



Child Poverty Delivery Plan 2022 to 2026

with **Child Poverty Action
Report 2021 to 2022**
and **Child Poverty Action
Plan 2022 to 2023**

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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 fourth 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 to 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 multidisciplinary 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 to 2021 which is based on the Family Resources Survey (FRS). The figures given for 2021 to 2022 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 and 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 \(November 2021\)](#)

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

[Tackling Child Poverty Action Report 2019](#)

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

[All in to End Child Poverty Progress Report November 2020 to 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 reshaped 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

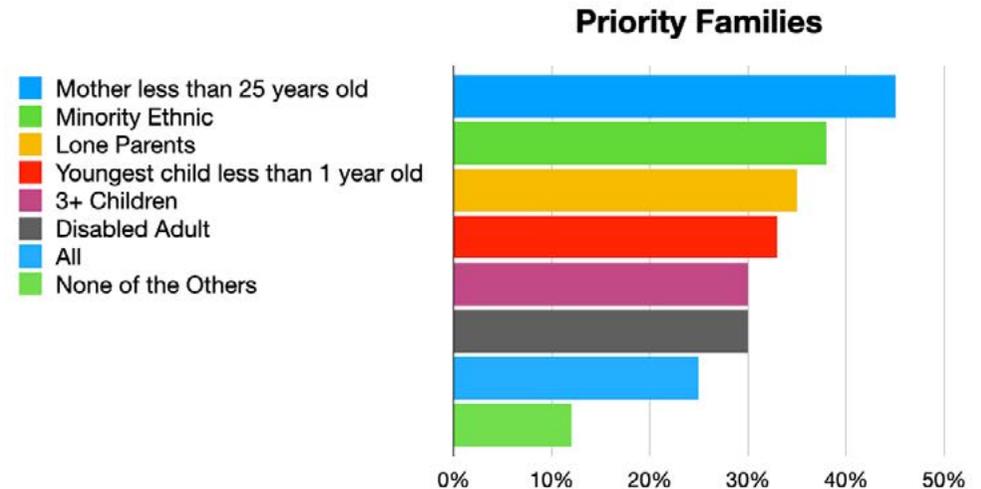
Our understanding of child poverty in Perth and Kinross has developed significantly in the course of the last year with the publication of [Lived Experience of Child Poverty in Perth and Kinross](#) and our [Perth and Kinross Children's Scorecard](#).

The Lived Experience of Child Poverty in Perth and Kinross was largely based on the testimony of 22 families from the priority family groups¹. 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

¹ Lone parents, families with a disabled member, ethnic minority families, large families, families with young mother and families with a child under 1 year (Scottish Government definition)

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 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 (eg 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, eg 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.	Perth and Kinross Council 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 to 2-year-olds in nursery provision.	38 families	Increase the number of families entitled to a place, to access a nursery provision.



Indicator	Current performance	Desired performance
Evidence of family-centred, multidisciplinary 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.

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 eighth 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 (1,930).
- 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.

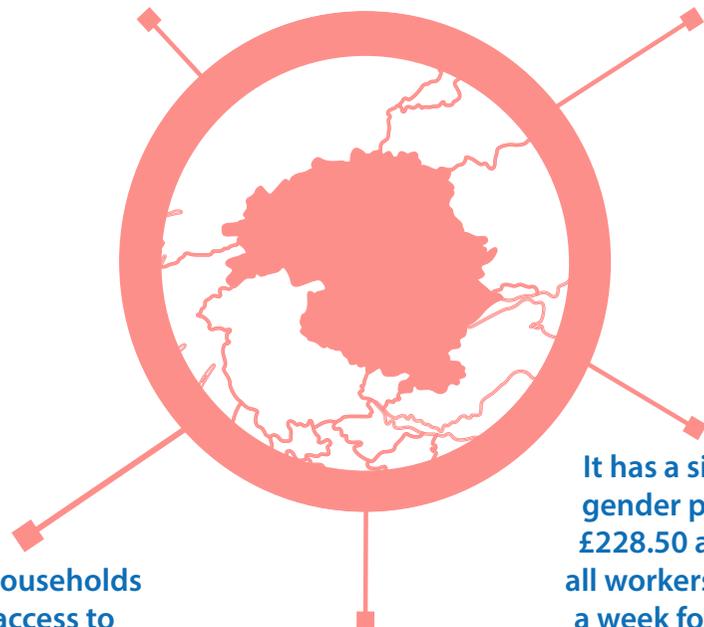


Crunch issues

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.



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.

It tops the league table for the employment rate gap between men and women.

It has a significant gender pay gap at £228.50 a week for all workers and £140 a week for full-time workers.

Using local data

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

We are currently establishing multidisciplinary teams to enable greater collaboration with communities, teams, and partners. The information held within the Power BI 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 to 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 - £5.2 million 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 (ELT) focussed their attention on the issue from February 2022 onwards and with regular reporting across the Council's 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 to 17-year-olds in Throughcare/Aftercare 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	Perth and Kinross Council tenants – increase of £104K	£254

Poverty/Cost of living mitigation		£000s
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		£000s
School	Meals during holiday period	£315
	Expansion of free school meals for 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
- 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. Muirton Community Foodshare which covers Perth City Centre, the wider Muirton area, Luncarty to Stanley and Bankfoot, experienced 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 and Kinross Council, our Community Planning Partners, and Energy Suppliers.
- A Cold Homes app has been commissioned by NHS Tayside and jointly funded by Perth and Kinross Council to enable frontline workers to provide energy advice to tenants and residents.
- 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 homemade 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 laundrettes, 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 and Kinross Council and NHS Tayside

Family Nurse Partnership Referrals to Welfare Rights Team at Perth and Kinross Council - midwives, health visitors and family nurses are referring clients to Perth and 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 £1,000 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 and NHS Tayside, this lady is now in work, her child is in nursery, and has a childminder and this family has a bright future.”

Perth and Kinross Council Employability Team

Working with Third Sector partners

Housing Services Financial Inclusion Project

Perth and 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 Perth and Kinross Council’s Welfare Rights Team and Perth Citizen’s Advice Bureau, and referrals were also made to the SCARF/HEAT teams for energy efficiency advice.

67 tenants were referred to Perth and Kinross Council’s Welfare Rights Team and 409 referrals were made to Perth Citizen’s Advice Bureau who helped 125 tenants with 390 issues as a result. Perth Citizen’s Advice Bureau’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 [Perth and Kinross Association of Voluntary Service’s 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, eg Ukrainian, Russian, Bulgarian, Polish and Romanian. We have provided training to Perth and Kinross Association of Voluntary Service workers, and we have a seamless referral agreement in place. Community-led groups supporting minority ethnic communities are now plugged into Perth and Kinross Council’s Welfare Rights team making access to help and advice easier for our Chinese Community and Perth Minorities Association.



Perth Welfare Society

Volunteers provided 2,189 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.

Tayside Hardship Project

Perth and 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 Perth and Kinross Council 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 Citizen's Advice Bureau resulting in client financial gain of £343,000.

NHS Tayside and Perth Citizen's Advice Bureau 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 Council's Welfare Rights Team and Perth Citizen's Advice Bureau 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 1,795 children.
- Invested £15 million to increase the pool of affordable housing by buying back ex-Council houses.
- Provided 3,000 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 to 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 to 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 and 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 multidisciplinary, 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.



Appendices

[Appendix 1: Child Poverty Action Report 2021 to 2022](#)

[Appendix 2: Child Poverty Action Plan 2022 to 2023](#)

[Appendix 3: Perth and Kinross Child Poverty Strategy](#)

If you or someone you know would like a copy of this document in another language or format, (on occasion, only a summary of the document will be provided in translation), this can be arranged by contacting the Customer Service Centre on 01738 475000.

You can also send us a text message on 07824 498145.

All Council Services can offer a telephone translation facility.

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