

Local Child Poverty Action Report

Executive Summary

Overview

This is the 4th Child Poverty Action Report and with it come some changes.

- We have moved 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 Deliver Plan 2022 – 2026 which is included in the report aligns with Best Start, Bright Futures, the Child Poverty Delivery Plan of the Scottish Government which covers the same period.
- We will issue an annual Children's Scorecard and update report which will report on our progress and lessons learned from implementing the delivery plan.

We have identified a number of 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

Further Reading

[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](#)

What have we done so far?

Since 2020 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 deliver to help them mitigate and move beyond poverty

- Used this information to develop a Children’s Scorecard measures the reach and effectiveness of our work with children and families affected by poverty.
- Developed and implemented 3 child poverty action plans spanning increasing income from employment, reducing the essential cost of living and increasing income from social security and other in-kind benefits

In the past year we under our current workstreams we have:

Workstream 1 - Maximising Income from employment – worked and provided funding to help young people into work through skills academies, Parental Employment support fund and other measures.

Workstream 2 – Reducing the essential cost of living – reduced the cost of the school day, run information campaigns to signpost help, established a food network, increased our tenancy sustainment fund

Workstream 3 – Maximising Income from social security and other benefits – adopted a one council approach to streamline applications, proactively contacted families for benefits checks, delivered Scottish Child Payment grants to 85% of those eligible

Workstream 4 – Breaking the cycle of poverty – developed a social needs screening project proposal, developed a Children’s scorecard, produced training materials for staff, run ‘Feeling the Pinch’ and Cost of Living Crisis’ campaigns

Full details of these activities along with case studies can be found in the full Local Child Poverty Action Report.

We have taken urgent action across the Council and with partners to put in place mitigation measures for those affected by the Cost-of-Living Crisis – establishing a Financial Insecurity Fund, ramping up investment in welfare rights, money and debt advice, increasing funds available for energy efficiency advice and making additional funds available for the provision of community food.

Child Poverty Working Group

The Child Poverty Working Group is being refreshed with new members from a broader range of stakeholder groups including the Third Sector, 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)

The Children’s Scorecard

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 areas covered in the Children's Scorecard are

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

Using Local Data

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

Delivery Plan 2022-2026

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:

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 Offer

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

