

PERTH AND KINROSS COUNCIL

24 February 2016

WORKING IN LOCALITIES TO TACKLE INEQUALITY

Joint Report by Senior Depute Chief Executive, ECS (Equality, Community Planning & Public Services Reform) and Depute Chief Executive, HCC (Corporate and Community Development)

PURPOSE OF REPORT

This report lays out proposals to build upon existing activity aimed at making Perth & Kinross a more fair and equitable place to live. Our aim is to change people's lives using legislation, evidence and experience. Stubborn inequalities exist and it is our challenge to address these through a fairness agenda.

Evidence has been gathered which provides an up to date profile of inequality in Perth & Kinross. This evidence, which has largely been gathered via 'desk top' research, is an important starting point to inform future measures to tackle inequality. It is however, important that this evidence is built upon through robust engagement with key stakeholders such as those people working in localities and, **vitality**, with people currently experiencing relative inequality in terms of income, health and employment opportunities.

1. BACKGROUND / MAIN ISSUES

- 1.1 Addressing inequalities and promoting social inclusion through prevention and early intervention is at the heart of the Scottish Government's legislative programme and the Fairer Scotland Agenda, as well as the Council's Corporate Plan and the Perth & Kinross Community Plan/Single Outcome Agreement. A report entitled "Shifting the Curve", (<http://thirdsectorcommunity.org.uk/News/shifting-the-curve>) prepared by independent advisors to the Scottish Government, has recently added to the debate on how to tackle stubborn inequalities in Scotland.
- 1.2 Although Perth & Kinross is considered to be a mainly affluent area, in reality many individuals and families across both our urban and rural communities are affected by inequality in relation to income, health and employment opportunities.
- 1.3 However, the geography of poverty is changing. Poverty is no longer concentrated in particular areas, meaning traditional approaches to identifying and tackling poverty and inequality such as the Scottish Index of Multiple Deprivation, can no longer give a complete picture, particularly with regard to people living in our rural communities. It is important to remember that individuals and families suffer from poverty and inequality, not whole geographical areas, and not only those outwith employment. It is also important to gather evidence on how experiences of urban/rural poverty are felt by those individuals and families

1.4 Evidence based practice already exists in Perth & Kinross in relation to addressing inequalities (Appendix 1). This includes extensive work from the Welfare Rights Team, Children & Families Team, NHS Tayside, Citizens Advice Bureau and Partner Organisations. The Evidence to Success programme is an example where the gathering and testing of robust evidence has informed the development and delivery of effective practice and achievement of better outcomes for individuals and families in Perth & Kinross.

1.5 Another example of the evidence of the impact of inequality is through the analysis of health and social care data across Perth & Kinross. The evidence suggests a higher consumption of health and social care resource within those communities that are generally less deprived. This is further explained by the higher presence of multi-morbidities affecting adults in less affluent communities, reducing longevity and therefore ultimately the ability to access services.

1.6 At its meeting on 7 October 2015 (Article 646 refers) the Council agreed the following motion –
The Poverty Alliance is the national anti-poverty network in Scotland and has offered valuable advice to the Perth and Kinross Council Welfare Rights staff to tackle the causes and consequences of poverty in Perth and Kinross.

As part of the national campaign to combat stigma, the Poverty Alliance has, in the run up to Challenge Poverty week later this month, invited Councils to sign up to the national “Stick Your Labels” campaign. The objective of the campaign is to tackle negative attitudes and challenge stereotypes about people experiencing poverty. The Campaign has been supported by the Scottish Government, CoSLA and Scottish Council for Voluntary Organisations.

Perth & Kinross Council pledges to:

- 1 *Set out its contribution and commitment to tackling poverty in our area.*
- 2 *Avoid language which can cause harm to people experiencing poverty or stigmatise those living in poverty.*
- 3 *Develop and take actions that will address negative attitudes towards people experiencing poverty.*

Council agrees to request that the Chief Executive brings forward a detailed report on addressing poverty and the above pledges within Perth and Kinross.

1.7 This report proposes an approach to build upon existing evidence based activity addressing inequalities across the different localities of Perth & Kinross.

2 PROPOSALS

- 2.1 The CPP Board has new statutory duties to tackle stubborn inequality in the CPP area and set out how it proposes to do this in a Local Outcome Improvement Plan (LOIP). In effect the current Community Plan will evolve into the LOIP although the current Community Plan will require refreshing and updating to ensure it demonstrates how the CPP will fulfil this new statutory duty.
- 2.2 At its meeting held on 16 December 2015, the Council approved a future approach to locality working. A key component of this approach is the establishment of Local Community Planning Partnerships to oversee the development of Locality Planning, including tackling inequalities, for which they are accountable to the CPP Board. The nature of the challenge before us requires a progressive and collaborative approach with a range of stakeholders.
- 2.3 It is proposed that these Local Community Planning Partnerships would lead local community engagement/conversations with regards to building upon the existing evidence based in relation to poverty and other inequalities. The local CPPs would engage with local people gathering views on what practical initiatives could be put in place using the existing best practice as examples of things that work and testing views and perceptions locally.
- 2.4 A number of formal Poverty Commissions have been held across Scotland providing reports in recent months, namely Renfrewshire Council (Child Poverty), Fife and Dundee. The Senior Depute Chief Executive has visited Renfrewshire and this visit has helped in shaping the proposals in this report.
- 2.5 Whilst the outputs from these Commissions have been helpful in informing existing activity in Perth & Kinross, it is suggested the most vital component of future joint working to address inequalities locally should be the involvement of local people currently facing inequalities on a daily basis.
- 2.6 Following Perth & Kinross's significant contribution to the Scottish National Action Plan for Human Rights, and the Council's decision to promote a better human rights culture in Perth & Kinross through a Statement of Intent [Making Human Rights a Reality in Perth & Kinross](#) our intention is to deliver on our aim for a Perth & Kinross where everyone is treated with dignity and respect and where everyone has the right to opportunities and to prosper.

3. NEXT STEPS

- 3.1 As outlined above, tackling inequality and addressing poverty are shared priorities within our Community Plan/SOA and the solutions to addressing such multi-faceted issues lie in multi-faceted partnership solutions. It is therefore further suggested that a Fairness Commission be established to build consensus across public organisations, employers and communities of

the need to tackle stubborn inequality. The consensus will be informed by the authentic view of those people experiencing hardship through inequality.

- 3.2 The purpose of the Commission is to build public and political support for actions to improve the lives of children, families and individuals. The Commission will give strategic direction and identify agreed actions with community representatives to tackle inequality. The Commission's conclusions and recommendations will inform the priorities of the Council and the Community Planning Partnership Board. The Board will oversee engagement within localities and the further development of appropriate joint activity to address poverty and inequality within local community planning partnership areas.
- 3.3 The proposed Commission would have a finite life and a short, sharp focus and would regularly report progress to the Council and the CPP Board. It is suggested that membership of the Commission be drawn from :
- Local people/organisations with first-hand experience of poverty and inequalities
 - An elected member
 - CPP Partner
 - An academic
 - Representative from local Third Sector e.g. Citizens Advice
 - Representative from Joseph Rowntree Foundation or Poverty Alliance
 - A Trade Union Rep
 - Senior Depute Chief Executive

The remit of the Commission will be to:

- Take evidence in the areas of early years, educational attainment, health inequalities, employment, skills, housing and income,
 - Give a voice to the authentic experience of individuals who experience inequalities,
 - Provide a report to the CPP and the Council on proposals for change that will address poverty
- 3.4 It is imperative that particular emphasis should be given to ensuring local people/organisations with first-hand experience of poverty/inequalities have a lead role in the Fairness Commission, therefore an appropriate individual with first hand experience of poverty should jointly chair the commission along side an elected member.

3.5 A suggested timetable for this activity is outlined below:-

Action	Timescale
Report to Council	24 February 2016
Engagement with CPP Board	March 2016
Establish Fairness Commission	August 2016
Engagement within Local Community Partnership areas/Evidence Gathering	September 2016 – June 2017
Report to Council / CPP Board outlining future activity to address inequalities	September 2017

4. RESOURCING

4.1 The engagement in localities would be led by the Community Development Teams. It is also suggested that third sector organisations with a focus on addressing inequalities e.g. Joseph Rowntree Foundation, STAR Project, Poverty Alliance, could be approached with a view to providing support through a six month secondment of an appropriate specialist to lead and coordinate the activity outlined within this draft report.

5. THE POVERTY ALLIANCE

5.1 The Poverty Alliance is a network of community, voluntary and statutory organisations working together to combat poverty. The Poverty Alliance campaign “Stick your Labels” aims to tackle the stigma of poverty. The Scottish Government, COSLA and eight local authorities have signed up to the campaign. The motion agreed by the Council on 7 October 2015 included reference to the campaign, and in signing up to the Campaign the Council will demonstrate its commitment to tackling poverty as well as benefit from entering into partnership with the Poverty Alliance this will provide access to their specialist expertise and support in developing our engagement activity across localities.

6. CONCLUSION AND RECOMENDATIONS

It is recommended that the Council agree to:-

- 1) Approve the establishment of a Fairness Commission as outlined in Section 3;
- 2) Approve the suggested approach and the timetable also as outlined in Section 3;
- 3) Note the examples of evidence-based practice (Appendix 1) as the basis for further engagement within localities; and
- 4) Sign up to the Poverty Alliance’s “Stick your Labels” campaign.

Author(s)

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1. IMPLICATIONS, ASSESSMENTS, CONSULTATION AND COMMUNICATION

Strategic Implications	Yes / None
Community Plan / Single Outcome Agreement	Yes
Corporate Plan	Yes
Resource Implications	
Financial	Yes
Workforce	Yes
Asset Management (land, property, IST)	No
Assessments	
Equality Impact Assessment	No
Strategic Environmental Assessment	No
Sustainability (community, economic, environmental)	No
Legal and Governance	No
Risk	No
Consultation	
Internal	Yes
External	No
Communication	
Communications Plan	Yes

1. Strategic Implications

Community Plan / Single Outcome Agreement

1.1 The Tackling Inequalities Report relates directly or indirectly to all of the following areas:

- (i) *Giving every child the best start in life*
- (ii) *Developing educated, responsible and informed citizens*
- (iii) *Promoting a prosperous, inclusive and sustainable economy*
- (iv) *Supporting people to lead independent, healthy and active lives*
- (v) *Creating a safe and sustainable place for future generations*

Corporate Plan

1.2 The Tackling Inequalities Report relates directly or indirectly to all of the following areas:

- (i) *Giving every child the best start in life;*
- (ii) *Developing educated, responsible and informed citizens;*
- (iii) *Promoting a prosperous, inclusive and sustainable economy;*
- (iv) *Supporting people to lead independent, healthy and active lives; and*
- (v) *Creating a safe and sustainable place for future generations.*

2. Resource Implications

Financial

- 2.1 The Executive Officer Team has been consulted regarding the financial implications which would cover the cost of a six month secondment of a specialist from the Third Sector.

Workforce

- 2.2 It is intended that any additional workload would be absorbed within existing resources.

Asset Management (land, property, IT)

- 2.3 N/A

3. Assessments

N/A

Equality Impact Assessment

- 3.1 Assessed as **not relevant** for the purposes of EqIA

Strategic Environmental Assessment

- 3.2 N/A

Sustainability

- 3.3 N/A

Legal and Governance

- 3.4 N/A

- 3.5 N/A

Risk

- 3.6 N/A

4. Consultation

Internal

4.1 Consultation took place with the following:

All Council Services,
The Executive Officer Team.

External

4.2 N/A

5. Communication

5.1 An effective communication plan with all relevant stakeholders is in place.

2. BACKGROUND PAPERS

This report provides a link to a background paper, "Evidence of Inequality in Perth & Kinross".

3. APPENDICES

(i) Working in localities to tackle inequality.

1. Existing activity aimed at addressing inequalities in Perth & Kinross

Children – Local Outcomes: Children have the best start in life; Nurtured and supported families.

Action Point	Responsible	What are we doing?
Implemented the actions identified in relevant Council Strategies around Children e.g. Early Years Strategy.	PKC – Education and Children’s Services.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Continue to implement the actions identified in relevant Council Strategies around Children e.g. Early Years Strategy.
Ensured that families providing kinship care are aware of the services available and how to access those services.	PKC – Welfare Rights Team and ECS – Children and Families Teams.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Welfare Rights outreach at Almondbank House to ensure that all kinship carers are in receipt of the correct incomes. Kinship Care Policy
Strengthened links with Midwives and Health Visitors to ensure that families with children are aware of the services available and how to access those services.	PKC – Welfare Rights Team and Perth CAB	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Funding secured from Health and Social Care Integration Fund to provide Welfare Rights and CAB liaison workers to work closely with Health staff.
Ensured that families with young children are aware of their entitlements.	NHS Tayside	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Continue to promote UK-wide Healthy Start scheme provides vouchers for the purchase of milk, fruit & veg, and vitamins for pregnant women and families with children under 4 years in receipt of certain benefits.

Employment – Local Outcomes: Young people reach their potential; People are ready for life and work; Employment opportunities for all; Thriving expanding economy.

Action Point	Responsible	What are we doing?
<i>Implemented the actions identified in Council Employability Strategy.</i>	PKC – The Environment Service	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Continue to implement the actions identified in Council Employability Strategy.

Income – Local Outcomes: Children have the best start in life; Nurtured and supported families; Older people are independent for longer; People in vulnerable circumstances are protected; Thriving expanding economy.

Action Point	Responsible	What are we doing?
<i>Ensured provision of specialist welfare rights and money advice services within and throughout Perth & Kinross. So that the people in our communities can get the right advice at the right time.</i>	PKC – Welfare Rights Team	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Continue to promote, maintain and develop the Council's online welfare rights resources. Maintain and develop PKC Welfare Rights Team's comprehensive online information on welfare benefits: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> About our Welfare Rights Team Life Events and available help A-Z of benefits Welfare Reform Mandatory Reconsiderations and Appeals Welfare Rights Resources We will continue to maintain and develop our online information in order to provide 24/7 access to benefits information. This will help to provide the right conditions for people to empower themselves. Continue to deliver welfare rights advice via social media. Continue to deliver our Benefits Champion course to all frontline workers across Perth and Kinross.

<p>Maximised income and respond to welfare reform.</p>	<p>PKC – Welfare Rights Team and Perth CAB</p> <p>PKC – Finance and Charging Team</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Continue to provide income maximisation advice and information to our residents. • Continue to provide information, advice, guidance, presentations, talks and training around welfare reform to Partner organisations. • Continue to provide an income maximisation service to those assessed for care charges.
<p>Limit the impact of expensive credit and promote financial inclusion.</p>	<p>All Partner organisations</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Developed a Credit Union as an alternative to high cost lenders and promoted the benefits of this lending to the people in our communities. • Continue to promote the Credit Union Budget Cards scheme. • Encouraging credit union membership with NHST staff (including P&K Credit Union). • Promote low cost home contents insurance for social sector tenants. • Funding a Money Advice Service through Perth Citizen’s Advice Bureau.
<p>Ensured that we can assist as many people as possible via the Scottish Welfare Fund by exploring sustainable, alternative methods of fulfilling Community Care Grants.</p>	<p>PKC – Welfare Rights Team and Perth CAB</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Promote access to banks and other financial services. • We are working with CoSLA, Falkirk and Renfrewshire Councils and Community Resource Network Scotland (CRNS) to explore the possibility of reuse goods for Scottish Welfare Fund, Community Care Grant (CCG), fulfilment. • Continue to provide support to the Perth and Kinross foodbank for those who do not qualify for Crisis Grants or other financial assistance.

Health & Well-being- Local Outcomes: Children have the best start in life; Nurtured and supported families; Longer, healthier lives for all; Older people are independent for longer; People in vulnerable circumstances are protected.

Action Point	Responsible	What are we doing?
<p><i>Implemented the actions identified in relevant Council Strategies around health and/or disability.</i></p>	<p>PKC – Community Care Service</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Implemented the actions identified in relevant Council Strategies around health and/or disability.
<p><i>Provided greater access to advice services throughout Perth & Kinross in partnership with Health and in Health settings.</i></p>	<p>PKC – Welfare Rights Team and NHS Tayside</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Delivered presentations at protected learning time sessions on Welfare Reform for GPs and other primary care staff. Provide an enhanced welfare rights service to people affected by cancer throughout Perth & Kinross since 2009. Joint delivery of Welfare Reform information sessions for NHS staff, focussing on in-work benefits. Delivered Welfare Rights outreach surgeries at Murray Royal Hospital, Cornhill and PRI. Extended Welfare Rights outreach surgeries to GP practices, Perth Royal Infirmary and Community Hospitals
	<p>NHS Tayside</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Development of a 'Money Worries/Crisis Help' mobile device app as a signposting resource to enable frontline staff in NHST and partner organisations to direct patients/clients to appropriate sources of advice and support, particularly in emergency/crisis situations. Continue with the "Keep Well" project across Tayside which offers health checks to people in vulnerable groups and the health check questionnaire includes questions on social history,

		employment and finances with opportunities for referral/signposting to employment, benefits and money advice services.
<i>Ensured that our unpaid carers are aware of where they can access advice and information and ensure that they do not experience financial hardship as a result of caring.</i>	PKC – Welfare Rights Team and PKAVS PKC-Education Service and PKC Young Carers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Continue to promote advice and support services via joint Welfare Rights/PKAVS Carers leaflet. Where a child has a caring role for a parent or sibling with a chronic health condition, schools record that and support the child's wellbeing, often working in partnership with PKC Young Carers.
<i>Ensured that the needs of the most vulnerable are met.</i>	HCC	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Established a multi-disciplinary support service for women at risk of offending which provides co-ordinated support and advice.

Housing – Local Outcomes: Children have the best start in life; Nurtured and supported families; Older people are independent for longer; People in vulnerable circumstances are protected; Attractive and welcoming environment.

Action Point	Responsible	What are we doing?
<i>Continued to implement the actions identified in Council Housing Strategies.</i>	PKC – Housing Service	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Approved a range of strategies designed to address the plight of the homeless, those in fuel poverty and those furthest from the job market Invested, in partnership with SSE, some £6m in improving the insulation of our Council properties over the last 3 years Reduced the number of Council tenants living in fuel poverty by 14.1%

<i>The provision of confidential and impartial advice to residents affected by priority debts.</i>	PKC – Welfare Rights Team	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Continue to deliver Welfare Rights outreach surgeries on a monthly basis within localities. All frontline PKC staff to be given debt awareness signposting training.
<i>Ensured that those requiring consumer debt are referred to agencies providing Specialist Money Advice</i>	PKC-Welfare Rights Team and Partner agencies	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Upskilling frontline staff regarding effective referrals.
<i>Provided affordable or free budgeting tools for people paying priority debts.</i>	HCC – Housing Service	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Mitigate the cost of Budgeting Cards for people in debt.
<i>Ensured that the most vulnerable in crisis can access food.</i>	HCC and P&K Foodbank	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> In 2013 we worked closely with our 3rd sector partners and local churches in order to establish a Foodbank and satellites across rural Perthshire.

Education – Local Outcomes: Children have the best start in life; Nurtured and supported families; People in vulnerable circumstances are protected; Thriving expanding economy; Resilient responsible and safe communities.

Action Point	Responsible	What are we doing?
<i>Implemented the actions identified in relevant Council Strategies around education.</i>	PKC – Education and Children’s Service	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Implement the actions identified in relevant Council Strategies around education.
<i>Promoted money management and digital skills.</i>	Perth CAB	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Outreach surgeries based in libraries throughout Perth and Kinross which seek to help those who are digitally excluded.
	PKC – Adult Learning	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Continue to promote and provide adult literacy and digital classes throughout Perth and Kinross.

<i>Ensured that financial capability is promoted from the earliest opportunity.</i>	Perth CAB	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Continue to undertake financial capability awareness sessions in all secondary schools throughout Perth and Kinross
<i>Supported children and young people who are experiencing barriers to learning.</i>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Embarked upon an 'Included, Engaged and Involved Strategy' bringing together the resources, locally and nationally, to support children caught in the attainment gap, or experiencing barriers to learning or self-esteem as a consequence of poverty
<i>Supported children to develop resilience, self-esteem and strategies which support a positive response to difficulties encountered</i>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • As children living in low income households are more likely to experience mental health problems than their more affluent peers, we will continue to deliver the "Bounceback" Programme as a key component of PKC schools' plans to get it right for every child.
<i>Developed and supported re-use and fundraising within schools.</i>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Developed hardship funds for residential trips and opportunities to donate and to buy second hand school uniform, and new school uniforms selected on the basis of cost within schools in areas of deprivation. • Provided 600 hours of free nursery places for 2 year olds and workless households under the banner of 'Strong Start' since August 2014. Eligible children attend nursery for 5 mornings or afternoon sessions per week. Each session lasts approximately 3 hours 10 minutes with start times agreed with individual schools.

Social/Community – Local Outcomes: Children have the best start in life; Nurtured and supported families; People in vulnerable circumstances are protected; Resilient responsible and safe communities.

Action Point	Responsible	What will we do ?
<p><i>Implemented the actions identified in relevant Council Strategies around Communities e.g. Gypsy/Traveller Strategy.</i></p>	<p>PKC – All Services</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Implemented the actions identified in relevant Council Strategies around communities.
<p><i>Strive to address the stigma of poverty.</i></p>	<p>PKC – Welfare Rights Team</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Delivered talks to community groups and third sector agencies raising awareness of entitlements for people on low incomes and/or with health problems. • Worked closely with MEAD to provide greater access to specialist advice services to people from BME communities. • Provide Poverty Awareness training to all Partner organisations throughout Perth and Kinross.

