

ANGUS COUNCIL

9 MAY 2019

ANGUS JOINT CHILD POVERTY LOCAL ACTION PLAN

REPORT BY MARK ARMSTRONG – DEPUTE CHIEF EXECUTIVE

ABSTRACT

Child poverty can undermine the health, wellbeing and educational attainment of the children who experience it. A 2013 study found that child poverty in the UK was costing at least £29 billion a year. The Child Poverty Act was introduced to make Scotland the best place in the world to grow up and live. In order to tackle this growing challenge Scottish Government have requested each Local Authority produce a Joint Child Poverty Local Action Plan.

1. RECOMMENDATION(S)

It is recommended that the Sub-Committee/Committee/Council:

- (i) Approve the report and appendices prepared in partnership across Angus
- (ii) Support the proposed implementation and process through the Angus Community Planning Partnership and the Tay Collaborative for Children, Young People and Families

2. ALIGNMENT TO THE ANGUS LOCAL OUTCOMES IMPROVEMENT PLAN/CORPORATE PLAN

The contents of the Angus Council Plan annual performance report 2017-2018 are aligned with the Angus Local Outcomes Improvement Plan 2017-2030.

3. BACKGROUND

The Child Poverty (Scotland) Act sets out four ambitious headline targets for 2030 that establish Scotland as the only part of the UK with statutory income targets on child poverty.

In Angus (after housing costs) we have 4,273 (19%) children living in poverty (2017) with the highest concentration in the Arbroath East and Lunan ward. In this area 28.5% of children are living in poverty.

Due to the growing impact of child poverty the Child Poverty (Scotland) Act sets out four ambitious headline targets for 2030 that establish Scotland as the only part of the UK with statutory income targets on child poverty:

- Less than 10% of children are in relative poverty
- Less than 5% of children are in absolute poverty
- Less than 5% of children are in combined low income and material deprivation
- Less than 5% of children are in persistent poverty

Over the past 6 months Angus Community Planning Partnership have developed a Child Poverty Working group to take forward this work – conducting the mapping of current and new activity, supporting practitioners to prioritise activity and organising a regional child poverty summit to co-produce the delivery plan.

4. CURRENT POSITION

Here in Angus our Community Planning Partnership have committed to putting poverty and wellbeing at the heart of all of our strategic work.

Significant investment in the Early Years agenda in Angus will help to pave the way towards 'Getting it right for every child' from day 1 and links to the improved referral pathways identified by the NHS to ensure 100% take up of services for example baby boxes.

Through the Tayside Plan for Children, Young People and Families our work as part of the Tayside Children's Service Collaborative (Report 331/18 refers) has also committed partners to work together to reduce the impact of poverty on our children, young people and families. We are therefore working to tackle child poverty at both a local and regional level.

The Child Poverty Act introduced the requirement for local authorities and each relevant Health Board to jointly prepare a Local Child Poverty Action Report. This report alongside the mapping sets out the background and current picture in Angus, what actions are being taken to tackle each of the three drivers of poverty and our planned way forward.

This plan should be read in conjunction with Every Child, Every Chance, The Tackling Child Poverty Delivery Plan 2018-22, which was published on 29 March 2018 at www.gov.scot/everychild

5. PROPOSALS

The Child Poverty Action Report mapping is split into the three drivers of poverty:-

- Income from Employment
- Reducing the Cost of Living
- Income from social security benefits and benefits in kind

This model is aligned to the guidance received from Scottish Government and has allowed us to prioritise the actions within the mapping. Key activities identified include improving the referral pathway within health so that children and families receive the support they need, the holiday initiative to ensure young people have healthy activities and lunch and a programme of training and education from welfare rights to ensure everyone is receiving the benefits they are entitled to.

6. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

All financial implications are identified within the mapping however the majority of actions will be delivered within existing budgets and with existing resources or through the securing of additional funding streams.

7. OTHER IMPLICATIONS

There is a Regional implication for this work following the Child Poverty Summit where a number of regional actions were identified. They will be taken forward as part of the Tay Collaborative for Children, Young People and Families.

8. CONSULTATION

To date there has been extensive consultation of this work. The mapping was initially distributed in December 2018 and has been circulated around all Angus Community Planning Partnership groups. Out with existing structures the mapping and report has been sent out for comments to Third Sector networks, Health and Social Care Partnership and through the community teams.

On 28th February 2019 the Angus Community Planning Partnership organised a regional Child Poverty Summit to ensure that duplication was avoided and that practitioners from across the region could input into this work. 106 people from across the Tay area attended and raised some crucial areas of work to be taken forward. This included exploring a regional transport opportunities, food growing initiatives and procurement.

NOTE: The background papers, as defined by Section 50D of the Local Government (Scotland) Act 1973 (other than any containing confidential or exempt information) which were relied on to any material extent in preparing the above report are:

- Every Child, Every Chance, The Tackling Child Poverty Delivery Plan 2018-22

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List of Appendices:

- Child Poverty Action Report 2019
- New Activity Mapping – Accessible Version