

Fife Child Poverty Action Report 2020



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Executive Foreword

The Fife Child Poverty Action Report 2020 sets out how we, Fife Council and NHS Fife, are working together, along with our third sector partners, to tackle child poverty in the Kingdom of Fife.

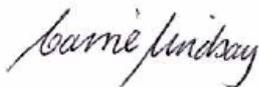
Last year we published Fife's first Local Child Poverty Action Report. The world has changed a great deal since then with a global pandemic and nationwide lockdown resulting in the UK falling into recession.

The pandemic has had an enormous impact on Fife's communities. Many families have been thrown into hardship due to furlough or job loss, with their money needing to stretch further to cover increased costs of heating, electricity and food. Less affluent families are more likely to be impacted by the coronavirus and more likely to be missing opportunities to learn. There have been positives too, with neighbours and communities pulling together to support each other in new ways.

It's more important than ever to listen to families and understand their experiences in order to respond effectively. People can face all sorts of barriers in having enough resource to nurture and support babies, children and young people, as well as women in pregnancy. Child poverty is not limited to certain communities, and in a preventive model, supporting families earlier can prevent further adversity escalating, which can have cumulative impacts on mental and physical health across the whole life course.

Staff across Fife's public and third sectors have been striving to respond to the crisis. While direct practical support is important, we need to examine the wider drivers which impact on income which are: access to work and employability, access to relevant benefits and reducing essential costs.

As part of our post-pandemic recovery and reform agenda as well as with the wider Plan for Fife review, we have an opportunity for a real change in culture to promote children's rights at all levels. This includes the right to a decent standard of living for all our children and young people to allow them to reach their potential.



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Child Poverty in Fife

What's the story in Fife?

Fife's population is around 373,550, making it the third largest local authority area in Scotland by population size. There are 64,552 children (aged 0-15) living in Fife, which makes up 17% of Fife's population and mirrors the overall percentage of the population of children in Scotland (16.9%) (NRS, 2020).

Changing demographics is a strategic challenge for Fife. The rate of increase of children will be relatively modest at 1.2%, peaking at 2023 (most increases are expected at secondary school age over the next 10 years). However, the decline in Fife's population over the next 20 years will be driven by having 10,300 less children (-16%) while having 26,400 more older people (an increase of 35% over the projected period).

New DWP and HMRC experimental statistics are showing that in 2018/19 over 13,000 children in Fife were living in relative poverty. That is one in five (21%) children in Fife and is higher than the Scottish average of 18%. These new statistics also show that in 2018/19 over 10,000 children in Fife were living in absolute poverty. Again, as a percentage, this was higher than the average for Scotland – 17% of children in Fife live in absolute poverty compared to 15% for Scotland (UK Government, 2020).

We knew that child poverty was expected to increase in Scotland before the coronavirus (Covid-19) pandemic hit, with the likelihood that it would affect more than one in three children by 2021, and then still further by 2030. However, the economic impact of the coronavirus pandemic and lockdown is hitting vulnerable people and families hardest pushing more people into poverty. Therefore, it is paramount that we step-up our efforts to tackle child poverty.

Prior to the lockdown, we knew that income deprivation in Fife was tracking what was happening in Scotland as a whole. The Scottish Index of Multiple Deprivation (SIMD) 2020 tells us that 11.9% of the population are income deprived in Fife (12.1% for Scotland) (Scottish Government, Jan 2020).

While overall levels of deprivation in Fife are like those seen across Scotland, this varies greatly across Fife's seven areas: Cowdenbeath, Dunfermline, Glenrothes, Kirkcaldy, Levenmouth, North East Fife and South & West Fife. Fife is a mix of urban and rural with two in three people living in urban areas within one of Fife's large towns. This mix brings its own challenges with rural poverty particularly prevalent in the remote villages of North East Fife and South & West Fife.



One in five

children in Fife live in relative poverty

30.8%

of children in the Buckhaven, Methil and Wemyss Villages ward live in poverty before housing costs



53%

of households in Fife are managing well financially

19%

of families in Fife live in fuel poverty



Regional child poverty estimates give the overall percentage of children in Fife living in poverty in 2017/18 as 21% before housing costs and 25% after housing costs. This overall average varied

across the 23 wards in Fife with Buckhaven, Methil and Wemyss Villages Ward having the highest before housing costs (30.8%) and Glenrothes West and Kinglassie Ward having the highest percentage after housing costs (38%), reflecting the local variations (End Child Poverty, May 2019).

Each of the seven Local Community Plans in Fife recognise areas of deprivation and mention poverty as a key issue in their areas and how they plan to tackle it locally. Each area has a Welfare Reform & Anti-Poverty (WRAP) group that brings together local community planning partners to tackle local poverty issues. Each area has its own distinct challenges, but these challenges are broadly around the themes of food insecurity, fuel poverty, and the cost and availability of transport.

'Deprived' doesn't mean just 'poor' or 'low income', it can also mean people have fewer resources and opportunities. The SIMD 2020 Education domain hasn't improved since the last SIMD release in 2016 and most domains continue to see a relative worsening of their position over time. In absolute terms, 9.4% of the working age population are employment deprived in Fife (9.3% for Scotland), and whilst this is slightly better than the SIMD 2016 ranking, without an improvement in the Education domain the Employment and Income domains may also be less likely to improve.

The proportion of households managing well financially can be a proxy for the financial resilience of households. Fife has historically performed better than Scotland in this measure, with a higher percentage of households managing well. However, in recent years this has dipped below the Scottish level with 53% of households managing well financially in Fife in 2018, compared with 55% in Scotland. Unsurprisingly the ability to manage well financially is linked with income, with higher earning households having a higher percentage managing well, (this measure drops to only 39% of households managing well when the income level is under £15,000). The ability to manage financially is also exacerbated by inequality with a greater percentage of households in the most deprived areas either just getting by, or not managing well (Scottish Government, Feb 2020).

The costs of living - how much a family pays for housing, food, fuel, transport and childcare costs, and other household costs - is a key driver of child poverty. Many parents struggle to afford essentials and often must make the difficult decision of choosing to heat their home or buying food. The latest Scottish House Condition Survey showed that 44,000 households (26% of all households) in Fife are in fuel poverty with 11% in extreme fuel poverty. In terms of families, 19% of families are living in fuel poverty (7,000 households) and 5% are in extreme fuel poverty in Fife (Scottish Government, Feb 2020).

Research by Iconic Consulting on Food Poverty and Food Insecurity in Fife published in 2017 found that at least 24,300 adults in Fife could be living in food insecure households (Iconic Consulting, Aug 2017). Since this report was published, food insecurity has been made a top priority for Fife's WRAP groups. Increases in food bank usage, as well as increase use of community pantries and fridges, over recent years have been compounded by the pandemic with many officers in the public and third sector reporting more families accessing emergency food provision as a direct result from the pandemic.

The Priority Groups in Fife

The information in 'Every Child, Every Chance' has been taken from the Family Resources Survey and the percentage of children in poverty in each group has been estimated at a Scotland-wide level. As a starting point in Fife, we have worked to establish how many children are in each of these priority groups.

Some of the figures for Fife have been based on the 2011 Census data. This is due to an unavailability of more recent data at a local authority or health board level. This issue has been highlighted nationally and consideration is being made as to how we can have access to better data to inform decision making and measure progress.

The following sections attempts to give a picture of what the priority groups look like in Fife. We know we need to more to support the priority groups in Fife but understanding the data on these groups gives us a good starting point for further discussion and action planning.

Lone Parent Families

Children in lone parent families are at a greater risk of poverty than the average household. In 2016, HMRC estimated that 11,900 lone parent families in Fife were receiving child benefit or tax credits. This was estimated to be around 19,300 children. In Scotland, it is estimated that 36% of children in lone parent families live in relative poverty. Although this figure isn't available for Fife, we can expect that a similar proportion of lone parent families in the Kingdom may be living on low incomes. If this was applied to Fife, then there could be approximately an estimated 6,900 children in lone parent families living in relative poverty.

A report by the Poverty Alliance and Fife Gingerbread found that despite a third of lone parents being in employment, many reported financial difficulties (McHardy, F. 2012). Rising costs of everyday living had a significant adverse effect, as did changes to the Welfare Reform system and related entitlement. Lone parents reported high levels of mental ill health, and that their situation made it difficult to increase their involvement in the labour marker or wider community life.

Families with someone who has a disability

Poverty in Scotland, an analysis by the Joseph Rowntree Foundation, identified that a significant number of children in poverty (40%) had a person with a disability in their family (Congreve, 2019). Scottish figures estimate that 30% of children who either have a disability themselves or have a parent with a disability live in relative poverty.

Precise figures for this group are not readily available at a local authority level, therefore, to give an idea of what this would look like in Fife, national estimates have been applied to the Fife population. Using data from the Department for Work & Pensions, we have estimated the number of children in relative poverty in Fife that live in families where someone has a disability at 6,789 children. There is limitation to this calculation as some individuals may not be in receipt of disability payments or may be affected by the benefit cap.

Families with more than three children

Data on child benefit claims show that families with three or more children comprise of 13% of child benefit claims in Fife, not far off the Scotland-level figure of 12.9%. Reports from colleagues offering welfare support and advice have noticed that large families can be particularly vulnerable and struggle financially. This reflects a briefing produced by NHS Health Scotland prior to the pandemic, which found that one of the causes of child poverty in larger families is that they are disproportionately affected by the two-child policy and the benefits cap. This briefing also found that children in larger families are more likely to belong to more than one priority group, particularly families with a disabled person or lone-parent families.

Minority Ethnic Families

Fife has a smaller proportion of children from a minority ethnic background than Scotland, yet children from minority ethnic backgrounds are likely to be in multiple priority groups. At the last census, there were over 3,800 children in Fife that were from a minority ethnic background. This equates to 5.3% of the under 18 population in Fife. In Scotland, it is estimated that 37% of children from minority ethnic families live in relative poverty. Although this figure isn't available for Fife, if we apply a similar proportion to Fife then over 1,400 children from minority ethnic families may be living in relative poverty.

This category does not include White-Gypsy Travellers, and whilst this group is also not included in the Scottish Government's Minority Ethnic priority group, we feel that this group is particularly marginalised and as a partnership we are looking at how we can provide more support to Fife's gypsy/traveller communities.

Families where the youngest child is aged under 1

In 2018, there were 3,479 children born in Fife. Although our birth rate per year has been on a downward trend over the past 10 years, we know that families with very young children are more vulnerable to poverty. Children will move out of this priority group when they turn 1-year old, but this does not necessarily mean they will transition out of poverty. Recent work by Fife Centre for Equalities highlighted that pregnancy is a time where people are at a greater risk of poverty (Fife Council Research Team, 2019).

Mothers under 25 years old

A recent briefing by the Improvement Service highlighted the gendered nature of poverty as women are more likely to be in poverty in Scotland, and "find it more difficult to escape poverty, due to the impact of economic and labour inequality and prevalence of Violence against Women and Girls". There is a clear link between women's poverty and children's wellbeing with younger mothers more vulnerable to poverty if they don't have a steady or large enough income to support their children.

In 2018, 21.9% of births in Fife were born to mothers aged under 25 years old. This is higher than the average for Scotland (17.1%). Pregnancy is often a time of hidden costs, placing many women under considerable pressure and with mothers aged under 25 years old more likely to be in a deprived group prior to giving birth, this can put significant pressure on the expectant mother.

Being in more than one priority group

It is worth noting that the figures for each priority group do not take account of the potential to be in more than one priority group (e.g. lone parents who are women and are under 25 years old). This means that the figures for the individual priority groups cannot be summed to give a total number of children in relative poverty.

It has not been possible to assess from the data available if being in more than one priority group results in poorer outcomes for individuals or if being in one priority group has a similar effect to being in two or three groups. What is known at present is that being in a priority group increases the likelihood of experiencing poverty and growing up in poverty affects children's outcomes.

If the purpose of the priority groups is to consider interventions to reach people in these groups, being in more than one priority group should increase the likelihood that interventions reach individuals who are in more than one group.

How are we doing?

The Plan for Fife contains 10-year ambitions and 3-year objectives and actions, the latter being due for review this year. The coronavirus crisis and its associated financial challenges over the medium-term has challenged our ability to improve outcomes in our current local outcome improvement plan and there is now a need for greater innovation and reform if we are to make progress toward the ambitions set out in the Plan for Fife.

Whilst this local child poverty action report sets out all the great work we have been doing over the past year to address child poverty, we need a way of measuring our outcomes so we know we're making a real impact. The subgroup of the Fife Child Poverty Group is looking at how we can use data to measure our success.

For this report we are looking at the number of children aged under 16 living in relative and absolute poverty in Fife. We'll monitor this over the coming years, but we will also be looking at the local Child Poverty Dashboard to understand what impact our actions are having.

Table 1: Number and percentage of children aged under 16 living in relative and absolute poverty (before housing costs) in Fife and Scotland, 2018-19

	Relative Poverty		Absolute Poverty	
	Number	%	Number	%
Fife	13,238	21%	10,915	17%
Scotland	166,784	18%	137,452	15%

Source: DWP

Table 1 shows that relative and absolute poverty is higher in Fife than in Scotland. Between 2014/15 and 2018/19, relative poverty has increased from 17% to 21%. A briefing on this data for Fife can be found via the [KnowFife Partnership Hub](#).

Governance & Reporting

In our 2019 report we set out the governance for the Fife local child poverty action report. Our Fife Child Poverty Group is a multi-agency group responsible for the co-ordination, production and publication of the Fife Child Poverty Action Report and monitors the delivery of the actions set out within the action plan.

The Fife Child Poverty Group reports to the Fife Welfare Reform & Anti-Poverty (WRAP) Partnership, providing updates and progress of the LCPAR to ensure it aligns with the Plan for Fife's priorities on poverty.

The group also reports to the Children in Fife Partnership. Fife's new Children's Services Plan is currently under-development and the Fife Child Poverty Group has been advocating for a priority on child poverty, which reflects the urgency and determination of the Child Poverty (Scotland) Act 2017. The new Children's Services Plan will be published in March 2021.

Our response to the Coronavirus Pandemic

Almost a third of families in Scotland have seen a drop in their income since March (JRF, June 2020). For a family already in poverty, living on anything less than their normal income is difficult and with more people experiencing income shocks and pressure from higher living costs, life in lockdown has been hard for many.

Officers have reported that families who may have been coping alright under normal circumstances and who were just keeping on top of their finances have suddenly been thrown into crisis due to furlough or job loss. Roughly 37,900 employees in Fife have been furloughed through the UK Government's Coronavirus Job Retention Scheme. The future of Fife's labour market will depend on what the situation will be when the furlough scheme and other government assistance begins to be phased out.

Money also needs to stretch further to cover increased costs for heating, electricity and food, with everyone staying at home together for longer.

Addressing food insecurity

The Covid-19 pandemic has had an impact on communities across Fife with significant numbers of families facing food insecurity related to income. With food insecurity already at high levels in Fife prior to the Covid-19 pandemic, these problems have been exacerbated and required a fast response.

Fife Council has worked closely with its partners to mitigate the impacts and to help protect the most vulnerable families and individuals in Fife's communities. Establishing community food resilience was a key objective and Fife Council has been providing food through seven community assistance centres. To ensure a stable and regular supply of food, Fife Council has also been supplementing community food projects like food banks, fridges and pantries, which have been a real lifeline to our vulnerable families.

Throughout lockdown, people and families have been able to contact Fife Voluntary Action's Helping Hand service for support if they require it. Families could request support for things like shopping or for accessing food, including a prescription delivery service.

At the start of lockdown in March 2020, Fife Council agreed that no meals would be prepared in schools other than for those attending Children's Activity Centres. Instead, a payment of £11.50 per week per child was made to parents/guardians who are registered for Free School Meals, and this continued over the summer holidays. Over 11,300 children in Fife have benefited from this payment, which has allowed flexibility, dignity, safety and convenience (CPAG, June 2020).

Learning under lockdown

Headteachers and their teams established approaches to maintaining contact with their most vulnerable children and young people, and their parents/carers. Regular communication with families has ensured that the appropriate support was provided for children and young people to stay well and engage in learning, particularly for our children and young people who may require additional support and other targeted cohorts of pupils, such as Care Experienced and Looked After Children.

During the school closures, guidance was provided to schools on support that could be provided for vulnerable children and young people. This included clear differentiated learning, support to structure learning opportunities at home and regular phone calls from teachers. It is recognised that children and young people can be vulnerable for a wide variety of reasons and these may change as time progresses resulting in barriers to learning.

School shutdowns are likely to accentuate the socio-economic divide in educational attainment (IFS, June 2020). Across the Children's Services Partnership, there has been a joined-up approach to providing support to these families with concerns shared through well-established processes. When there are significant concerns for children, young people and families, referrals have been made to allow access to the Children's Activity Centres. Children identified as vulnerable have been accessing Children's Activity Centres along with the children of key workers to support learning. Children's Activity Centres offered places to targeted vulnerable pupils, which involved close partnership working across services in order to ensure a robust approach to identification of risks and needs. Referrals to centres were made by any service and, when deemed appropriate, spaces were allocated at any time. During their time at the centres, children accessed IT equipment and engaged in the learning that had been set by their own school.

Home schooling for many families was difficult but for families living in poverty, the resources that can help make home schooling easier – devices, books and the internet – are out of reach (CAP, June 2020). A survey by CPAG found that the low-income families were twice as likely to say that they lacked all the resources they needed to support learning at home, with 40% saying they were missing at least one essential resource.

Fife's Headteachers and their teams were communicating with families to support learning at home where there was limited or no access to devices or internet. Schools have taken varied and creative measures, being led by the needs of their community, to track and support learning in offline ways. These are individual to circumstance, but include, physical learning packs being sent home, communication with families through letters, emails, phone calls and text messages. In many communities, resources, supplies and learning packs have been made available for family collection from shops and businesses in local areas.

Additionally, over the period of school closures, Fife Council supplied 400 devices to Primary Schools. Secondary School technicians have been able to reconfigure and build around 500 devices, suitable for use at home, from existing school devices. O2 4G Wi-Fi mini hotspots were also supplied to pupils who did not have a broadband connection. These devices were distributed to children and young people to improve their access to digital platforms and online resources to support learning. Work is also underway in establishing support for accessing GLOW and other platforms through non-standard equipment such as games consoles, e-readers and smart TVs.

Where pupils were continuing to have difficulties accessing suitable devices or the internet, alternative approaches were put in place, in consultation with children, young people and their families, to enable learning to continue. To strengthen this, Fife Council submitted a bid to the Scottish Government's Connecting Scotland initiative for funding devices and connectivity as part of Fife Council's Digital Inclusion Strategy. This bid was successful and has provided Education with over 5,400 devices and 1,100 connection solutions. As part of the second phase of the Connecting Scotland initiative, Fife Council will be looking at a bid that supports people in poverty, particularly families who weren't captured in the Education provision in phase 1.

Working during a pandemic

We all know that good work can be a solution to lifting families out of poverty and improving outcomes for children and young people, however the crisis has impacted this greatly. Since the lockdown, many families have had to juggle working from home and childcare, loss of income due to redundancy, furlough, and less jobs available through the labour market. Lone parents are

impacted even harder; unable to job search as the kids are at home full time, plans for further education have also been put on hold.

Throughout the pandemic, Fife's employability services have been supporting families with employment issues. A Covid-19-related jobs brokerage service (www.c19jobs.org) was developed for the Edinburgh & South East Scotland City Region, to match jobseekers with urgent vacancies arising in key sectors, including care, logistics and agricultural production.

Establishing new benefits arrangements

6.5% of working age residents in Fife were claiming Jobseeker's Allowance or Universal Credit in May 2020 - 2.7 percentage points higher than the same time last year (Fife Council, June 2020). The crisis has pushed more people to apply for benefits but has also made it more likely for them to borrow money with a poll by JRF finding that more than half of Scottish families in receipt of Universal Credit or Child Tax Credit have had to borrow money since start of the crisis and that seven in ten these families have had to cut back on food and other essentials (JRF, June 2020). To support people who are applying for benefits, services in Fife have had to adapt to different ways of working to continue to provide services.

Although face-to-face community job clubs have been suspended until further notice, Fife Council's Welfare Support Workers have continued to provide essential support to people who are struggling financially and have concentrated their time on providing the service by telephone. Officers are reporting wider engagement in the welfare support service by using the telephone contact model than they would traditionally get through the Community Job Clubs and are noticing more women contacting the service than before the pandemic. Workers have been proactively contacting users of the community job clubs by phone or SMS messages to ensure they are supported during the crisis. The service will be looking at ways of keeping the telephone line running as a way of engaging with people whilst planning to safely re-open Job Clubs.

Throughout the COVID-19 pandemic, Citizen's Advice & Rights Fife (CARF) inevitably had to alter the way in which it delivered its advice services. The barriers to having a physical presence within communities was overcome by re-deploying staff to the local telephone advice line, conducting appointments via telephone, supporting the newly formed Scotland's Citizen's Advice Helpline and continuing to offer a web chat facility for those who prefer this method of contact. CARF has indicated that in terms of Universal Credit, digital access was a key barrier and it was helpful that advisers could refer clients to the "Help to claim" project to assist vulnerable clients to make a new claim and to support them up to the payment stage.

Homelessness services and tenancy support

During the crisis, Fife Council experienced increased pressure on temporary accommodation due to homeless applicants seeking to make their own accommodation arrangements not being able to do so and asking the council for assistance. Working with registered social landlord partners, the Council built a bank of additional accommodation to cope with the increased pressure. Although normal housing allocations were suspended, Fife Council Housing Services has been able to continue to allocate permanent properties to statutorily homeless households.

Child Protection and Domestic Abuse

Poverty is one of many factors that increase the risk of child abuse and neglect and children living in poverty tend to be overrepresented on the Child Protection Register. The stress of living in poverty can make family life harder (Independent Care Review, 2020).

Since the lockdown was implemented, the Children and Families Social Work Service has worked to ensure that Fife Council continues to support the most vulnerable children and their families. The

service amended its standards to ask that all children on the Child Protection Register and those children at high risk of family breakdown were visited weekly and were seen face to face during lockdown.

Social isolation policies and employment change during lockdown put some women and children at a greater risk of domestic abuse, neglect, physical abuse, emotional abuse and sexual abuse (Improvement Service, 2020). In anticipation of increased referrals to Fife Women's Aid following lockdown, an additional six refuge properties were provided, as well as additional housing support services to assist women and children fleeing domestic abuse.

Impact on priority groups

A report by the Fife Council Research Team commissioned by Fife Centre for Equalities found that certain protected characteristics are more likely to increase an individual's vulnerability to poverty. These include ethnicity, disability and single parenthood. Being more vulnerable to poverty also means they are likely to have been harder hit by the pandemic.

Parents with dependent children are under greater financial pressure, particularly single parents and parents with young children. Women may be at greater risk because they are over-represented in the sectors most affected by social distancing restrictions. The pressure on parents' time has been immense - balancing work and childcare. Mothers are more likely to have quit or lost their job, or to have been furloughed since the start of the lockdown (IFS, May 2020).

Ethnic minorities are more economically vulnerable and more likely to be impacted by lockdown measures (Money and Pensions Service, 2020). New research from the Social Metrics Commission (August 2020) found that groups already more likely to be trapped in poverty (e.g. disabled people and ethnic minorities) are more likely to be pulled into deeper hardship. Fife Centre for Equalities (FCE) has created several virtual support groups to help different equality groups to stay connected with one another during the coronavirus pandemic. Individuals have been able to raise their concerns directly with FCE via a Covid-19 Equality Concerns questionnaire, telephone, text or email. From 1 April 2020, FCE have dealt with over 130 enquiries, of which 45 were related to disability and 31 were related to race. Fife's gypsy/traveller tenants on the three permanent sites in Fife have been provided with additional assistance in terms of food and power supply to assist households to get by during the crisis.

Learning and Recovery

Towards the end of 2019, work began to review the Plan for Fife's three-year actions. The intention was to undertake a wide-ranging review of the Plan, however, experience from the Covid-19 pandemic suggests that there is now a need to further review this approach in order to avoid creating separate and parallel processes around post-Covid-19 recovery and reform and the wider Plan for Fife review.

It has been proposed to Fife Partnership Board that the initial phase of the Plan for Fife review focuses on a small number of priority areas that are key to post-Covid-19 recovery. These priorities include **tackling poverty and crisis prevention**.

There is now an opportunity to learn from our response to the pandemic and to better join up support at a local level, reduce duplication and improve commissioning and resource allocation to support vulnerable families, children and young people and address issues relating to child poverty.

Our Child Poverty Action Plan

Reviewing our plan

Since we published our first Child Poverty Action Plan in 2019, we have identified other areas of work that we want to include in our plan for their importance in tackling the persistent issue of child poverty.

We have revisited our action plan as suggested by the Poverty & Inequality Commission's review published in November 2019 and have taken on the feedback provided by the National Co-ordinator for the Local Child Poverty Action Report.

In this section we will look at our updated Child Poverty Action Plan, which accommodates some new actions, reflects the progress we have made so far and incorporates what we have learned from responding to the coronavirus pandemic. We had 60 actions in our initial plan illustrating the extent of our commitment to tackling child poverty, however, we have since refreshed the Action Plan, so we have 16 high-level actions that fit strategically with what's set out in Fife's local outcome improvement plan. Our new, updated Child Poverty Action Plan can be found in Appendix 1.

We haven't scrapped any of our actions but have incorporated them into our plan with some becoming high-level and others sitting as sub-actions. Appendix 2 explains our rationale for including them and what we've changed since our last report.

We are including new actions in our plan which reflect some work that is already underway.

Income from Employment

We know that children in Fife are living in poverty despite having one person in their household in work and recognise that to bring about change we need to bring better jobs to the area, encourage the payment of the Living Wage, and provide in-work support and employment support programmes.

Fife Council's Business & Employability Service is leading on the No One Left Behind (NOLB) project. NOLB provides a new, locally informed framework for commissioning employability services in the area. In Fife, we are applying the Scottish Approach to Service Design and engaging with service providers and those who use services to help ensure the services commissioned are relevant and appropriate. Working with Fife Voluntary Action, Fife Centre for Equalities and partners, the Service ran online 'Conversations' engagement events, which focussed on key equalities groups including (but not limited to) families, people from ethnic minority backgrounds and young people. Over 120 people have engaged in the online Conversations and a further 124 completed an online survey. The Commissioning Framework will be launched in November 2020 with new services in place from April 2021.

Income from Social Security and Benefits in kind

Social security is an anchor that we can all use in times of need, but for some families who rely on the current system, support can be inadequate and can generate more challenges for parents accessing social security and the services supporting them.

Child maintenance is a legal right and obligation. It is an important aspect of social policy that can help with a child's everyday living costs. In early 2016, the Poverty Alliance conducted research on Child Maintenance in Fife. The findings in the report 'Bairns Come First: Fairness for their future'

were published at the launch of Fife Gingerbread's Child Maintenance Campaign in September 2016. The Fife Child Maintenance Group – a multi-agency group chaired by Fife Gingerbread - wants to renew this campaign and gain an understanding of the current landscape of child maintenance in Fife. That's why we are adding an action to review the current landscape of child maintenance in Fife, build on the Bairns Come First report and renew the child maintenance campaign for Fife based on the current position.

Costs of Living

Transport can unlock opportunities for people, allowing access to education, the labour market, health care services, and even recreation and leisure. However, it is often a key barrier to parents in poverty. A lack of affordable transport that doesn't operate at the times needed can restrict parents' working hours or the time they have for searching for and accessing work.

Fife Council has already begun work by looking at how people use subsidised transport. The Let's Talk... about Transporting People project is involving people in designing the future of subsidised passenger transport services. Locally, the North East Fife Anti-Poverty Group commissioned research for a North East Fife Rural Transport Study that explores the costs and benefits of establishing a scheme of support for bus travel for the unemployed.

We want families in Fife to be able to access affordable transport that gets them where they need to go. To do this, we will improve affordable and sustainable travel and public transport, particularly in rural parts of Fife, during evenings and weekends.

Whole Systems Approach

A whole system approach involves applying systems thinking, methods and practice to better understand public health challenges and identify collective actions. Adopting a whole system approach to Scotland's Public Health Priorities is a long-term endeavour.

Fife has been chosen as an early adopter of the whole systems approach for child poverty, as part of the Public Health Reform programme, with Public Health Scotland. The Fife Child Poverty Group has undertaken a self-assessment which will direct how we move forward with this workstream which has influenced this report. Based on the nine characteristics of this approach, the main areas for improvement were: **participation, engagement and use of data for improved outcomes**. Due to the realignment of activities and resources to support Covid-19, the reform activities have paused; however, this is still part of our approach going forward.

Progress with our plan

Since June 2019, partners have been working on various projects that are supporting the delivery of our action plan. We have set out below how our actions are progressing.

Action	Progress
Income from Employment	
Promote banking and affordable credit options.	The Financial Inclusion Partnership between Fife Council, Falkirk Council and West Lothian Council is ongoing with the work on the CDFI, Conduit Scotland, ensuring that struggling families have access to affordable credit. The partnership won a COSLA Excellence Award for Best Team in 2019.

	<p>The Dunfermline Advice Hub co-located with Conduit Scotland in 2019, which provides more spaces for partners to work from, more advice sessions and events, and a wider range of information for the local community.</p> <p>A Money Advice leaflet was launched in 2019 with 17,000 leaflets distributed throughout Fife providing information on relevant money advice services for individuals and families. This was followed up with a press release and communications through social media.</p> <p>Fife Council is promoting financial wellbeing to employees rather than just credit union membership. Employees of Fife Council that may be on the lower pay grades and who may have been impacted by the coronavirus pandemic have been encouraged to access resources for improving financial wellbeing through the Fife Council Employee Wellbeing Handbook 2020/21 and the Fife Council Health, Safety and Wellbeing News Bulletin. Promotion of financial wellbeing includes employee benefits, credit unions and local discounts, as well as signposting to the Benefits and Money Advice page on the Council's website and information from CARF.</p>
<p>Work with Fife employers to support family friendly workplace policies e.g. Fair Work, Good Work.</p>	<p>The Fife Health Promotion Workplace team has promoted family friendly workplace policies throughout the year. This has focused on training and supporting businesses and organisation to develop policy and gain Healthy Working Lives award accreditation. This has been promoted through visits, social media, e-bulletins and newsletters. A progress report from the team is due later this year, having been delayed due to the pandemic. As part of this work, the team have been looking at how they can support the priority groups by highlighting them through one-to-one support with local businesses and organisations.</p> <p>NHS Fife has updated and relaunched its Well@Work Staff Handbook. It was promoted throughout the organisation to staff and managers in January 2020 and is available via NHS Fife intranet, as well as paper format.</p>
<p>Promote Fife as a Living Wage region and look at the role of procurement in supporting this.</p>	<p>The interim target to double the number of accredited Living Wage employers in Glenrothes from 9 to 18 was achieved within the first six months of this action. It is estimated that Living Wage accreditations have benefited 200 employees in Glenrothes with a total increase in income of £75,000.</p> <p>Whilst the economic impact of the Covid-19 pandemic (alongside other uncertainties) has made Living Wage accreditation an unrealistic proposition for businesses at the present time, the pandemic has, nevertheless, significantly raised the profile of, and support for, low-paid workers.</p>
<p>Build on the Making it Work for Families programme through the Edinburgh & South East Scotland City Region Deal's Integrated Regional Employability & Skills programme and</p>	<p>Fife Council has the lead for the development and implementation of the Intensive Family Support (IFS) service, as part of the wider Integrated Regional Employability and Skills (IRES) Programme. Fife Council has established a Service Level Agreement with the Capital City Partnership (CCP) to act as a programme manager for the delivery of the IFS service across all six local authority areas. Fife Council has also developed a draft collaboration agreement</p>

<p>support an Intensive Family Support Service.</p>	<p>with each of the local authority partners to ensure that financial compliance and governance arrangements are in place.</p> <p>Fife Gingerbread, Clued Up, CARF and FIRST will be delivering the IFS for Fife with activity due to commence by October 2020. Focused on supporting workless, lone parent and low-income families with an S1/S2 pupil at home, living in the Levenmouth and Kirkcaldy areas. This will focus on engaging families with current, historic substance use or who are considered to be at risk of substance use.</p>
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Cost of Living

<p>Develop our approach to concessions and cost reduction to ensure cost is not a barrier to participation.</p>	<p>Research into the Council's existing concessions schemes has been carried out, as well as insights into anti-poverty subsidy schemes used in other UK local authorities.</p> <p>The Council's charging policy has been reviewed and updated, specifically looking at the position on level of concessionary rate and target groups.</p> <p>Work carried out so far in relation to concessions has focused on access to physical activity, sport and leisure provision. Work will be progressed to ensure a new concessions approach addresses wider issues of child poverty and barriers to participation.</p> <p>In terms of addressing barriers to participating in sport, this year Fife Council's Active Communities Team have been running a SportsSTARS programme across Fife. The sessions are £2.50 per week, however, colleagues in Active Communities know that many families may not be able to afford this, especially if they have more than one child attending the programme and if their children are also engaged in other sports programmes. Therefore, participants are given the option to pay in a term block, pay weekly or pay what you can, when you can, and even have the option not to pay if they aren't able to afford it. This is all done very discretely and as everyone in the session has a different way of paying, it helps break down some of the financial stigma. The sessions run from local community venues, which can help with any travel barriers, and also run from secondary schools, which can assist with primary school pupils becoming more familiar with the secondary school setting.</p>
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<p>Identify and address cost barriers to participation in school.</p>	<p>Specific Cost of the School Day guidance was sent out to all education staff for Term 4 2020 to draw attention to the financial impacts of the coronavirus pandemic on children and families.</p> <p>From August 2020, a new member of staff will be in post to deliver Poverty Matters training to every school in Fife. Schools will be encouraged to have a 'poverty proofing statement' in their school curriculum rationale, a designated 'poverty matters' trainer in school, and audit their school costs every three years to identify costs that can be minimised.</p> <p>In terms of period poverty being a barrier to participation in school, all Fife schools offer access to free sanitary products. During the pandemic, pupils were encouraged to take home products just as the lockdown was announced. Since then Fife Council is offering an online ordering service with the supplier, Hey Girls, to ensure</p>
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	<p>anyone who menstruates, regardless of age, can access free products if they are unable to afford products or access them during the pandemic.</p>
<p>Ensure there are effective, dignified mechanisms for supporting people facing food crisis while working towards a significant reduction in household food insecurity.</p>	<p>Fife has been exploring and piloting different models of food purchase and distribution options including community pantries and fridges to tackle food insecurity.</p> <p>Fife Council has been leading the current Covid-19 food resilience plan, which focused primarily on a hub and spoke model. A central emergency food warehouse was established in Glenrothes, which was providing supplies of essential food and non-food items into the seven area teams. These supplies supported community-based food providers such as food banks and community fridges and pantries, as well as provided urgent grocery packs direct to households in food or financial crisis with no immediate access to cash. As part of this work, Fife Council is undertaking action-based research to understand the experiences of households who have benefited from a food or financial intervention, which will enable the Council and partners to inform future food resilience planning and support in Fife.</p> <p>In our Child Poverty Action Report 2019, we had an action to increase skills and knowledge to prepare affordable, nutritious food. The Council’s Community Food Team have provided recipe cards and food waste cards as part of the emergency grocery packs that have been provided as part of the Covid-19 response. These were designed to assist individuals and families to maximise the potential of the emergency food packs being provided.</p> <p>In supporting families to access food provision, the Fife Food Insecurity Steering Group provides details of food provision across Fife - including food banks, fridges, community cafes, growing projects and school holiday schemes – via Fife Council’s website.</p> <p>A money crisis tool was developed by the Menu for Change project team, in collaboration with workers in Levenmouth, and piloted over summer 2019. An evaluation was conducted but this elicited very few responses. The tool was introduced to participants at the local WRAPs networking event in November 2019. Feedback was mixed and there was no clear mandate to develop a single tool at Fife level. Before the pandemic, other Fife areas were intending to develop their own versions of the tool.</p> <p>A project to explore and deliver potential solutions to the issue of holiday hunger faced by young people and their families amongst various communities in Fife was introduced in 2019. A selection of schools in all seven committee areas provided hot school lunches alongside community-based provision managed by local Community Development teams, providing a mix of hot lunches and packed lunches to suit activity programmes and capacity. The total number of meals provided during the Easter, Summer and October holidays in 2019 was 125,102. Café Inc also ran during Christmas holidays with food provided on days where facilities were open and food parcels distributed for the remaining days. Since the Covid-19 pandemic, Café Inc has been unable to operate due to physical distancing restrictions.</p>

<p>Improve access to local, affordable and flexible childcare, including explore parent led approaches to take advantage of learning, training and job opportunities.</p>	<p>Seven family nurture centres offer a 52-week service, ensuring those who are most vulnerable and in greatest need of support in each local area can access family learning and parenting support as well as additional hours of Early Learning Childcare (ELC) during holiday periods. 28 early years lead officers are working to promote equity and excellence in areas of need in Fife through targeted interventions. Gaps in children’s learning and experience are identified early through their work and targeted interventions put in place to ensure children’s progress. All ELC services in Fife are supported by quality improvement through access to early years specialists, including peripatetic nursery teachers, area principal teachers and development officers. Almost all providers are meeting the Care Inspectorate quality standards of ‘good’ or above with a high number achieving very good or excellent.</p> <p>In considering whether currently funded early learning and childcare for 2-year-olds reaches families at risk of poverty, and whether additional action could be taken to maximise reach, multi-agency group meetings between Health, Education and Social Work consider individual cases to maximise spaces.</p>
<p>Provide support to families to meet housing costs or to find affordable sustainable housing.</p>	<p>Fife Council Housing Service is supporting families to meet housing costs through a £1m Universal Credit (UC) rent support fund to support Council households affected by rent arrears following a transition to UC. In April 2020, an additional £1m was set aside as rent support for self-employed and furloughed Council tenants whose employment has been impacted by Covid-19.</p> <p>Over 100 additional units of temporary accommodation have been commissioned to provide additional resources for families in crisis and facing homelessness. Six additional refuges have been commissioned and operated by Fife Woman's Aid for victims of domestic abuse and their families.</p> <p>Work is underway to engage with eligible households and channel support through either the UC or Covid-19 rent support scheme. To help families find affordable sustainable housing, housing allocations are being broadened to include more priority groups as part of a wider Covid-19 recovery plan. Practical assistance is being provided to help homeless families move home and this includes developing our approach to provide furnishings and other practical support to new tenants.</p>
<p>Reduce the number and percentage of households experiencing fuel poverty.</p>	<p>A service level agreement is in place with the Cosy Kingdom Partnership. This is reviewed annually with progress monitored quarterly. In 2019/20, 1,029 households were supported out of fuel poverty and 1,303 households learned how to reduce their home energy use through a home energy advice visit.</p> <p>The provision of home energy advice and support to households requires a long-term perspective to achieve new national targets to reduce fuel poverty to a 5% of households and extreme fuel poverty to 1% of households by 2040.</p>

Income from Social Security and benefits in kind

Explore a local pilot of basic income.

Over the past two years, Fife Council has worked alongside North Ayrshire, City of Edinburgh and Glasgow City Councils as well as with NHS Health Scotland and the Improvement Service to explore the feasibility of a Scottish Citizens Basic Income (CBI) pilot. The concept is based on offering every individual, regardless of existing welfare benefits or earned income, an unconditional, regular payment.

The [draft final report](#) was published in June 2020 has been agreed by all four councils and has been submitted to ministers. The report concludes a CBI pilot is desirable, but recognises the significant challenges involved. The proposed model for a CBI pilot would aim to understand the impact of CBI on poverty, child poverty and unemployment, as well as health and financial wellbeing, and experience of the social security system. The CBI Feasibility Study Steering Group will continue to meet to monitor the progress of the report.

Based on the principles in the proposed model, Fife Council established an emergency food insecurity hardship fund which uses monies from the Food Fund. This has supported individuals and families who have no access to other welfare support e.g. Universal Credit, Scottish Welfare Fund etc. The approach was agreed as part of the Council's emergency response to Covid-19 and was available for an initial three-month period. The multi-disciplinary teams in each area agreed payments in conjunction with the Community Manager. Payments were made for a maximum four-week period at a rate of £50 per child and £75 per adult and was designed to prevent further worsening or future welfare issues for these individuals and households.

Co-ordinate support locally to deliver mitigation measures and monitor the impact of welfare changes.

Local initiatives can vary from area to area based on circumstances and space within venues. Each Fife Area Committee has a multi-agency Welfare Reform and Anti-Poverty (WRAP) group that oversees and delivers the area's response to poverty. In November 2019, members of these groups across Fife were brought together for a networking event to share best practice and discuss projects.

In mitigating the impact of welfare changes, Fife Council's Welfare Support service is delivered primarily through a network of 49 Community Job Clubs. In 2019/20, support was provided to 1,843 individuals in Job Clubs and a further 633 received advice and guidance outwith Job Clubs.

The Making it Work for Families project, which was delivered by CARF, Fife Gingerbread and Clued Up, had to end in 2019 due to a loss of funding. This has since secured further funding through the Edinburgh & South East Scotland City Region Deal's Integrated Family Support Service and will be starting in October 2020.

CARF continues to deliver the other projects set out in our previous Child Poverty Action Plan, like the Help to Claim service, the MacMillan Welfare Benefits service and the Armed Forces Advice project, to name a few.

The coronavirus pandemic has inevitably altered the way in which Fife's public and third sectors deliver services. CARF has continued to deliver advice and support across all areas of Fife. The barriers to having a physical presence within communities has been overcome by re-deploying staff. Although Fife Council's Job Clubs have been unable to run due to the pandemic, the first quarter of 2020/21 saw 556 individuals engage with welfare support through a dedicated telephone line and contact at welfare support drop-ins hosted at food banks, community pantries and fridges.

Partnership is key to all of our actions and establishing links with the new social security agency is essential in ensuring Fifiers can access all the benefits they are entitled to. We are working with Social Security Scotland's Local Delivery Relationship Lead for Fife to promote a number of new payments that can help children and families in Fife, most notably the Best Start Grant and Best Start Foods.

Social Security Scotland is working in close partnership with organisations across Fife to maximise the uptake of benefits. Along with attendance at Fife-wide and local welfare reform and anti-poverty groups, and regular circulation of materials (including an emphasis on distributing information to people involved in the response to COVID-19 within local communities), the following outputs have been achieved:

- Best Start Grant information provided to all parents receiving letters from Fife Council regarding their entitlement to free school meals and clothing grants.
- Details provided as needed to partners for training programmes.
- Links to online stakeholder resources circulated to staff through Education and Children's Services, and via the service's dedicated welfare support co-ordinator.
- Links through www.fife.gov.uk/benefits to Social Security Scotland and the online applications available at www.mygov.scot.
- Social Security Scotland social media posts shared by Fife Council, partner and community pages

There have been over 11,000 applications for Best Start Grant and Best Start Foods in Fife since the payments were launched to the 31 May 2020, with 71% of these payments being authorised (higher than the Scottish average of 66%). This means families in Fife have received £2.29 million worth of additional support for their children since the payment was rolled out.

In mitigating against the impact of period poverty, Fife Council has been making products available in a range of places across the region. However, as many of these venues closed due to the pandemic, the Council launched a period products online ordering service in partnership with its supplier, Hey Girls, so period products can be delivered straight to Fife residents' homes. The service is available for anyone who menstruates but is particularly

	<p>targeted at people who are unable to afford or access products currently due to the pandemic.</p> <p>We know that there is still a stigma surrounding poverty and we are working with various community planning partners to provide a programme of Poverty Awareness Training to all partners to enable them to identify poverty and respond in the appropriate way by knowing where they can signpost and refer. A full audit report of the Poverty Awareness Training Programme 2019/20 is currently being compiled so we are currently unable to report on the total number of attendees. During 2019/20 and in previous years, we have been able to run a mix of e-learning and face-to-face courses on a range of different poverty matters. Due to the pandemic, we're having to work a little differently this year with mainly e-learning and virtual workshops.</p> <p>During the 2019/20 programme, Fife Gingerbread ran a workshop called "Universal Debit", which aims to raise awareness amongst professionals of benefits and the reality of living in poverty to better equip support workers in Fife to ensure families are able to build their financial capacity, as well as improving their ability to identify warning signs as an early intervention approach to low income and poverty.</p>
<p>Integrate accessible income maximisation at key points in service provision across the partnership.</p>	<p>A benchmarking exercise was carried out to collect information from members of the WRAP Partnership about current interventions, actions and proposed plans to address existing issues and gaps as well as potential future gaps in Fife's income maximisation services.</p> <p>An income maximisation workshop was held in summer 2019 to inform the development of an action plan and second phase of benchmarking to capture information from a wider group of people.</p> <p>As Fife's money advice service, CARF is leading on the income maximisation action. In addition to its mainstream work, CARF has delivered the following to support the priority groups - often in partnership with other services during 2019/20:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A project engaging expectant mothers and families with children in Fife's Gypsy/Travellers communities to provide income maximisation and enable wider access to other CARF services. • The Making It Work for Lone Parents project continues to be delivered despite the need to meet with the clients online due to social distancing. CARF delivers this project in partnership with Fife Gingerbread and Clued Up. Cooking groups, budgeting lessons and benefit coffee meetings are hosted via closed Facebook groups and Zoom for those clients already engaged with the service. Promotional activity has taken place to raise the profile of the project. • CARF's partnership with Cosy Kingdom, Unforgotten Forces and NHS Fife utilised the 2019/20 flu jag season to engage with people and families with disabilities and at risk of fuel poverty. When Fife Council launched the COVID Community

	<p>Helpline, CARF adapted its referral process to be more readily available to those within the shielding category or those who were advised to self-isolate. These two projects alone have secured client financial gains of over £469,000 last financial year across almost 400 households.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Carer Income Maximisation work funded by Fife Health and Social Care Partnership. • CARF's Money Talks Team (previously Financial Health Checks) continues to help mothers aged under 25. This project has aligned itself with the Financial Inclusion Pathway and provides a full income maximisation service for new and expectant families. • Boosting Budgets sessions with Fife Council Education Services for parents and families, involving CARF and Cosy Kingdom.
<p>Improve advocacy and support to enable families and pregnant women to deal with benefit changes, maximise income and be more financially resilient.</p>	<p>A multi-agency working group was established for delivering the financial inclusion referral pathway for pregnant women and families with young children by midwives and health visitors. The group has continued to meet and progress actions throughout the year. The group has benefited from the input of the local team who are participating in the Universal Health Visiting Financial Inclusion Pathway Quality Improvement Practicum 2019/20.</p> <p>To increase signposting/referrals from various NHS services for children and families, child poverty has been made a standing item at monthly Child Health Management Team meetings. Processes, procedures, impact updates, marketing and training have been provided on income maximisation through CARF's Money Talk team, and email communications are regularly cascaded through the network, which includes Occupational Therapists, Child Psychology, Dieticians, Family Nurse Practitioners, Midwives, Health Visitors, etc. In addition to this, information on the priority groups has been promoted. An evaluation is due to be carried out with NHS services on signposting and referrals. This has been delayed due to the pandemic.</p> <p>Engagement and participation activities are underway to find out the experience of accessing the services and how services could be improved at each stage of the process. Dedicated space within clinics for the Money Talk team has helped with referral rates. From the April 2019 to March 2020, 603 families engaged with the dedicated CARF Money Talk team, which is supporting this pathway. During the same period, there was £325,000 in financial gains, equating to an average of £540 per family - £200,000 of the financial gains can be attributed to Universal Credit.</p> <p>Fife Gingerbread have been running the Fife Teen Parent Project. The team works with new and expectant teen parents aged 16-20 with the focus of the project on parenting, attachment and development. A lot of this project is about building stable foundations, so the team spends a lot of time with the family ensuring they have access to the all the benefits they are entitled to and are signposted to relevant services such as CARF or Housing, etc. The project is about empowering them to be in control and then</p>

	helping the teen parents to progress to work, training and/or education.
Indirect actions	
<p>Understand Fife's child poverty priority groups by reviewing data and considering ways of engaging with the priority groups to co-produce support.</p>	<p>In 2019, the Child Poverty Group began looking at data available for the priority groups in Fife. This work was unable to be progressed due to the reprioritisation of services to tackling the coronavirus pandemic, however, this work has been picked up again with a subgroup meeting to look specifically at child poverty data in Fife.</p> <p>We are conscious that our work in this area may not have been clearly reflected or explained in previous reports, and we are working to improve.</p> <p>Covid-19 has brought an extra challenge because it has caused such disruption, changing both who may be affected by poverty and the ways we can talk to them.</p> <p>The Child Poverty Group has been thinking and talking about this work to try and discover what would be best. Our discussions have included:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reviewing all LCPARs to identify ways other areas have found successful. • Speaking with colleagues in other areas to learn from their experience. • Reviewing existing networks, past learning and systems within Fife. <p>We will continue with this work both locally and with the national network on LCPARs. With this information, we are going to develop our strategy in more detail over the coming months. Currently the options we think are likely to be helpful are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensuring we have clear descriptions and/ or logic models that show how the feedback of lived experience we receive via our partners is reflected in our plans. • Finding out more about how people in Fife think and feel about poverty now (everybody, not just those currently experiencing it) and what we should do about it. This may be through online surveys, online discussion groups, feedback from our partner organisations and/ or events within schools and workplaces. • New ways for people with lived experience to participate in decision making. This will include looking into how we can support digital access (helping people to access the internet and equipment such as laptops) and which plans could be most improved by testing with people who will see the changes in their daily life. <p>Reflecting on how we can raise awareness of poverty and its effects among our staff and partners and helping them find the best ways to discuss it with our patients and clients.</p>

Improve awareness and the impact of Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACEs).

A two-part reflective workshop programme was developed in Fife in 2018 to support practitioners to consider the impact of ACEs and trauma on young people and families that they work with, reflect on and develop their practice. By summer 2020, hundreds of people have now completed the workshops from various sectors including Education, NHS Fife, and the third sector.

In Autumn 2019, a multi-agency group was set up to take forward the Scottish Government's ambition of training all staff to understand the effects of psychological trauma. A Fife-wide collaborative approach was taken, and the group created an e-learning module which looks at trauma, what it is and how everyone can make a difference. The training was introduced in March 2020 and by August, over 2,100 Fife Council employees have completed the module as well as many more from NHS Fife and third sector partners.

The group has also created a further reflective workshop designed to be used by teams to aid self-reflection, share thoughts and ideas and help to create trauma-informed workplaces. The workshop will be made available soon.

Case Study: Café Inc 2019/20

Priority Group(s): Children - universal (no target group)
Child Poverty Outcome(s): Reduced cost of living

Officers from Fife Council's Communities and Neighbourhoods, Enterprise and Environment and Education and Children's Services were requested to prepare a pilot project to explore and deliver potential solutions to the issue of holiday hunger faced by young people and their families amongst various communities in Fife.

The pilot operated during the 2019 Easter holidays in the Cowdenbeath area out of four schools, five community centres and three playschemes with a mix of hot food and packed lunches. The play-schemes in scope were referral only and target families would benefit from the service. The service was promoted via a leaflet drop to each student in Cowdenbeath Schools, a poster campaign and social media.

The pilot delivered a total of 7,150 meals. Schools supplied 1,233 meals with an additional 5,917 meals supplied from community centres and community venues.

Following a review of the Cowdenbeath pilot, it was agreed that Café Inc would be expanded to cover the whole of Fife. This provision took the form of two connected aspects like the pilot Café Inc. provision and was branded in the same way to ensure consistency across delivery areas.

A selection of schools in all seven committee areas provided hot school lunches alongside community-based provision managed by local Community Development teams, providing a mix of hot lunches and packed lunches to suit activity programmes and capacity. The schools were identified using two key sets of criteria. Lists were created where schools sat within both the 1st decile of the SIMD and where schools had over 40% of students entitled to Free School Meals.

Each venue was set up slightly differently with some allowing for parent-led play and new channels for signposting to different services. Third sector partners were involved, providing various support services for parents should they require it.

The total number of meals provided during the Easter, Summer and October holidays in 2019 was 125,102. Café Inc also ran during Christmas 2019 where 9,438 meals were provided as a mix of sit in meals and take away lunches for days where facilities were closed during the holidays.

Café Inc has unfortunately not been able to run during 2020 due to the pandemic. However, there are plans in development for how Café Inc could be run later in the year whilst complying with social distancing rules.



Case Study: Making it Work for Lone Parents

Priority Group(s):	Lone Parents
Child Poverty Outcome(s):	Increase in income from employment, increase in income from social security and benefits in kind

Making it Work for Lone Parents is a partnership project delivered by Fife Gingerbread and Citizens Advice & Rights Fife to support lone parents to overcome barriers to employment, leading the household to a more sustainable financial base and subsequently improving the life chances of the children.

Fife Gingerbread supports lone parents to engage in the project, overcome barriers to progression and build resilience through a person-centred approach to meet the needs of each family. Each family receives a tailored approach to fit their circumstances with CARF integrated throughout the project providing specialist money advice to lone parents at all support stages of their employability journey. Overcoming debts and financial worries removes a huge barrier to employment and allows families to thrive and positive relationships to further develop with the child/children.

Key achievements (2019-20):

- 134 lone parents engaged with the project
- £77,945 financial gain through income maximisation activity
- 70 referrals were made for financial inclusion activity
- 43 individuals reported improved money management skills
- £38,583 debt identified and support provided
- 16 money advice group sessions were facilitated with 354 participants
- 43 work, education and training outcomes were achieved

Key priorities moving forward:

- Reducing dependency, and increasing resilience, for the time when assistance arising directly from the pandemic (such as additional benefit payments and food assistance) is removed.
- Advice and assistance to lone parents is continuing to be delivered remotely with increased use of technology – ensuring that all lone parents have equal access to services benefitting the individual and the family.
- Progression towards employment is an important route out of poverty for families in need – prioritising support to gain good, sustainable and well-paid jobs. We will continue to support lone parents through the transition into employment.

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Our Child Poverty Action Report

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Appendix 1 – Child Poverty Action Plan

Based on feedback, this year we have presented our action plan by each driver, as well as through a category titled ‘indirect actions’, which are designed to ensure we have the right foundations for tackling child poverty. For instance, our action to improve awareness of ACEs recognises that trauma is both a cause and consequence of poverty. We have also proposed new actions going forward.

Action	Partners involved (lead partner in bold if applicable)	How impact will be/is being assessed	Timeframe	Group(s) the action is intended to reduce poverty amongst
Income from employment				
Promote banking and affordable credit options.	Cosy Kingdom, CARF, Fife Council , Fife Credit Unions, Fife Voluntary Action, Conduit Scotland	We are assessing the impact of this action by looking at: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> referrals to money advice service providers in Fife number of Credit Union members. 	March 2021	There is no specific priority group that this action targets, however, it does aim to benefit all individuals or households with low incomes.
Work with Fife employers to support family friendly workplace policies e.g. Fair Work, Good Work.	Fife H&SCP – Health Promotion Workplace Team , NHS Fife, Fife Council	Number of employers engaged. Reduction in employee absence within NHS Fife. Uptake of family-friendly policies.	2021	This action targets employees living on low incomes in Fife. There are specific sub-actions that intend to reduce poverty amongst children under 1, lone parents, families effected by disabilities and families with 3 or more children.
Promote Fife as a Living Wage region and look at the role of procurement in supporting this.	Living Wage Action Group: Fife Council ,	Number of businesses signed up to the Living Wage Scotland accreditation.	Ongoing	This action targets individuals earning less than the calculated real Living Wage.

		Number of people uplifted onto the Living Wage from the Living Wage figures.		
Build on the Making it Work for Families programme through the Edinburgh & South East Scotland City Region Deal's Integrated Regional Employability & Skills programme and support an Intensive Family Support Service.	Edinburgh & South East Scotland City Region Deal partners: Fife, City of Edinburgh, Scottish Borders, East Lothian, Midlothian and West Lothian Councils.	Once this service is up and running, we will monitor the number of families participating in the service, and of these families we will assess the attainment of the young people involved and whether they leave school to a positive destination.	To be up and running by 2020	There is no specific priority group that this action targets. This is partly because of the stage of the programme.
Costs of living				
Develop our approach to concessions and cost reduction to ensure cost is not a barrier to participation.	Fife Council Communities & Neighbourhoods Service	We will consider the numbers and profile of people participating to assess whether the concession is being used by families who may not have been able to afford participating otherwise.	Summer 2020	There is no specific priority group that this action targets, however, it does aim to benefit all individuals or households with low incomes who are receiving certain benefits.
Identify and address cost barriers to participation in school.	Fife Council Education & Children's Services	We are assessing the impact of this action by looking at: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> uptake of free school meals and school clothing grant whether schools have completed an audit of costs all schools have poverty proofing statements all schools have links on their websites to information on free school meals, clothing grant, etc. the costs for participating in activities run by Active Schools 	2021	There is no specific priority group, however children in receipt of free school meals will be the beneficiaries of this action. Children with multiple siblings, young carers, care experienced, minority ethnic children, and children in kinship care could benefit from reduced cost barriers.

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> attendance at training. 		
Ensure there are effective, dignified mechanisms for supporting people facing food crisis while working towards a significant reduction in household food insecurity.	Food Insecurity Steering Group: NHS Fife, CARF, Fife Council Communities & Neighbourhoods Service, Greener Kirkcaldy, Glenrothes Food Bank, Kirkcaldy Food Bank, CLEAR Buckhaven	Research being carried out in autumn 2020, with individuals and food providers across Fife, to assess effectiveness of responses to people experiencing food crisis.	2021	There is no specific priority group, however, this is aimed at people and families that are food insecure, which is likely to be experienced by families in the priority groups.
Improve access to local, affordable and flexible childcare, including explore parent led approaches to take advantage of learning, training and job opportunities.	Fife Council Education & Children's Services	To assess our impact for this action, we will monitor: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> the overall fees for childcare the cost of childcare and the number of ELC hours available the number of families using early learning and childcare. 	2021	This action will benefit families living on low incomes. Although it is not targeted at a specific priority group, it will benefit them.
Provide support to families to meet housing costs or to find affordable sustainable housing.	Fife Housing Partnership: Fife Council, NHS Fife, the Scottish Government, the Fife Housing Association Alliance (made up of Fife, Glen, Kingdom and, Ore Valley housing associations), tenants and residents federations and private landlords steering group	We are monitoring the take up of Housing Benefit and rent top-ups, as well monitoring the number of Housing staff that are trained to offer housing alternatives for housing choice and benefits.	Ongoing	This doesn't impact a specific priority group but will benefit a number of families that are living in fuel poverty.
Reduce the number and percentage of households experiencing fuel poverty.	Fife Housing Partnership: Fife Council, NHS Fife, the Scottish Government, the Fife Housing Association Alliance (made up of Fife, Glen, Kingdom and, Ore Valley housing associations), tenants and residents federations and private landlords steering group	We will monitor the number of households that receive free home energy advice and the number of households helped out of fuel poverty.	2022	This doesn't impact a specific priority group but will benefit a number of families that are living in fuel poverty.

Income from social security and benefits in kind

<p>Explore a local pilot of basic income.</p>	<p>Scottish Government, and Fife, City of Edinburgh, North Ayrshire and Glasgow City Councils</p>	<p>The impact of this action will be determined through a full business case which will be submitted to the Scottish Government.</p> <p>The success of this action depends on whether it is able to influence government policy.</p>	<p>Spring/Summer 2020</p>	<p>There is no specific group that this action targets due to the nature of it being a pilot with the intention that all citizens could receive a basic income.</p> <p>However, this action can potentially benefit some groups more than others, particularly lone parents and people with disabilities.</p>
<p>Co-ordinate support locally to deliver mitigation measures and monitor the impact of welfare changes.</p>	<p>Fife Welfare Reform & Anti-Poverty Partnership: CARF, Fife Council, NHS Fife, Fife H&SCP, Fife Gingerbread, Fife Voluntary Action, Social Security Scotland, DWP</p>	<p>We will assess the impact of this action by monitoring the outcomes of projects relating to welfare reform and poverty mitigation in local communities.</p>	<p>2023</p>	<p>This action will benefit families living on low incomes. Although it is not targeted at a specific priority group, it will benefit them.</p>
<p>Integrate accessible income maximisation at key points in service provision across the partnership.</p>	<p>Fife Welfare Reform and Anti-Poverty Partnership: CARF, Fife Council, NHS Fife, Fife H&SCP, Fife Gingerbread, Fife Voluntary Action, Social Security Scotland, DWP</p>	<p>We will assess the impact by monitoring benefit up-take.</p>	<p>2023</p>	<p>This action will benefit families living on low incomes. Although it is not targeted at a specific priority group, it will benefit them.</p>
<p>Improve advocacy and support to enable families and pregnant women to deal with benefit changes, maximise income and be more financially resilient.</p>	<p>Fife Health & Social Care Partnership, NHS Fife, CARF</p>	<p>We will monitor the number of referrals to financial advice services through the <i>CARF Financial Health Check</i> project and will supplement this by tracking the number of referrals to money advice or income maximisation services as well as to maternity grants,</p>	<p>2021</p>	<p>This action is aimed at families or pregnant women, and therefore may impact lone parents, mothers aged under 25, children under 1 and families with 3 or more children.</p>

		neonatal support that are made by staff to their patients.		
Indirect actions				
Understand Fife's child poverty priority groups by reviewing data and considering ways of engaging with the priority groups to co-produce support.	Fife Child Poverty Group: NHS Fife , Fife Council, CARF, Fife Gingerbread, Social Security Scotland	We will assess the impact of this action based on the level of lived experience reflected in the group's decision making.	2021 (pushed back due to Covid-19)	This action aims to involve people in the priority groups in decision making to allow us to better support them.
Improve awareness and the impact of Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACEs).	Fife Council, Fife H&SCP, NHS Fife	We will monitor the impact of this action amongst key staff groups by considering the number of employees who have participated in training and workshops.	2023	This action won't specifically benefit the priority groups, however, it does lay the foundations for building a workforce that is trauma aware.

Planned new actions

Action	Partners involved (lead partner in bold if applicable)	How impact will be/is being assessed	Timeframe	Group(s) the action is intended to reduce poverty amongst
Income from employment				
Develop and implement a new, locally informed framework for commissioning employability services in the area through the No One Left Behind programme and Parental Employment Support Fund.	Fife Council Business & Employability Service , Fife Voluntary Action, DWP, NHS Fife, Fife College, Skills Development Scotland	Following an initial stakeholder workshop in March 2020, a series of collaborative conversations have been held with service users and those with lived experience to inform the framework and challenge fund process. Outcomes will be delivered in line with Scottish Government requirements for the NOLB framework.	Challenge Fund to be active from April 2021	Intended to reduce poverty amongst families and will likely benefit families captured through the priority groups.

Costs of Living				
Improve affordable and sustainable travel and public transport, particularly in rural parts of Fife and during evenings and weekends.	Fife Council Transportation Service , Fife Council Communities & Neighbourhoods Service	The impact will be assessed through a number of projects relating to affordable transport, including the outcome of the <i>Let's Talk... about Transporting People</i> project, which aims to involve people in designing the future of subsidised passenger transport services.	2023	There is no specific priority group that this action targets, however, it does aim to benefit all individuals living in Fife.
Income from social security and benefits in kind				
Renew awareness raising around child maintenance, centred on a children's rights approach.	Fife Gingerbread , CARF, NHS Fife, Fife Council	We will monitor the levels of Child Maintenance claimed in Fife. The impact will be on the financial and emotional wellbeing of children and families knowing that both parents are contributing – relative to their means – as is the child's right.	2021	Lone parents This action may also benefit lone parent families that fall into other priority groups like disability, ethnic minorities, more than three children, etc.

Appendix 2 – Action Rationale

On reviewing our actions, we wanted to create a more succinct action plan that has clear links to the Plan for Fife and demonstrates how we are working collaboratively to address the drivers of child poverty.

We had 60 actions in our initial plan, which showed the extent of our knowledge and understanding of what is required and it illustrated our ambition to tackle child poverty. This year, however, to make reporting more meaningful and practical, we have reduced the number of actions but have incorporated them all into 16 high-level actions.

The table below sets out each of our high-level actions and explains our rationale for including them and what we've changed since our last report.

<p>Promote banking and affordable credit options.</p>	<p>We want Fife to be a more equitable place where people don't have to turn to illegal loan sharks or high-cost payday lenders. That's why we are working in partnership to promote our Fife credit unions and Conduit Scotland.</p> <p>We haven't changed this action since our last report, however, we have grouped two other actions under this for reporting purposes. In 2019, we said we would promote credit union membership to Fife employees and raise awareness of the Tay Valley Credit Union for Fife Council Employees. It is our intention to continue with these actions as a means of supporting the delivery of this high-level action.</p> <p>This is a key action that contributes to our financial inclusion strategy and will be essential in making sure families can maximise their income. Find out about the progress we are making on this action on page 13 of our Child Poverty Action Report.</p>
<p>Work with Fife employers to support family friendly workplace policies e.g. Fair Work, Good Work.</p>	<p>We know that for many parents, employment isn't always as secure as it seems, and for many families, a flexible family friendly workplace policy can really make the difference when juggling employment and childcare, especially when you're living on a tight budget.</p> <p>To achieve this high-level action, we're combining it with other actions which were laid out in our previous action plan to address similar issues.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Signpost staff to relevant services and to Trade Union 'hardship' funds • Advance payment of bus fares to enable support services staff to get to work when bases have changed. • Continue to progress development of good work policies on procurement and employment practice in relation to child poverty. <p>Find out more about what we have been doing on this action on page 14 of our report.</p>
<p>Promote Fife as a Living Wage region and look at the role of procurement in supporting this.</p>	<p>Fife Council has committed to making Fife a Living Wage region. It's in our Plan for Fife and will have real benefits for many families who are not yet receiving the living wage.</p>

<p>Build on the Making it Work for Families programme through the Edinburgh & South East Scotland City Region Deal's Integrated Regional Employability & Skills programme and support an Intensive Family Support Service.</p>	<p>We want to build on the Making it Work for Families programme which unfortunately lost its funding in 2019. In order to continue this fantastic piece of work, we are supporting an Intensive Family Support Service through the ESES City Region Deal's Integrated Regional Employability & Skills programme. Find out more about the progress of this action on page 14 of our report.</p>
<p>Develop our approach to concessions and cost reduction to ensure cost is not a barrier to participation.</p>	<p>We want to ensure that any child who wants to participate in sport, leisure, arts and culture can and that the cost isn't a barrier for children, young people and families on low incomes. This is a Plan for Fife action and we are committed to ensuring it benefits children in poverty.</p>
<p>Identify and address cost barriers to participation in school.</p>	<p>Cost shouldn't be a barrier to children at school. We have made this a high-level action because of the Cost of the School Day and are supplementing it with actions that we highlighted in our previous report.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide access to free sanitary products. • Raise awareness of the impact of Cost of the School Day on families with guidelines to be developed to support schools in taking appropriate actions and sharing good practice. • Produce and implement a participation policy to ensure that all of Fife's Young people have the same opportunity to represent Fife through their chosen sport. • Provide training for Active School staff to ensure they are better informed on Child poverty in Fife, the cost of the school day and how to mitigate cost. • Roll out of Poverty Matters training to schools across Fife and developing draft guidance and top tips for schools on the COSD. • Make a commitment to free sport and physical activity extra-curricular opportunities for young people. • Work with external activity providers to lower the cost of extra-curricular provision, through the Council's Service Level Agreement.
<p>Ensure there are effective, dignified mechanisms for supporting people facing food crisis while working towards a significant reduction in household food insecurity.</p>	<p>Food insecurity is a real issue in Fife's communities. Even before the coronavirus pandemic exacerbated this issue, food insecurity was a very real problem for many of our children, young people and families. We set out actions in our plan last year to help address food insecurity and it remains a priority to deliver these actions. We are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • exploring and piloting different models of food purchase and distribution options including community pantries / fridges. • increasing skills and knowledge to prepare affordable, nutritious food. • mapping food provision across Fife (including school holiday provision, community cafes and food banks). • piloting, evaluating and rolling out a money crisis tool for workers interacting with people who are food insecure. • piloting a new scheme to address the issue of food insecurity faced by children, young people and families during school holidays in communities across Fife. <p>We have grouped these under this high-level action. Find out more about what we're doing to tackle food insecurity for children and families in Fife on page 16 of the Child Poverty Action Report.</p>

<p>Improve access to local, affordable and flexible childcare, including explore parent led approaches to take advantage of learning, training and job opportunities.</p>	<p>We know the value of affordable and flexible childcare and how it has the potential to enable parents to find work whilst ensuring their child is well looked after. Therefore, we wanted to make this a high-level action that supports parents to maximise their household income.</p> <p>This is a Plan for Fife action, which means that there are already a number of actions being implemented that will be looking to improve access. However, in our 2019 report, we set out a number of actions that can also support us achieving this action. We are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • exploring options for discounts on school age childcare fees for those on low incomes via FifeStyle, Holiday Play Schemes and Breakfast Cafes in schools. • considering whether currently funded early learning and childcare for 2- year-olds reaches families at risk of poverty, and whether additional action could be taken to maximise reach. • exploring where funded hours offered for pre-schoolers could be increased or subsidising additional hours for families at risk or experiencing poverty. • considering ways to further subsidise or provide free additional hours of early learning and childcare for children under 2 for families at risk of or experiencing poverty.
<p>Provide support to families to meet housing costs or to find affordable sustainable housing.</p>	<p>Children deserve to have a stable home and should not have to face homelessness because their parents cannot afford their housing costs. We want to help parents sustain their tenancies. Find out more about what we are doing on this action on page 16 of the report.</p>
<p>Reduce the number and percentage of households experiencing fuel poverty.</p>	<p>Too many children in Fife are living in households that are fuel poor. We recognise that this is an area of poverty that can affect anyone, but for children, a warm house to come home to is essential for their development. Therefore, we are making this one of our high-level actions and aligns nicely with our fuel poverty ambitions in the Plan for Fife.</p>
<p>Explore a local pilot of basic income.</p>	<p>Following our Fairness Matters report recommendation to explore basic income as a way of making Fife fairer, we incorporated it into our Plan for Fife.</p> <p>We believe social security is an essential public service, and in times of hardship like the coronavirus crisis, exploring alternatives to social security to give more people money in their pockets is fundamental if we want an equitable society.</p> <p>For these reasons, we decided that it deserved to be a high-level child poverty action. It also demonstrates Fife's willingness to be involved in national projects and to collaborate with other local authorities and national partners.</p>
<p>Co-ordinate support locally to deliver mitigation measures and monitor the impact of welfare changes.</p>	<p>We are working on a range of activities and projects across the whole of Fife that support our welfare reform and anti-poverty objectives.</p> <p>As we stated in the report, Fife has a large geography with a mix of urban and rural areas. Fife is split into seven areas to ensure we are meeting the needs of local communities, but all our areas are slightly different with their own unique opportunities and challenges. We also know that welfare reform is having an unprecedented impact on our most vulnerable communities, therefore it's important that our services offer co-ordinated support to ensure delivery of mitigation measures and monitor</p>

	<p>the impact of welfare changes. Therefore, it's one of the key actions outlined in the Plan for Fife as well as our Child Poverty Action Plan.</p> <p>We have included a lot of sub-actions under this high-level action that were in our original action plan. We recognise the important role Community Learning & Development plays in delivering meaningful interventions and their high levels of engagement with people with lived experience. We are supporting this action by doing what we said we would do in the 2019 report. We are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • targeting community-based adult learning activity within Fife's SIMD areas with the poorest outcomes in order to address poverty and inequality, • refreshing our digital skills programmes, and • implementing a revised approach to joint working on family learning. <p>In 2016, Fife Council mainstreamed welfare reform support. This included Welfare Support Workers who deliver welfare reform advice and support in local communities through our Community Job Clubs. As we set out in our plan last year, we still intend to increase partner delivery of initiatives that complement or increase the offer of job clubs by incorporating mental health support, clothes exchanges and food initiatives.</p> <p>We want to build on the current model to enhance community led approaches by maximising opportunities for local solutions in response to the need for welfare support.</p> <p>However, we don't just want to mitigate the impact of welfare changes, we want co-ordinated support across Fife that makes it a fairer place to live. Find out about what we've been doing to progress this action on page 18.</p>
<p>Integrate accessible income maximisation at key points in service provision across the partnership.</p>	<p>We know the social security landscape can be complicated and difficult to navigate, but we want to ensure that families are accessing all the benefits they are entitled to. That's why we're focusing on income maximisation as part of our Child Poverty Action Plan. It's also Plan for Fife action. Find out more about what we have been doing on this on page 20.</p>
<p>Improve advocacy and support to enable families and pregnant women to deal with benefit changes, maximise income and be more financially resilient.</p>	<p>The Child Poverty (Scotland) Act 2017 requires that local authorities and NHS board report in particular on:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Income maximisation measures taken in the area of the local authority during the reporting year to provide pregnant women and families with children with: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Information, advice and assistance about eligibility for financial support, and ○ Assistance to apply for financial support. <p>We reported on what we are doing on page 21 of the report. This is an important issue for us in Fife and is a key action in our Plan for Fife. In our 2019 report, we set out a number of actions that were all centred around supporting families and pregnant women to maximise their incomes. This is now a high-level action and includes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • delivering the financial inclusion referral pathway for pregnant women and families with young children by midwives and health visitors to CARF "financial health checks". • signposting/ referrals from various NHS services for children and families. • increasing financial assistance referrals from the Family Nurse Partnership.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • improving monitoring from midwives and health visitors for enquiries and referrals for a financial health check and income maximisation. • increasing awareness, knowledge, skills & signposting for health professionals working with pregnant women and families with children to raise the issue and refer to financial advice services.
<p>Understand Fife's child poverty priority groups by reviewing data and consider ways of engaging with the priority groups to co-produce support.</p>	<p>In 2019, we outlined two actions that were designed to better understand the priority groups in Fife:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Review further data on child poverty considering priority groups. • Engage with priority groups to co-produce child poverty support. <p>We have combined these actions into one high-level indirect action that will help us understand the priority groups and will allow us to better design services. To do this we need a better understanding of the child poverty data in Fife. We also want our child poverty actions to reflect the thoughts and experiences of those with lived experience of poverty.</p> <p>Find out more about what we have been doing to progress this action on page 21.</p>
<p>Improve awareness and the impact of Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACEs).</p>	<p>We know that poverty can be a cause and consequence of Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACEs) and trauma. ACEs can have a huge impact on children and young people throughout their lives and have been found to be associated with a range of poorer health and social outcomes in adulthood (Scottish Government, 2020).</p> <p>It may not be a direct driver of child poverty, but we believe it's important to address it in the context of child poverty and so we have made it one of our high-level indirect actions. Fife Partnership is committed to developing the Fife workforce to be trauma-informed and that's why it is also one of our Plan for Fife actions.</p>