

# North Lanarkshire Council Report

## Wellbeing and Tackling Poverty Committee

Does this report require to be approved?  Yes  No

Ref AG/JC

Date 25/04/25

## Local Child Poverty Action Report 2023/24 –External Feedback

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### Executive Summary

In line with the Plan for North Lanarkshire Programme of Work, the purpose of this report is to provide an update on the feedback received via the Improvement Service on the North Lanarkshire Local Child Poverty Action Report 2023/24.

This report and the activity which underpins this forms a key strand of the council's *Resilient People* Programme of Work.

### Recommendations

It is recommended that the Wellbeing and Tackling Poverty Committee:

- (1) Note the feedback received from Public Health Scotland on the North Lanarkshire Local Child Poverty Action Report 2023/24, and
- (2) Endorse the self-assessment plan outlined in paras 2.7-2.11 of this report.

### The Plan for North Lanarkshire

Priority	All priorities
Ambition statement	All ambition statements
Programme of Work	Resilient People

## 1. Background

- 1.1 The Child Poverty (Scotland) Act 2017 placed a duty on Local Authorities and NHS Boards to jointly develop and publish an annual Local Child Poverty Action Report (LCPAR).
- 1.2 North Lanarkshire has continued to take the approach of integrating the local child poverty action plan and reporting into its overall Tackling Poverty Strategy in recognition that tackling child poverty is inextricably linked with tackling poverty in our

families and wider communities and to help ensure that tackling poverty is an area that is considered in decision making across the Partnership.

- 1.3 The LCPAR is produced by the Tackling Poverty Writers' Group which consists of officers from the Council and NHS Lanarkshire. The Group is overseen by the Tackling Poverty Officers Action Group.
- 1.4 The LCPAR reflects on work carried out across services to tackle child poverty and financial insecurity, with an Action Plan that looks forward to future activities.
- 1.5 An arrangement is in place for the national partners on child poverty including leads from Scottish Government, the Improvement Service and Public Health Scotland to review and provide feedback on local reports with a view to both supporting and monitoring progress in this area. Through this arrangement Public Health Scotland was allocated North Lanarkshire's 2023/24 LCPAR for review.
- 1.6 In order to continue to improve the effectiveness of work in this area local authorities are also invited and encouraged to undertake a self-assessment exercise using a nationally produced framework and template. This will be taken forward by the Tackling Poverty Officers Action Group with the support of the Improvement Service and/or Public Health Scotland as outlined below.

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## **2. Report**

- 2.1 The Local Child Poverty Action Report 2023/24 was approved at the Policy and Strategy Committee held on 1<sup>st</sup> November 2024
- 2.2 As noted above following submission to the Scottish Government in line with the statutory requirement. North Lanarkshire's Report was allocated for review to the Public Health Scotland. Full feedback from this review is attached (Appendix One) with the principal findings outlined at 2.3 – 2.6.3 below.

### **Public Health Scotland Feedback**

- 2.3 The review found that North Lanarkshire's Report provided a comprehensive picture of progress made in the Tackling Poverty Strategy Plan, which described approaches and outcomes related to tackling poverty for all who require support including parents and young people in low-income families.
- 2.4 Importantly the review also found that the report and the action plan addressed both the long term and prevention with crisis intervention and mitigation interventions linking those in need into longer term and preventative support.
- 2.5 The report found that there was clear reference to the drivers of child poverty and found the adoption of Holistic Support as a 4<sup>th</sup> driver to tackling poverty both interesting and innovative.
- 2.6 The following areas were some of those identified by the Review as interesting practice to share and explore (full report – appendix one).
- 2.6.1 **New Information Management System for the Tackling Poverty Team** – The Local Child Poverty Action Report identified that the introduction of Mosaic would help the Tackling Poverty Team report financial gains for priority family groups. As we move

forward the reviewers are interested in how this will help target priority families. This is an area that we will address in future reports.

- 2.6.2 **Adoption of Holistic Support as A Fourth Driver** – As above the reviewers found it innovative that North Lanarkshire had given holistic supports the same importance as the other drivers, recognising both that whole family support takes a no wrong door approach and the importance of everyone's role in referral pathways.
- 2.6.3 **Cash First Approach** – the report identified the work we are doing in North Lanarkshire as good practice and felt that this was an area of work that could be shared with other local authorities
- 2.6.4 **The Three Questions Approach** – the reviewers noted that this gave better insights into lived experience and noted that it would be good to see progress on what decisions are informed by lived experience and service user design going forward.
- 2.7 With respect to areas which could be strengthened within reporting or our supporting Action Plan, the reviewers highlighted to following areas:
- 2.7.1 **Employability** – the reviewers wanted to know more about in work progression and in work poverty actions for priority families.
- 2.7.2 **Fuel Poverty and Affordable Credit** – the reviewers identified that it was difficult to ascertain actions and outcomes for priority groups families from our report. We were able to discuss with the reviewers that in relation to fuel poverty the numbers of families using this service was not high, and that the majority of referrals came from single adults, this is an area we will flesh out in future reporting.
- 2.7.3 **Primary Care Referral Pathways** – the report recognised the well-established referral pathways between areas of health and the tackling poverty team, however, felt that the referral pathways from primary care and for low-income staff with children was less clear. This is an area we will explore with health in future reports.

## **Self-Assessment**

- 2.8 The purpose of the Self-Assessment is for the partners in the Tackling Poverty Officers Action Group to consider strengths and any areas for improvement within their approach to addressing child poverty.
- 2.9 The Self-Assessment Process is framed around four key areas.
- Understanding Local Need
  - Using a Wide Range of Policy Levers
  - Understanding Our Progress
  - Ways of Working
- 2.10 Our locally agreed process involves each partner completing a survey based on key aspects of work to tackle child poverty, these are then analysed and fed back to the Tackling Poverty Officers Action Group.
- 2.11 Consideration of the completed Self-Assessment informs areas for improvement and in turn our local action plan.

- 2.12 The next self-assessment exercise will be completed with the national partners and the Tackling Poverty Officers Action Group in the coming months, with a report being made available to Committee following this.

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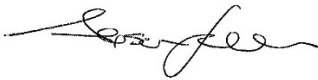
**3. Measures of success**

- 3.1 The successful delivery and outcomes of 2023/24 Local Child Poverty Action Report.

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**4. Supporting documentation**

- 4.1 **Appendix 1** – Public Health Scotland Feedback



**Alison Gordon**  
**Chief Social Work Officer**

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## 5. Impacts

<p><b>5.1 Public Sector Equality Duty and Fairer Scotland Duty</b> Does the report contain information that has an impact as a result of the Public Sector Equality Duty and/or Fairer Scotland Duty? Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> If Yes, please provide a brief summary of the impact?</p> <p>The Council's Towards a fairer North Lanarkshire Tackling Poverty Strategy is fully aligned with the requirements of the Fairer Scotland Duty, its purpose being to reduce the inequalities caused by socio economic disadvantage.</p> <p>If Yes, has an assessment been carried out and published on the council's website? <a href="https://www.northlanarkshire.gov.uk/your-community/equalities/equality-and-fairer-scotland-duty-impact-assessments">https://www.northlanarkshire.gov.uk/your-community/equalities/equality-and-fairer-scotland-duty-impact-assessments</a> Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/></p>
<p><b>5.2 Financial impact</b> Does the report contain any financial impacts? Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Governance arrangements for the grants referenced above have been referred to the Enterprise and Fair Work Committee. If Yes, have all relevant financial impacts been discussed and agreed with Finance? Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> If Yes, please provide a brief summary of the impact?</p>
<p><b>5.3 HR policy impact</b> Does the report contain any HR policy or procedure impacts? Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> If Yes, have all relevant HR impacts been discussed and agreed with People Resources? Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> If Yes, please provide a brief summary of the impact?</p>
<p><b>5.4 Legal impact</b> Does the report contain any legal impacts (such as general legal matters, statutory considerations (including employment law considerations), or new legislation)? Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> If Yes, have all relevant legal impacts been discussed and agreed with Legal and Democratic? Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> If Yes, please provide a brief summary of the impact?</p>
<p><b>5.5 Data protection impact</b> Does the report / project / practice contain or involve the processing of personal data? Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> If Yes, is the processing of this personal data likely to result in a high risk to the data subject?</p>

Yes  No

If Yes, has a Data Protection Impact Assessment (DPIA) been carried out and e-mailed to [dataprotection@northlan.gov.uk](mailto:dataprotection@northlan.gov.uk)

Yes  No

**5.6 Technology / Digital impact**

Does the report contain information that has an impact on either technology, digital transformation, service redesign / business change processes, data management, or connectivity / broadband / Wi-Fi?

Yes  No

If Yes, please provide a brief summary of the impact?

Where the impact identifies a requirement for significant technology change, has an assessment been carried out (or is scheduled to be carried out) by the Enterprise Architecture Governance Group (EAGG)?

Yes  No

**5.7 Environmental / Carbon impact**

Does the report / project / practice contain information that has an impact on any environmental or carbon matters?

Yes  No

If Yes, please provide a brief summary of the impact?

**5.8 Communications impact**

Does the report contain any information that has an impact on the council's communications activities?

Yes  No

If Yes, please provide a brief summary of the impact?

The TPAG has a Communication Subgroup who takes forward any communications/activities for residents/staff on behalf of the TPOAG

**5.9 Risk impact**

Is there a risk impact?

Yes  No

If Yes, please provide a brief summary of the key risks and potential impacts, highlighting where the risk(s) are assessed and recorded (e.g. Corporate or Service or Project Risk Registers), and how they are managed?

Tackling Poverty has been identified as a Corporate Risk, with the Chief Social Work Officer as the risk lead. Towards a Fairer North Lanarkshire - Tackling Poverty Strategy sets out a planned approach which seeks to eliminate poverty or make very significant reductions in the level of poverty resulting in benefit to the residents and including improvement in the overall level of health and wellbeing of communities.

**5.10 Armed Forces Covenant Duty**

Does the report require to take due regard of the Armed Forces Covenant Duty (i.e. does it relate to healthcare, housing, or education services for in-Service or ex-Service personnel, or their families, or widow(er)s)?

Yes  No

If Yes, please provide a brief summary of the provision which has been made to ensure there has been appropriate consideration of the particular needs of the Armed Forces community to make sure that they do not face disadvantage compared to other citizens in the provision of public services.

**5.11 Children's rights and wellbeing impact**

Does the report contain any information regarding any council activity, service delivery, policy, or plan that has an impact on children and young people up to the age of 18, or on a specific group of these?

Yes  No

If Yes, please provide a brief summary of the impact and the provision that has been made to ensure there has been appropriate consideration of the relevant Articles from the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC).

In North Lanarkshire we recognise that tackling poverty and inequality does not fall to one Service, or one Sector, we must therefore work together to use our resources effectively and efficiently to ensure that all our communities have access to opportunities that will lead to better outcomes for people in terms of employment, wellbeing and inclusive growth.

If Yes, has a Children's Rights and Wellbeing Impact Assessment (CRWIA) been carried out?

Yes  No

## APPENDIX ONE – FEEDBACK FROM PUBLIC HEALTH SCOTLAND

**Date of meeting:** 16<sup>th</sup> January 2025

**Local Authority area** North Lanarkshire

**Attendees:** Donna Burnett and Darren Rocks, PHS

**Key points of feedback for local partner (this can be taken from the last question of the Smart Survey which directs national partners to list key points of feedback for local partners:**

This is a comprehensive report on progress made in the Tackling Poverty Strategy Plan, which describes approaches and outcomes related to tackling poverty for all who require support including parents and young people in low-income families. Includes a range of programmes e.g. Working for Families and Developing the Young Workforce within the Local Employability Plan.

Part of the Tackling Poverty Strategy Action Plan there are actions covering 3 years from 2023 – 2026)

Clear reference to drivers of child poverty.

The full impact of actions specifically for priority families with children in some services is unclear however the new recording system, referred to in the report, records priority families and should improve this.

**The main focus of the report is long term and preventative. Crisis intervention and mitigation interventions link those in need into longer term, preventative support.**

Holistic Support adopted as a 4<sup>th</sup> Driver of Child Poverty

**Both strategic direction and key policy and service decisions are informed by data and intelligence**

Strategic planning takes account of all types of households experiencing poverty therefore priority families are included. It is just not clear in all services if/how priority families are prioritized, unless the service is funded solely for these groups. The new performance management system may have potential to address this.

Appears to be clear governance in both local authority and health board and the wider partnership.



**An Overarching Question** to think about – how many people can you achieve outcomes for in total across the plan and how does this compare with the number of people who require these outcomes?

**Interesting practice to share and areas of interest to explore**

- **New information management system** for Tackling Poverty Team and ability to report financial gains for priority family groups. Recommend for peer support session. Going forward, it would be useful to understand how this helps targeting priority families and what this targeting looks like?
- Adoption of **Holistic support as a fourth driver** with a focus on wrap around support – whole family support taking a no wrong door approach and importance of everyone's role in referral pathways.
- **Financial support services** continue to include **cash first approach** - worth sharing with other areas how this is and can be sustained.
- **Housing Strategy** – creating homes for families that are energy efficient, low carbon and with study spaces worth sharing more widely.
- **Hive Project** – innovative
- **3 Questions approach** to gaining better insights into lived experience – it would be good to see progress on what decisions are informed by lived experience and service user design going forward
- **NHS Demonstrator – sharing of further learning from second cohort would be welcome** - The collaboration between NHS Lanarkshire's Employability Hub Team with International Service System (ISS) at University Hospital Hairmyres and support from local employability partners, to deliver the NHS demonstrator.
- **Training for health staff** built around the IFAN Asking About Money Worries leaflet.

**Areas to consider action**

- Other than the NHS Demonstrator we could not see if there are other approaches to widening access to employment with anchor institutions for those within priority families. Could the Demonstrator approach be taken in other Anchor Institutions?

- Housing strategy: It would be good to know if there is a plan to address unsuitable housing for those already in properties that do not meet their family's needs. Actions to ensure the new standard being achieved in new properties is achieved across existing housing. How can this be achieved within existing social housing, private lets and owner-occupied housing?
- Collaborative approach between NLC and 12 third sector providers to provide employment support to parents (Working for Families). It will be good to see the outcomes from this and may be a practice to share in the future.
- The case studies which include pre-referral financial data and individuals' income after support – clearly demonstrates the impact of increasing income through employment/ SS – and the impact on people's lives/families - a strong addition to the report.
- Income maximisation approaches and holistic focus and onward referral seems well developed. Referral pathways from health for money advice and advice in health settings mentioned in the report but Pathways from primary care and for low-income staff with children less clear. Income Maximisation Deep Dive by PHS might provide a greater level of insight into this.
- The report highlights that Income domain data from SIMD is being used to target resources (outreach) to areas in 1% most deprived communities in Scotland – the local areas are outlined but it is unclear in the report what resources have been directed there to support local families. We established at the feedback session the new Community Hubs are at an early stage of rollout.
- Fuel Poverty and Affordable Credit referred to in the report but actions and outcomes particularly for priority families was difficult to ascertain from the report
- It would be good to know more about In-work progression and in-work poverty actions for priority families