecard reports on current and desired performance in each area.

The Lived experience research also informed the development of the "Offer" for children and families affected by poverty which is now being taken out into communities to be further developed with parents and Priority Families.



Wellbeing

Link to the "Offer"	Parents asked for	Indicators
<p>Reduce the negative impact of poverty</p> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Help for families with issues around mental health or wellbeing • Timely support for mental health for children and young people experiencing stress/distress 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Information for families on sources of wellbeing and mental health support • Funding for programmes or interventions to support the mental health and wellbeing of children and young people. • Number of families with 0-2 year olds in nursery provision • Evidence of family centred, multidisciplinary working across social work, learning disabilities, addiction and substance misuse • Learning from social needs screening project is captured



Measuring Child Poverty

The [Children's Scorecard](#) includes the Measuring Child Poverty data and reports on the 26 indicators identified in the Local Child Poverty Action Report 2020/21 and indicates if progress has been made.

Number of Children
Living in Poverty



5155 or 22.6%
2019/2020
5138 or 22.2%
2018/19



Income from Employment



**72,100 or 74.6% of
People are in Work**

6800 fewer than in
2019



**13000 or 16.5%
of the workforce
earn less than the Living
Wage of £9.50 an hour**

1,000 fewer than in 2019. We don't
know if these people lost their jobs or secured better
pay



**8.2% are
Underemployed
(they would like to work more hours)**

Small Change on the last
figures of 6.9%



**24,000
are in lower paid
work**

An increase of 3,200 on
2020 figures



Job Density is 0.77

This means that there are 77 jobs for every 100 people
aged 16 - 64 (2020)



In 2018 there were 82
jobs for every 100 people
aged 16 - 64.

£574.90

Average Earnings

**Pay Gap with Scotland widens to
£47.10**

Wages increase by a small margin - but
pay gap widens significantly



**Pay Gap with
Scotland £11.90 in
2019 and £24 in 2020**

Gender Pay Gap

£140 a week for full time
workers.

£228.50 a week for all
workers

Increased by £32 a week on 2020 for full
time workers



**Perth & Kinross tops the league table for Employment Rate Gap
between men and women in Scotland**



Data Challenges

One of the data challenges we face is getting Perth and Kinross wide or localised data on the Priority Families.

- we know that just under half of those living in poverty are lone parent families, and that 1 in 5 families have a disabled family member.
- the data on ethnic minority families is from the 2011 Census and no longer reflects the demography of Perth and Kinross. The EU Settlement Scheme places Perth and Kinross as the 8th highest local authority area in Scotland with 11,800 applications and 5,900 settled with a further 4,650 pre-settled. Our 3 main application countries are Poland, Romania and Bulgaria. A large number of these are children and young people (1930).
- we know that there are 737 lone parent families who have a disabled family member – but have struggled to identify data for other areas of intersectionality.

We are currently collaborating with Improvement Scotland and the Scottish Government on their pilot project looking at Child Poverty in Remote, Rural and Island Areas where some of the data challenges experienced in regions where population density is low are under discussion.

Crunch Issues

The deep dive into the data so far has revealed some issues particular to Perth and Kinross.

- it is a low paid economy with a significant and widening pay gap with the rest of Scotland; 16.5% of our workforce earn less than the Living Wage of £9.50 an hour and 24,000 are in low paid work
- the pay gap with the rest of Scotland widened to £47.10 a week – from £11.90 in 2019 and £24 in 2020
- it has a significant gender pay gap at £228.50 a week for all workers and £140 a week for full-time workers
- it tops the league table for the employment rate gap between men and women
- fewer households have access to social housing and 1 in 3 private tenants experience extreme fuel poverty – twice the rate of those in social housing

Using Local Data

We spent some time drilling down to develop our understanding of poverty at a more localised level. We have developed a powerBI tool which is easy to use and provides standardised and reliable data on poverty at a neighbourhood level.

We are currently establishing multi-disciplinary teams to enable greater collaboration with communities, teams, and partners. The information held within the PowerBI tool will enable a greater understanding of what is happening at a neighbourhood level to provide an evidence base for developing local solutions.

This rich tapestry of data and intelligence around the causes and consequences of poverty have informed the development of our Child Poverty Delivery Plan 2022 -2026.

There are further challenges to be met. We are now investigating how data profiling can be used to identify and connect families who are affected by poverty to the help and support they need and want. Some of the challenges are presented by ensuring that we comply with Data Protection legislation, and some of the data challenges exist because of rurality and the difficulty of finding and usable data sets for Priority Families in rural and remote rural locations.

What We Did

Cost-of-Living Crisis - £5.2M committed to supporting struggling families

Perth and Kinross Council was quick to realise the profound challenges that the Cost-of-Living Crisis would present for families and others affected by poverty. The Executive Leadership Team focussed their attention on the issue from February 2022 onwards and with regular reporting across the Council' Services going to the ELT, by the end of May 2022 a significant resource had been allocated to mitigation activities.

Poverty/Cost of Living Mitigation		£000s
Low Income Support Payment	All households in receipt of council tax reduction, 16/17 year olds in Through Care/After Care https://www.pkc.gov.uk/llisp	£1,074
	Cost of Living Crisis Payments to Kinship and Foster Carers	£120,
Financial Insecurity Fund	Help with priority debts including rent, fuel, and council tax	£600
Augmenting Scottish Welfare Fund	Increasing capacity for low income households to access crisis grants	£400
Tenancy Sustainment Fund	PKC tenants – increase of £104K	£254
Fuel Poverty	Fuel poverty and energy efficiency advice	£160
	Warm Home Packs	£50
	Warm Spaces	£150
Schools	Summer Activities	£242
	Holiday Food Insecurity Programmes	£154
Food Fund	Community Food Initiatives	£327
	Community Food Initiatives (Warm Spaces)	£120
Welfare Rights	Support and Advice	£74
Wider Mitigation		
School	Meals during holiday period	£315
	Expansion of free school meals P4 and P5	£1,142

Poverty/Cost of Living Mitigation		£000s
Anti-Poverty Task Force	Engagement payments for people with lived experience – Anti Poverty Task Force	£5
Business Networks	Leverage of support from businesses to tackle poverty	£25

Monitoring Statistics and Data Sets have been identified for monitoring the ongoing impact of the Cost-of-Living Crisis, and Situation Reports have been received from key third sector and community organisations who are working close to the ground with families and individuals to obtain testimonies and case studies from families experiencing financial stress as a result of the spiralling cost of living.

Statistics and Data include:

- Money owed to Perth and Kinross Council
- School breakfast clubs and school meals
- Rent
- Council Tax

Requests for Financial/Other Help

- Referrals to Welfare Rights Team
- Referrals to Perth Citizen's Advice Bureau (CAB)
- Referrals to Perth Foodbank
- Free School Meals applications
- School Clothing Grant applications
- Education Maintenance Allowance applications
- Scottish Welfare Fund Crisis Grant Applications
- Tenancy Sustainment Fund applications
- Financial Inclusion Fund applications
- Home Heat Fund applications

Each data set on its own does not tell us much, however taken together they will provide a clearer picture of how the cost-of-living crisis is impacting on families. Analysis of the data so far tells us that there are early signs of financial stress being experienced by families which manifest in:

- significant increases in demand for welfare and money advice services and a 262% increase in debt related to household utility bills
- significant increase on pre-pandemic levels in application rates for the Scottish Welfare Fund Crisis Grants

However, the general picture shows that the full impact of the Cost-of-Living Crisis has yet to appear in the statistics and data. These will be monitored on an ongoing basis.

Monitoring activity has revealed slow but steady increases in demands for advice and signposting services, rising concerns about the cost of food and concerns about ability to pay winter fuel bills. At least one community, North Muirton (the most deprived in Perth & Kinross) experiencing a 183% increase in usage of Community Foodshare.

"E, 76, widow, uses the Community Fridge4All project on a weekly basis. She has said she is doing this so she can put away money to save for higher utility bills this winter."
F, 33, is an employed teaching assistant. her husband also works full-time. They are struggling to manage their budget because of the rise in the cost of utilities. They access the Community Fridge twice a week.

G, 64, is unemployed and is an unpaid carer for a number of her grandchildren, a niece and nephew so their parents can work. She struggles on benefits and uses the Community Fridge4All to help feed the children and herself.

P, Romanian, 34, works full-time and his wife works part-time. They are both in low-income employment. They believe they are not entitled to UK benefits. They use the Community Fridge to stretch their budget."

Other measures identified in response to the Cost-of-Living Crisis are:

- a Fuel Poverty Steering Group has been established and involves representatives from across Perth & Kinross Council, our Community Planning Partners, and Energy Suppliers
- a Cold Homes app has been commissioned by NHS Tayside and jointly funded by Perth & Kinross Council to enable frontline workers to provide energy advice to tenants and residents
- a Free Food, Lunch Clubs and Cosy Spaces locations are being identified and an advice leaflet is being prepared to let people know where they can go for free food, hot food and warmth

St John's Academy Homework Hub

Library staff, primary and secondary teachers supported the homework hub. Children and young people participated in a range of supported activities. Primary school pupils were given the time and space to complete their homework. Primary teachers were available to provide support where necessary. Secondary pupils either used the support as an opportunity to benefit from class teachers help, ensure a quiet place to complete homework or help with specific 1-1 literacy or

English support where needed as appropriate. The teacher for physical education also attended planned sessions ensuring that there was a focus on health and wellbeing for children and young people.

The project proved to be popular with children and young people. The headteacher arranged funding for Secondary pupils for free travel, via the local bus service (before free travel for under 22s was introduced). This ensured additional after school opportunities were not impeded by financial barriers.

Family Focus 'One Pot Surprise' Project

The Family Focus Team identified that many of the families with whom they work are living in significant poverty. The families have often not had opportunities to learn how to make low-cost nutritious meals and many did not have the equipment they needed to do so. Cooking and eating together provides an opportunity for parents and children to spend positive time and learn new skills together.

The team distributed 'One Pot Surprise' kits for families and a range of materials to support families to produce low cost and healthy meals. Each kit included a hand blender, knife, chopping board, measuring jug, saucepan, dry ingredients for soup and 2 wipe clean recipe cards with clear visual instructions. When they are given to families, the fresh ingredients for soup are provided. The recipe cards show what adult and child portions look like and describe how to make soup that is suitable for babies.

Providing the kits to families allows workers to speak about the benefits of soup for children and adults in terms of being cheap and easy to make, filling, reducing constipation and good nutrition. Feedback has been that parents appreciate the blender as it enables them to 'hide' vegetables in soup. Alongside the recipe cards, videos were made to show parents how they can make the soup which is ideal for visual learners and those who may not be able to read or read easily. Some prizes of local shopping cards were organised, and families have submitted photos of their home-made soup, showing themselves and their children enjoying making and eating the soup together. [One Pot Surprise - Carrot & Lentil Soup - YouTube](#)

Delivering on Whole Council Approaches

School Meals Debt Triggers Welfare Advice Offer

As a result of concerns surrounding school meals debt, the Welfare Rights Team proactively contacted all households with child-related debts (school meals, breakfast clubs and after school clubs). The team found that almost all households with school meals debt qualified for free school meals. The team helped 119 families with school meals debt to the value of £16,796.

Kinship Care Team referred 33 families for additional welfare rights support to ensure that they had access to benefits advice, assistance and representation.

"Social workers will ask parents or carers for permission to refer them to our Welfare Rights Team for income maximisation. We work with parents or carers to help them create budgeting plans and address debt issues which can feel overwhelming. Sometimes, with parents or carers permission, we will make a referral to Shelter for Housing Support. We apply for funds from various sources to ensure that there is money for school trips and to buy clothing and equipment that might be needed for them like boots, cagoules and torches. Families are given annual tickets for Active Kids and Auchingarroch to ensure they have some nice days out and very often we arrange lifts for parents and children and pick them up at the end of the day.

We also apply for funds for essential purchases, like a washing machine, fridge freezer, vacuum cleaner, floor coverings, bedding and furniture. There are no community launderettes, and a washing machine is essential if you are to protect hygiene and dignity. We can provide some funds (using a Section 22 fund) to help with gas and electricity in times of crisis. Then there are funds for presents at Christmas time and we spend a lot of time collecting and delivering toys and hampers in time for Christmas. We always make sure parents have travel warrants or cash in advance if they have to attend a hearing or to make a contact arrangement and will often drive parents and children to hospital appointments to save them travel costs and time. We are acutely aware of the shame that parents and carers feel when they cannot afford to provide for their children, and we do our best to alleviate this by adopting a holistic approach and reaching beyond our service for help for these families."

Social Worker, Perth and Kinross Council

Working Together – Perth & Kinross Council and NHS Tayside

Family Nurse Partnership Referrals to Welfare Rights Team at Perth & Kinross Council - Midwives, health visitors and family nurses are referring clients to Perth & Kinross Council's Welfare Rights Team. 283 referrals were received from these healthcare professionals which resulted in £146,000 of client financial gain.

"Family Nurses have found this an easy referral system to use, which supports them to get the best information for their clients. Clients mostly report that they are contacted quickly by the welfare rights service and that they feel supported through their welfare questions and queries".

Staff feedback (Family Nurse Partnership Supervisor, NHS Tayside)

Joined Up Action between Perth and Kinross Council and NHS Tayside

NHS Tayside and Perth and Kinross Council have jointly funded a Cold Homes app for frontline workers to enable them to give residents advice on how to keep warm and save energy this winter.

"A young mother was referred to the employability service and she was able to get a job at Perth Royal Infirmary. But she couldn't take it up – even in work she could not afford the £1000 a month childcare bill that would come with the job as it stood. She was in despair and on the brink of turning down the job. Our employability team found her money to help pay upfront childcare costs of around £700. They called the Senior Charge Nurse who would be her boss and explained the situation. The Senior Charge Nurse spoke to NHS Tayside's HR department and her shift pattern was changed and this massively reduced her childcare costs. This is what we mean about delivering a one council, whole family, whole community approach. It is not overly complicated, often it is just looking at the situation and making a few calls to resolve a seemingly intractable problem. Thanks to the efforts of colleagues in Perth and Kinross Council's and NHS Tayside, this lady is now in work, her child is in nursery, and has a child minder and this family has a bright future."

PKC Employability Team

Working with Third Sector Partners

Housing Services Financial Inclusion Project

Perth & Kinross Council has invested £100,000 from the Housing Revenue Account to establish a Financial Inclusion Project for tenants. This has enabled Housing staff working on the Financial Inclusion Project to cold call 1,236 tenants during working hours, in the evening and at weekends to ask how they were coping, and whether they needed any help with applying for benefits. The focus was not on rent but how the household was managing financially. As a result, referrals were made to PKC's Welfare Rights Team and Perth CAB, and referrals were also made to the SCARF/HEAT teams for energy efficiency advice.

67 tenants were referred to PKC's welfare rights team and 409 referrals were made to Perth CAB who helped 125 tenants with 390 issues as a result. Perth CAB's average client financial gain for those who qualified for additional benefits/financial support was £1640, and £205,000 for the 3 months to March 2022.

Enabling minority ethnic communities to access advice and information about benefits

Welfare Rights work in partnership with [PKAVS Minority Communities Hub](#) to ensure that minority community groups can readily access advice, information and benefit appeals representation. We have a number of promotional leaflets translated into some of the most common languages in our area e.g., Ukrainian, Russian, Bulgarian, Polish and Romanian. We have provided training to PKAVS workers, and we have a seamless referral agreement in place. Community led groups supporting minority ethnic communities are now plugged into PKC's welfare rights team making access to help and advice easier for our Chinese Community and Perth Minorities Association.

Perth Welfare Society

Volunteers provided 2189 individuals and families with one-to-one support/signposting and referrals to other services. They provide a wide range of activities from a befriending service, help with applying for benefits/housing/health and social care services, hot meals twice a week for vulnerable adults and families. Chai and Chat sessions for men run every two weeks and ladies enjoy exercise classes once a week. Children and Adults arts and craft classes are offered as are Mindspace training to help boost mental health and wellbeing. (insert pictures)

Tayside Hardship Project

Perth & Kinross Council's Welfare Rights Team are working with Aberlour to provide a comprehensive and enhanced welfare rights service to vulnerable families with dependent children. Families can access the Financial Insecurity Fund provided by PKC and an Urgent Assistance Fund provided by Aberlour.

Perth and Kinross Council Carer's Support Team and Perth CAB

In total 479 carers across Perth and Kinross received welfare rights and money advice from Perth CAB resulting in client financial gain of £343,000.

NHS Tayside and Perth CAB are gearing up to deliver a money, benefit and debt advice service to patients in the Murray Royal Hospital. This will expand the current service available within the Carseview Centre.

"The fact that an individual's benefits were assessed pre-discharge and support was provided to enable them to claim a Community Care Grant meant that unnecessary delays to discharge were avoided. Service users were confident their benefits were in order and were less anxious about their exit back to the community"
Staff Feedback (Senior Practitioner, NHS Tayside)

"I know things would have been a lot more difficult had it not been for the Carseview Welfare Advice. I couldn't be more grateful. This is an essential service and has impacted myself and my son's first year of his life more than I could ever express. Thank you".

Patient Feedback (NHS Tayside)

Perth and Kinross Welfare Rights Team and Perth CAB together delivered £10 million in client financial gain for struggling households.

Perth and Kinross Council

- Provided £20,000 of funding to Perth Foodbank which provided emergency food to 1795 children
- Invested £15 million to increase the pool of affordable housing by buying back ex-Council houses
- Provided 3000 children with digital access to support learning at home
- Secured £2.1 million to deliver employability, skills training and support
- Established 5 Skills Academies in Hospitality, Digital and Green Skills, and HGV and LGV Licenses for entry to the Haulage Industry
- Disbursed £4.9 million in a range of Cash First approaches

Joining it all Up

An Anti-Poverty Task Force has been established to provide independent, active leadership and support for cross sector collaboration and action to help those most affected by poverty and the cost-of-living crisis. The task force will engage the private, public and third sectors as well as individual citizens. It will:

- champion the reduction in poverty levels and associated stigma across Perth and Kinross
- use its influence across the public and private sector and in our communities to drive necessary and urgent action
- provide a co-ordinating focal point for all the current activities aimed at reducing inequalities including child poverty
- shape further development of actions and activities through co-production, guidance, and feedback
- oversee the delivery of mitigating actions and their impact through regular monitoring.

The 18-member Task Force will operate as an independent advisory body with Perth and Kinross Council providing secretariat support.

Child Poverty Delivery Plan 2022 – 2026

We decided to move to a 4-year Delivery Plan to enable us to take a more strategic and ambitious approach to shifting the dial on child poverty than is possible with annual planning cycles.

Our **Child Poverty Delivery Plan 2022 – 2026** which is included in this report aligns with **Best Start, Bright Futures, the Child Poverty Delivery Plan** of the Scottish Government which covers the same period.

Strategic Aims

- 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

Objectives

Over the next 4 years Perth & Kinross Council will work with NHS Tayside and our Community Planning Partners to:

- 1. Provide opportunities and support needed to enter, sustain and progress in work (employability and skills, housing and economic opportunity, connectivity and childcare)**

Sharpening Focus:

- Supporting parents into employment which pays the Living Wage or more
- Taking action to close the gender employment and pay gaps
- Addressing challenges presented by rurality

- 2. Maximise the support available to families to lead dignified lives and meet their basic needs (person-centred support, social security and income maximisation).**

Sharpening Focus:

- Addressing the rural poverty premium
- Addressing the needs of the gypsy traveller community and other minority ethnic communities

- Addressing stigma which prevents parents and families from seeking help and support

3. Supporting the next generation to survive and thrive (next generation)

Sharpening Focus:

- Closing the poverty-related attainment gap
- Addressing the challenges faced by disabled young people entering further and higher education and the jobs market
- Addressing mental health and wellbeing issues for parents and children affected by poverty

4. Deliver a one council, whole family, whole community approach to connecting children and families to the help and support they need to mitigate and move beyond poverty

Sharpening Focus:

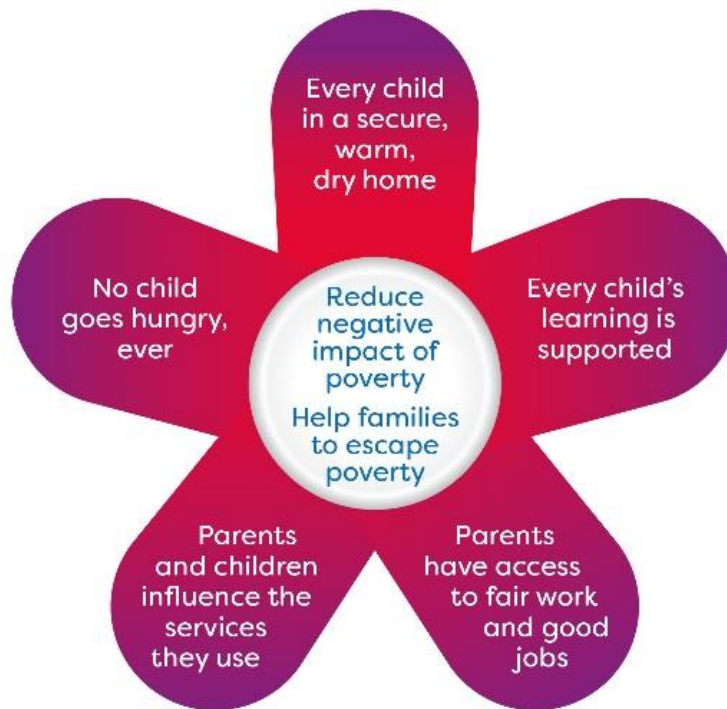
- Changing the way we work to use data driven approaches to identify and connect with families affected by poverty
- Offer no wrong door approaches to connecting families to the help and support they need and want
- Developing multi-disciplinary, cross organisational working in teams at locality level to build inclusive communities which strengthen the web of support on offer to families and children affected by poverty

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 are about to deepen our engagement with families affected by poverty and with the community organisations which currently support them through a series of local listening events.

The Offer will develop over time as we go out to communities and listen and engage with parents, communities, businesses, and citizens. The Offer is aspirational but not wholly within the gift of the council. It will require collaborative working across all stakeholders to achieve these aims.







Appendix 1 - Child Poverty Action Report – 2021/2022

What we said we would do - and what we did

Workstream 1 – Maximising income from employment		
We said we would help	We did help	
145 Young People into vocational training	241 young people into vocational training	
56 Young People Achieving Qualifications		
45 Young People into FE/HE training	39 young people into FE/HE training	
77 Young People into Work	76 young people into work	
16 Young People into Modern Apprenticeships	25 young people into modern apprenticeships	
80 Young people on a supported activity programme	50 young people were supported on Activity Agreements and 46 young people attended Skills Academies.	
58 (75% of those taking part) Young People sustaining employment	51 (75% of those taking part) sustained employment	
Deliver Wage Incentives to 60 Employers @ £4000 over 52 weeks	60 employers received with enhanced package of £6500 per employer and £1500 for additional training opportunities	
Rural Employment Initiative - Create 23 Jobs	21 new jobs created with 10 in the pipeline	
Futures for Families - Parents into Work	8 parents were helped into work through the Parental Employment Support Fund	

Workstream 2 – Reducing the essential cost of living	
We said we would help	We did help
Review the “Cost of the school day” programme	Curricular costs in secondary schools have been removed for all young people with no negative impact upon their educational experience in those areas.
Relaunch the “Cost of the school day” programme and provide schools with a video and training materials.	We have been working closely with schools to ensure they all consider the Cost of the School Day in their plans. Video has not been produced.
Take ongoing actions to reduce Cost of the School Day including uniform, travel, school trips, eating, school clubs, fundraising and events, home learning, attitudes to poverty. Reduce the cost of practical subjects in secondary schools and investigate uniform recycling programme.	Schools are currently reviewing their approaches to deciding upon elements of daily school life such as school uniform in consultation with young people and their families. Very few school trips have been re-introduced and schools have been assessing the trips they used to offer and considering if there are young people who will not be able to access them and if they are now viable. Practical subject costs have been removed. Some schools have implemented uniform recycling and others are making plans to implement.
We will promote Big Energy Savings Week with our CPP Partners.	Incorporated into Winter "Feeling the Pinch" campaign

Wider ongoing engagement with local social housing providers to share information gathered through affordability model and further discussion to promote affordable rents	None of the social landlords offered this information/briefing have expressed an interest in taking it up.
Private Landlord Forum to be planned, to raise awareness of child and fuel poverty within the private sector.	Private Sector Landlord Forum is no longer in place.
Evaluate our transport activities to reduce the cost of travel. Identify potential for travel concessions for families during weekends, holidays and after school - Bid for Smarter Choices, Smarter Places funding to provide some subsidised transport.	A new subsidised bus route was provided in West Kinross-shire. Improved public transport links from Crieff to Perth College UHI.
Option to load free transport on Young Scot cards still to be considered.	Free travel has now been extended to under 22's. 9862 under 22s have received their free travel passes as at the end of June 2022. This is a take-up rate of 37%.
Improving people's access to affordable credit and supporting financial inclusion - consider credit rating project for Local Authority tenants.	£100,000 invested in a 2-year Financial Inclusion Project consideration to be given for this to be extended. Sustaining Tenancy Fund has been increased to £254,00 per annum, an increase of £100,000 on pre- pandemic figures.

Improve uptake of free school meals by 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; increased awareness of FSM and how to apply.	Application processes for Free School Meals will be streamlined for the August 22/23 intake. It is anticipated that this will lead to increased take-up.
Establish a governance structure for the Food Share Network, establishing a permanent food hub in Perth in conjunction with Transform (Fareshare).	A Food Network has been established involving third sector organisations across Perth & Kinross. Giraffe were provided with £65,000 of funding to establish a food hub in Perth to support food share schemes across Perth and Kinross.

Workstream 3 – Maximising income from social security and other benefits	
We said we would help	What we did help
Explore more streamlined processes for all Council concessions	<p>A One Council- One Form approach is being adopted. work is ongoing to streamline the application process for both Free School Meals and School Clothing Grants for the 22/23 school intake.</p> <p>PKC is working out a legal basis for data sharing with key partners including the DWP and Social Security Scotland to enable income maximisation for customers of our welfare rights team.</p>
2000 families from Priority Groups will be offered a welfare rights check	The Welfare Rights Team proactively contacted over 2000 families to offer a comprehensive benefit check. 1,100 families were given comprehensive benefits advice and assistance. It has been harder to determine if these families were in the Priority Groups as this information is not readily available.
Take up rates for the Scottish Child Payment reach 85%	85% take up rates achieved
Health professionals work collaboratively with Welfare Rights Team and effective referral pathways are established across universal health and education services.	The Welfare Rights Team has received funding from the Tayside Regional Improvement Collaborative since 2018 to provide a service to low income families who are pregnant or who have dependent children. The service is based around referrals from midwives, Health Visitors, and the Family Nurse Partnership.

	<p>Last year we received 283 referrals from these Healthcare practitioners which resulted in £146,000.00 in benefit gains for the families referred. We deliver talks and presentations to these practitioners on an on-going basis to ensure that we raise awareness of the service we provide and to promote the difference that we can make to low-income families.</p> <p>We asked our customers if the service was easy to access and 100% of the respondents said "yes".</p> <p>Adult Inpatient Nursing Admission Documentation now includes questions on money worries and employment and has been embedded across all NHS Inpatient Services. The documentation has been tested within Perth Royal Infirmary and will be rolled out during the next financial year.</p> <p>Live Warm and Well – Hospital Discharge Pilot with Paediatrics and Respiratory Services established a referral system where people with life limiting diseases like Cystic Fibrosis or Lung Cancer were referred for advice prior to hospital discharge.</p>
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Workstream 4 – Breaking the cycle of poverty	
We said we would help	We did help
Collaborate review of the Pupil Equity Fund	This is reviewed annually alongside PEF Guidance for Schools. A PEF Planning Tool was developed in collaboration with ECS and Education Scotland to improve tracking of impact of PEF spend on pupils.
Review and Learn from Midwife Project as enablers for families in poverty to access opportunities to maximise income and reduce costs.	A performance report on the first year of the Midwife Project has been provided. This has yet to be discussed within PKC for lessons learned.
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.	Mapping exercise completed, led to development of Children's Scorecard where indicators to measure performance are logged
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	Children's Scorecard developed following - Measuring Poverty (26 Indicators); feedback from Lived Experience of Child Poverty in Perth and Kinross, development of Perth and Kinross offer for families affected by poverty
Provide a video and training and offered to CP Partners for inclusion in their staff development and learning programmes.	Video produced; training materials provided to Public Health Scotland who took on this commitment.
A public information campaign will spread key messages around child poverty and direct parents to sources of help	The "Feeling the Pinch" and "Cost of Living Crisis" campaigns have been run, the Feeling the Pinch campaign was also reviewed.

We will scope out data driven approaches to identifying households where children are affected by poverty and delivering tailored support via key worker approaches	This work is ongoing. We are working with Improvement Scotland and the SAVVI project to identify if GDPR laws allow for this work to be undertaken.
A feasibility study for a Social Needs Screening programme will be undertaken, a toolkit, training course and pilot project developed	Social needs Screening project proposal has been developed, toolkit written, and we are currently seeking test of change funding to implement this project.

Appendix 2 - Child Poverty Action Plan 2022/23

Workstream 1 - Providing opportunities and support needed to enter, sustain, and progress in work (employability and skills, housing, connectivity and childcare, economic opportunity)

Challenges

Reaching Priority Families

Perth & Kinross Specific Challenges

- Supporting parents into employment which pays the Living Wage
- Taking action to close the gender employment and pay gaps
- Addressing challenges presented by rurality

(SMART) Action Description and desired outcome	Responsible Services	Due Date	Review Date
We will increase the number of affordable homes let from PKC own stock	Housing	March 2023	March 2023
We will increase opportunities for eligible families based on low incomes to access childcare across PKC.	ECS	Ongoing	March 2023
We will ensure there are sufficient childcare places for 2 – 5 year olds across public/community/private provision to support parental employment and endeavour to do the same for 0-2 year olds as SG resources to support expansion become available.	ECS	Ongoing	March 2023

We will create an online resource that provides Parents and Carers with up to date and timely information to support their child or family.	ECS	March 2023	March 2023
We will liaise with funded providers to progress their commitment to paying the real Living Wage to staff delivering funded hours of ELC.	ECS - Early Learning and Childcare	Ongoing	March 2023
We will establish an in-work poverty task force	NHS Tayside	March 2023	March 2023
NHS Tayside will become a fully accredited Living Wage employer	NHS Tayside	March 2023	March 2023
We will increase the uptake of eligible families accessing their Strong Start 2 place	ECS - early Learning and childcare	March 2023	March 2023
We will secure more funding to increase financial support to community transport schemes	Communities – Business and Resources	March 2023	March 2023

We will increase the number of demand responsive transport schemes in deep rural areas	Communities – Business and Resources	March 2023	March 2023
We will run awareness campaigns to increase uptake of free travel passes by the under 22s	Communities – Business and Resources	March 2023	March 2023
We will support 35 parents experiencing poverty whilst in employment and/or assist in moving into good quality, well paid sustainable employment	Skills and Employment Initiatives	March 2023	March 2023
We will support 17 parents experiencing poverty by funding training and development opportunities, utilising the Elev8 Training Grant	Skills and Employment Initiatives	March 2023	March 2023
We will assist public and third sector employers to create 58 new labour market opportunities for long term unemployed people for a period of up to 26 weeks	Skills and Employment Initiatives	September 2022	September 2022
We will assist in the creation of 120 new job opportunities, utilising PKC and Scottish Government funding	Skills and Employment Initiatives	March 2023	March 2023

We will develop a suite of skills academies to allow our residents to gain valuable accredited skills to aid progression in or into employment	Skills and Employment Initiatives	March 2023	March 2023
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Workstream 2 - Maximising the support available to families to lead dignified lives and meet their basic needs (person-centred support, social security, and income maximisation)

Challenges

Reaching Priority Families

Perth & Kinross Specific Challenges

- Addressing the rural poverty premium

(SMART) Action Description	Responsible Services	Due Date	Review Date
The unborn baby multi-agency support group will identify pregnant women who need additional support and refer them for income maximisation, wellbeing support and other relevant services	NHS Tayside	March 2023	March 2023
A mobile phone app will be developed to enable access to information and advice on how to tackle fuel insecurity across Tayside	NHS Tayside	March 2023	March 2023

Share and promote the NHS National Services Scotland Community Benefit Gateway (CBG) to help reduce health inequalities across Tayside - https://www.nss.nhs.scot/procurement-and-logistics/sustainability/access-our-community-benefit-gateway/	NHS Tayside	March 2023	March 2023
Increase the number of health and educational income maximisation referrals to welfare/energy advice services across Tayside.	NHS Tayside	March 2023	March 2023
Cost of Living and Child Poverty training to be delivered to, and promoted with, Early Year practitioners across Tayside.	NHS Tayside	March 2023	March 2023
We will put social needs screening in place for all child concern reports which addresses the impact of poverty on those children and families for whom a concern has been reported	Child Protection Committee	March 2023	March 2023
We will ensure all frontline workers and service managers are aware of issues relating to poverty related stigma and dignity (Public Health Scotland Training Programme)	ALL	March 2023	March 2023

We will continue to maximise streamlining of council concessions	Customer Services Board	December 2023	March 2023
We will deploy Cash 1 st approaches to reduce stigma and promote dignified entry points for help and support	Welfare Rights, ECS, Housing Services, HSCP, Third Sector	March 2023	March 2023
We will deliver a Cost-of-Living Crisis public awareness campaign focussing on benefits maximisation, energy efficiency food and crisis support for struggling families	Communities/Welfare Rights	September 2023	March 2023
We will deliver a Cost-of-Living Crisis Support programme aimed at mitigating the impact on struggling families	ALL	July 2022	March 2023
We will offer All Families a welfare rights check	Welfare Rights	Ongoing	March 2023
We will develop a test of change project in 3 localities to deliver tailored support packages to Priority Families	ALL	September 2022	March 2023

We will offer welfare rights advice to all Perth and Kinross employees	Welfare Rights Team	Ongoing	March 2023
We will work with cross sectoral partners to provide food, childcare and activities during holiday periods to eligible families based on low income.	Communities ECS	Ongoing	a April 2023
We will progress the forthcoming Scottish Delivery Plan detailing the provision of wraparound childcare, offering childcare before and after school and during school holidays	ECS	Ongoing	June 2023
We will increase the take-up of free school meals	ECS	Ongoing	March 2023

Workstream 3 - Supporting the next generation to survive and thrive (next generation)

Challenges

- Reaching Priority Families
- Closing the poverty related attainment gap

Perth & Kinross Specific Challenges

- Addressing the rural poverty premium

(SMART) Action Description	Responsible Services	Due Date	Review Date
We will establish an Anti- Poverty Task Force to provide leadership and co-ordination around poverty related matters	CPWG	Dec 2022	Dec 2022
We will establish a website to provide one stop shop for parental advice encompassing mental health and wellbeing	TRIC	March 2023	March 2023
We will increase support available to children and young people experiencing wellbeing challenges		March 2023	March 2023
We will raise attainment and achievement for all and close the attainment gap through our Raising Attainment Strategy	ECS	Ongoing	March 2023
Work with partners to support recovery, through implementation of evidence-based approaches to target literacy, numeracy and health and wellbeing outcomes.	ECS	Ongoing	March 2023

Ensure that there is a coherent, universal, and targeted approach to the “Young Person’s Guarantee” in partnership with all stakeholders.	SEI		
Develop and implement a Perth and Kinross action plan to deliver the new Tayside Emotional and Mental Wellbeing Strategy Connected Tayside and launch the Perth and Kinross local mental health pathway.	ECS		
Work with partners to support implementation of the Community Mental Health fund.	ECS		
Extend Free School meal provision to all Primary pupils pending additional SG support.	ECS		

Appendix 3 – Child Poverty Strategy

Outcomes box to be amended with text on next page

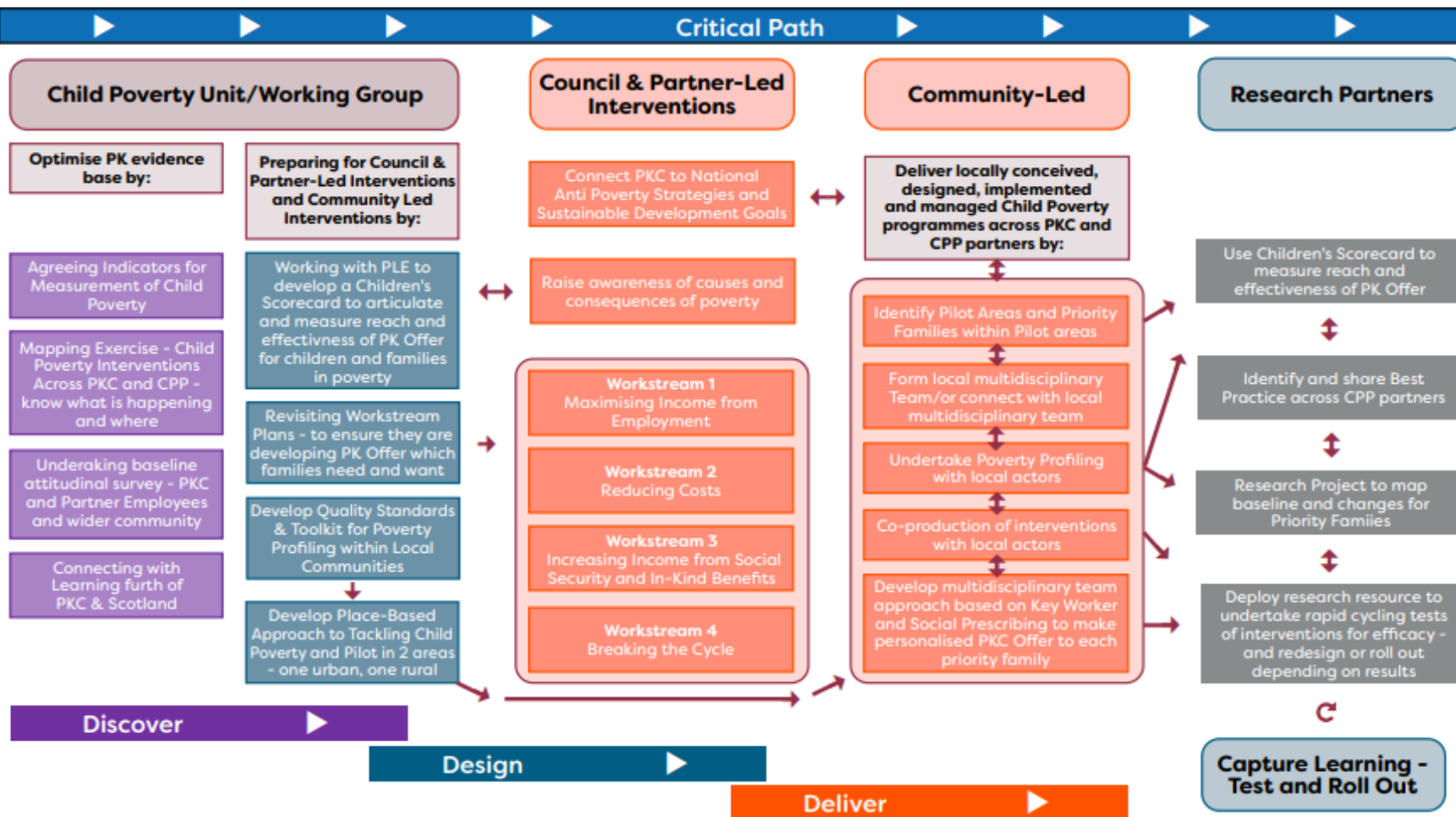
Perth and Kinross Child Poverty Strategy

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



(To be added to text box – Outcomes above)

Objectives

Over the next 4 years Perth & Kinross Council will work with NHS Tayside and our Community Planning Partners to

- 5. Provide opportunities and support needed to enter, sustain and progress in work (employability and skills, housing and economic opportunity, connectivity and childcare)**

Sharpening Focus

- Supporting parents into employment which pays the Living Wage or more
- Taking action to close the gender employment and pay gaps
- Addressing challenges presented by rurality

- 6. Maximise the support available to families to lead dignified lives and meet their basic needs (person-centred support, social security and income maximisation).**

Sharpening Focus

- Addressing the rural poverty premium
- Addressing the needs of the gypsy traveller community and other minority ethnic communities
- Addressing stigma which prevents parents and families from seeking help and support

- 7. Supporting the next generation to survive and thrive (next generation)**

Sharpening Focus

- Closing the poverty-related attainment gap
- Addressing the challenges faced by disabled young people entering further and higher education and the jobs market
- Addressing mental health and wellbeing issues for parents and children affected by poverty

- 8. Deliver a one council, whole family, whole community approach to connecting children and families to the help and support they need to mitigate and move beyond poverty**

Sharpening Focus

- Changing the way we work to use data driven approaches to identify and connect with families affected by poverty
- Offer no wrong door approaches to connecting families to the help and support they need and want
- Developing multi-disciplinary, cross organisational working in teams at locality level to build inclusive communities which strengthen the web of support on offer to families and children affected by poverty