

ABERDEEN CITY COUNCIL

COMMITTEE	Anti-Poverty and Inequality Committee
DATE	8 March 2023
EXEMPT	No
CONFIDENTIAL	No
REPORT TITLE	Local Child Poverty Action Report
REPORT NUMBER	CUS/23/061
DIRECTOR	Andy MacDonald
CHIEF OFFICER	Derek McGowan
REPORT AUTHOR	Paul Tytler
TERMS OF REFERENCE	2.1

1. PURPOSE OF REPORT

- 1.1 To provide the Committee with the half yearly Child Poverty Action report for 2022/23.

2. RECOMMENDATION(S)

That the Committee: -

- 2.1 Notes the progress in this half yearly report;
- 2.2 Notes progress in submitting the annual report and refreshed Child Poverty Action Plan 2022-26 to Scottish Government; and
- 2.3 Notes progress in establishing the Child Poverty sub-group of the Anti-Poverty Outcome Improvement Group.

3. CURRENT SITUATION

- 3.1 At the Operational Delivery Committee on 13 January 2021, it was agreed that committee receives a half yearly report on the actions being taken by Community Planning Aberdeen to reduce and eradicate child poverty.
- 3.2 The Child Poverty (Scotland) Act 2017 (the Act) fully entered into force on the 1st July 2019. The Act sets out steps required to be taken by the Scottish Government, Local Authorities and Health Boards to tackle child poverty. The Act identifies four definitions for poverty, identifies targets to be achieved by 2030, and creates a requirement for Local Authorities and Local Health Boards to annually agree a Child Poverty Action Report. This Report is then published and submitted to Scottish Ministers.
- 3.3 Poverty is defined in the Act under four different headings:
- Relative poverty
 - Absolute poverty
 - Combined low income and material deprivation

- Persistent poverty

- 3.4 The [annual Child Poverty Action Plan report](#) (CUS/22/149) was submitted to Operational Delivery Committee on 31 August 2022. The committee approved the report and it was submitted to Scottish Government on 31 August 2022. The annual report for 2022/23 will be submitted to committee in June 2023.
- 3.5 A refreshed Child Poverty Action Plan was approved by Committee on 11 January 2023, with the Committee noting progress in developing the Child Poverty Action Plan 2022-2026 and further work to finalise and ensure alignment with the Children's Services Plan by March 2023. The Child Poverty Action Plan 2022-2026 was submitted to Scottish Government on 17 January 2023.
- 3.6 Services continue deliver against the priorities and actions identified in the Action Plan, and detailed progress will be reported to Committee in the annual report later in June 2023. Key developments since the annual report submitted in August 2022:
- Development and submission to Scottish Government of the refreshed Child Poverty Action Plan for 2022-26;
 - Work to align to the Child Poverty Action Plan with the Children's Services Delivery Plan by March 2023;
 - Establishment of the Child Poverty sub-group of the Anti-Poverty Outcome Improvement Group. The group met on 7 February 2023 and priorities include:
 - Developing improved baseline and performance data
 - Ensuring involvement of those with lived experience
 - Tackling structural barriers faced by those affected by poverty
 - Early intervention – engaging with families in communities sooner
 - Tackling stigma
 - Sharing learning and good practice – ensure competent and confident front line workers
 - Ensuring focus on the six priority groups identified as being most at risk of child poverty in the refreshed action plan:
 - lone parent families
 - minority ethnic families
 - families with a disabled adult or child
 - families with a younger mother (under 25)
 - families with a child under 1
 - larger families (3+ children)

4 CHILD POVERTY TARGETS

- 4.1 Section 1 of the Act sets out targets that the Scottish Ministers must meet by 2030. These are that, of children living in households in Scotland:
- (a) less than 10% fall within relative poverty
 - (b) less than 5% fall within absolute poverty
 - (c) less than 5% fall within combined low income and material deprivation
 - (d) less than 5% fall within persistent poverty
- 4.2 Section 2 of the Act sets out Interim targets, that must be met by the Scottish Ministers in the financial year beginning with 1 April 2023. These are, that, of children living in households in Scotland—
- (a) less than 18% fall within relative poverty
 - (b) less than 14% fall within absolute poverty
 - (c) less than 8% fall within combined low income and material deprivation
 - (d) less than 8% fall within persistent poverty

These measures cannot yet be defined at a Local Authority level.

5 LOCAL CHILD POVERTY ACTION REPORTS

- 5.1 The Act requires each Local Authority and NHS Board to publish a Local Child Poverty Action Report (LCPAR) and undertake annual monitoring and reporting to demonstrate progress against statutory targets.
- 5.2 A LCPAR must describe any measures taken in the area of the local authority during the reporting year by the local authority and each relevant Health Board for the purpose of contributing to the meeting of the child poverty targets, and measures that are proposed to be taken to meet these targets.
- 5.3 Additionally, a LCPAR must describe any income maximisation measures taken in the area of the local authority during the reporting year to provide pregnant women and families with children with—
- a) information, advice, and assistance about eligibility for financial support, and
 - b) assistance to apply for financial support;
- 5.4 The report must in particular also describe any measures taken during the reporting year, or which are proposed to be taken, in the area of the local authority in relation to children living in households whose income is adversely affected, or whose expenditure is increased, because a member of the household has one or more protected characteristics.
- 5.5 The Act states that progress against these targets will be scrutinised nationally by the Poverty and Inequality Commission. However, at a local level it is the responsibility of the Local Authority and Health Board to publish, as soon as practical after the end of each financial year, a report on progress locally.

6 CHILD POVERTY ACTION IN ABERDEEN

- 6.1 The Population Needs Assessment used as the basis for the refresh of the LOIP in 2021 identified that the rate of child poverty in Aberdeen was estimated

to be 21.8%, or around 5500 children. Poverty is defined as 'below 60% median income after housing costs'.

6.2 This report sets out the measures that have been taken by the Council, NHS and other partners to tackle and mitigate the effects of child poverty during 2022/23.

6.3 The report outlines significant efforts to tackle child poverty through 2022/23, demonstrating both the extent to which the Council, NHS and partners understood the impact the pandemic would have on children and young people, and the actions taken to support their physical and mental health and wellbeing.

6.4 In March 2022 the Scottish Government launched 'Best Start Bright Future', the new Tackling Child Poverty Delivery Plan 2022-26. 'Best Start Bright Future' sets out three key aims:

- Providing the opportunities and integrated support parents need to enter, sustain and progress in work
- Maximising the support available for families to live dignified lives and meet their basic needs
- Supporting the next generation to thrive

6.5 As noted in 3.4 above, a refreshed Child Poverty Action Plan was approved by Committee on 11 January 2023, with the Committee noting progress in developing the Child Poverty Action Plan 2022-2026 and further work to finalise and ensure alignment with the Children's Services Plan by March 2023. This work is now overseen by a Child Poverty sub-group of the Anti-Poverty Outcome Improvement Group, led by the Chief Officer, Early Intervention and Community Empowerment. The sub-group is led by NHS Grampian and includes third sector and community partners.

6.6 The [Anti-Poverty Outcome Improvement](#) Group leads and is responsible for actions which support delivery of the Local Outcome Improvement Plan (LOIP) and underpinning locality plans. It is responsible for ensuring progress against the primary and secondary drivers and improvement aims set for Stretch Outcome 1 (no one in Aberdeen will suffer due to poverty) of the LOIP.

7. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

7.1 Financial implications relating to this report would result from failure to achieve the outcomes sought for children and families across the City. Public services face significant challenges on expenditure, with financial projections indicating that these pressures will remain. Demand management is a key driver in helping meet these challenges and failing to address child poverty may mean that costs associated with child poverty do not reduce, adding to projected pressures in coming years.

8. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

8.1 The preparation and publication of the LCPAR fulfils Aberdeen City Council's duty under section 13 of the Act.

9. ENVIRONMENTAL IMPLICATIONS

- 9.1 There are no direct environmental implications arising from the recommendations of this report.

10. RISK

Category	Risks	Primary Controls/Control Actions to achieve Target Risk Level	*Target Risk Level (L, M or H) *taking into account controls/control actions	*Does Target Risk Level Match Appetite Set?
Strategic Risk	Risk that the Council along with partners does not meet the requirements of the legislation, to the long term detriment of children and families in Aberdeen	Partnership work to mitigate the effects of poverty across the city	L	Yes
Compliance	Risk relates to failure to comply with statutory requirements	Provision of the LOIP as Aberdeen City Child Poverty Action Plan; annual reporting.	L	Yes
Operational	Failure to meet statutory targets	This work will improve outcomes for children and families across the City.	L	Yes
Financial	Risk relates to non-achievement of targets long term and failing to reduce demand through early	Joint working and multi-agency service redesign to identify appropriate measures.	L	Yes

	intervention in key drivers. Failure to achieve the outcomes desired will mean residents requiring support from public agencies for longer.			
Reputational	Risk relates to failure to meet the statutory targets.	Meeting the LOIP outcomes.	L	Yes
Environment / Climate	Risk as opportunity	Meeting the LOIP outcomes will improve the environment for children.	L	Yes

11. OUTCOMES

Local Outcome Improvement Plan Themes	
	Impact of Report
Prosperous Economy	This report demonstrates the positive range of work being undertaken at service and partnership level to improve the quality of life for families and children in poverty.
Prosperous People	This report demonstrates the positive range of work being undertaken at service and partnership level to improve the quality of life for families and children in poverty.
Prosperous Place	This report demonstrates the positive range of work being undertaken at service and partnership level to improve the quality of life for families and children in poverty.
Enabling Technology	Digital support provided in several areas including education provision and Connecting Scotland.

12. IMPACT ASSESSMENTS

Assessment	Outcome
Integrated Impact Assessment	Stage 1 assessment completed.

Data Protection Impact Assessment	Not required.
Duty of Due Regard / Fairer Scotland Duty	The aim of the LOIP is to improve outcomes for all. The Fairer Scotland Duty is considered against strategic decisions.

13. BACKGROUND PAPERS

13.1 CUS/23/011 Child Poverty Action Plan 2022-2026

14. APPENDICES

14.1 None

12. REPORT AUTHOR CONTACT DETAILS

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