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23 October 2024

**Members of the
Wellbeing and Tackling Poverty Committee**

Chief Executive's Office

Archie Aitken
Chief Officer (Legal & Democratic)
Civic Centre, Windmillhill Street,
Motherwell ML1 1AB
www.northlanarkshire.gov.uk

Notice is given that a Meeting of the **Wellbeing and Tackling Poverty Committee** is to be held in the Council Chamber, Civic Centre, Windmillhill Street, Motherwell, ML1 1AB on Friday, 01 November 2024 at 10:00 AM which you are requested to attend.

The agenda of business is attached.

Archie Aitken
Chief Officer (Legal & Democratic)

Members :

C Costello, K Harmon, D Ashraf, C Barclay, B Baudo, H Brannan-McVey, J Cairns, G Currie, P Di Mascio, F Fotheringham, W Goldie, J Jones, P Kelly, J Keltie, A Khan, J Leckie, H Loughran, B McCluskey, A McCrory, L Mitchell, P Patton, C Quigley, L Stubbs, S Watson, C Williams.

Agenda

Declarations of Interest In Terms of the Ethical Standards In Public Life Etc. (Scotland) Act 2000

Operational

Elected Member Equality Champion – Update to Terms of Reference

5 - 10

Submit report by Chief Officer (People Resources) seeking approval to update the terms of reference governing the role and remit of the Equalities Champion

Tackling Poverty Report

11 - 106

Submit report by the Chief Social Work Officer (Education, Families, Justice & Integrated Practice) seeking approval of the updated Tackling Poverty Action Plan and the 2023-2024 Local Child Poverty Action Report

North Lanarkshire Council Report

Wellbeing and Tackling Poverty Committee

Does this report require to be approved? ☒ Yes ☐ No

Ref FW/AC

Date 01/11/24

Elected Member Equality Champion – update to Terms of Reference

From Fiona Whittaker (Chief Officer, People Resources)

E-mail WhittakerF@northlan.gov.uk **Telephone** 07973 728628

Executive Summary

This report provides for approval an update to the Terms of Reference governing the role and remit of the Council's Elected Member Equality Champion.

The Terms of Reference were developed in 2017 when the Council's first Elected Member Equality Champion was appointed. They provide and ensure clarity about the role of the Equality Champion. Since that time there have been changes both in the Council's administration, bringing about a new Elected Member Equality Champion, and in its approach to delivering on the Equality agenda through the establishment of the Equality Board.

To reflect these changes, while also allowing for flexibility in the undertaking if the role to circumvent any future changes, it was deemed necessary to update the Terms of Reference.

Recommendations

It is recommended that the Wellbeing and Tackling Poverty Committee approves the updated terms of reference governing the role and remit of the Elected Member Equality Champion.

The Plan for North Lanarkshire

Priority All priorities

Ambition statement All ambition statements

Programme of Work Statutory / corporate / service requirement

1. Background

- 1.1 In October 2017 the former Youth Communities and Equality sub-committee approved Terms of Reference for the role and remit of the Council's first Elected Member Equality Champion.
 - 1.2 The terms of reference were developed to provide and ensure clarity about the role of the Equality Champion and were developed through discussion between the former Equalities Champion and key Council Officers directly working on corporate equality matters.
 - 1.3 In the years since developing the first Terms of Reference there have been changes both in the Council's administration, bringing about a new Elected Member Equality Champion, and in its approach to delivering on the Equality agenda through the establishment of the Equality Board.
 - 1.4 Whilst many aspects of the role and remit of the Equality Champion remain relevant and unchanged, it is important to reflect within the Terms of Reference the close relationship between the Equality Champion and the work of the Equality Board while also allowing for flexibility in the undertaking of the role to circumvent any future changes.
 - 1.5 The current Terms of Reference are attached as an appendix to this report.
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2. Report

Elected Member Equality Champion – Updated Terms of Reference

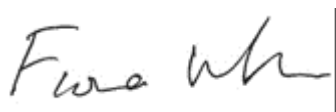
- 2.1 The role of the Elected Member Equality Champion is to be a figurehead who demonstrates support for equality and diversity matters and initiatives both within the council and across North Lanarkshire's communities. The Elected Member Equality Champion will:
 - support the council's Equality Board in the delivery of its Equality Strategy;
 - provide leadership - raise the profile of and promote equality within the Council and its communities in partnership with the Council's Equality Board. For example, use opportunities associated with national and international commemoration and celebrations;
 - provide scrutiny - ensure that equality considerations are embedded in the decision making and governance of the council;
 - drive change – in partnership with key officers, request where appropriate for an examination on an aspect of equality to be carried out for the purpose of progress and call for action to be taken where disadvantage exists for people with particular protected characteristics;
 - provide representation - represent the Council at a political level on regional and national forums, if appropriate, where equality matters are concerned;
 - provide support - attend and endorse equality related employee and community events as appropriate;
 - meet on a quarterly basis with key Council officers via the Equality Board and other key internal and external stakeholders as necessary.
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3. Measures of success

- 3.1 Demonstrates a further advancement of the Public Sector Equality Duty (General) on the part of North Lanarkshire Council.
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4. Supporting documentation

Appendix: Elected Member Equality Champion Terms of Reference 2017.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Fiona Whittaker', followed by a vertical line.

Fiona Whittaker
Chief Officer People Resources

5. Impacts

5.1	<p>Public Sector Equality Duty and Fairer Scotland Duty</p> <p>Does the report contain information that has an impact as a result of the Public Sector Equality Duty and/or Fairer Scotland Duty?</p> <p>Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/></p> <p>If Yes, please provide a brief summary of the impact?</p> <p>The role and remit supports the advancement of the General Equality Duty</p> <p>If Yes, has an assessment been carried out and published on the council's website? https://www.northlanarkshire.gov.uk/your-community/equalities/equality-and-fairer-scotland-duty-impact-assessments</p> <p>Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/></p>
5.2	<p>Financial impact</p> <p>Does the report contain any financial impacts?</p> <p>Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/></p> <p>If Yes, have all relevant financial impacts been discussed and agreed with Finance?</p> <p>Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/></p> <p>If Yes, please provide a brief summary of the impact?</p>
5.3	<p>HR policy impact</p> <p>Does the report contain any HR policy or procedure impacts?</p> <p>Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/></p> <p>If Yes, have all relevant HR impacts been discussed and agreed with People Resources?</p> <p>Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/></p> <p>If Yes, please provide a brief summary of the impact?</p>
5.4	<p>Legal impact</p> <p>Does the report contain any legal impacts (such as general legal matters, statutory considerations (including employment law considerations), or new legislation)?</p> <p>Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/></p> <p>If Yes, have all relevant legal impacts been discussed and agreed with Legal and Democratic?</p> <p>Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/></p> <p>If Yes, please provide a brief summary of the impact?</p>
5.5	<p>Data protection impact</p> <p>Does the report / project / practice contain or involve the processing of personal data?</p> <p>Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/></p> <p>If Yes, is the processing of this personal data likely to result in a high risk to the data subject?</p> <p>Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/></p> <p>If Yes, has a Data Protection Impact Assessment (DPIA) been carried out and e-mailed to dataprotection@northlan.gov.uk</p> <p>Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/></p>
5.6	<p>Technology / Digital impact</p> <p>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?</p> <p>Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/></p>

<p>If Yes, please provide a brief summary of the impact?</p> <p>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)?</p> <p>Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/></p>
<p>5.7 Environmental / Carbon impact</p> <p>Does the report / project / practice contain information that has an impact on any environmental or carbon matters?</p> <p>Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/></p> <p>If Yes, please provide a brief summary of the impact?</p>
<p>5.8 Communications impact</p> <p>Does the report contain any information that has an impact on the council's communications activities?</p> <p>Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/></p> <p>If Yes, please provide a brief summary of the impact?</p>
<p>5.9 Risk impact</p> <p>Is there a risk impact?</p> <p>Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/></p> <p>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?</p>
<p>5.10 Armed Forces Covenant Duty</p> <p>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)?</p> <p>Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/></p> <p>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.</p>
<p>5.11 Children's rights and wellbeing impact</p> <p>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?</p> <p>Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/></p> <p>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).</p> <p>If Yes, has a Children's Rights and Wellbeing Impact Assessment (CRWIA) been carried out?</p> <p>Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/></p>

NLC Elected Member Equality Champion

Terms of Reference 2017

The role of the Equality Champion is to be a senior politician who demonstrates support for equality and diversity matters and initiatives both within the council and across North Lanarkshire's communities.

The elected member Equalities Champion will:

- provide leadership – raise the profile of and promote equality within the Council and its communities. For example, use opportunities associated with national and international commemoration and celebrations.
- provide scrutiny – ensure that equality considerations are embedded in the decision making and governance of the council.
- drive change – request, where appropriate, for an examination on an aspect of equality to be carried out for the purpose of progress and call for action to be taken where disadvantage exists for people with particular protected characteristics.
- provide representation – represent the Council at a political level on regional and national forums where equality matters are concerned.
- provide support – attend and endorse equality related employee and community events as appropriate.
- meet on a regular basis with key Council officers.

North Lanarkshire Council Report

Wellbeing and Tackling Poverty Committee

Does this report require to be approved? ☒ Yes ☐ No

Ref AG/JC

Date 01/11/24

Tackling Poverty Strategy (Action Plan Update) 2023 to 2024/ Local Child Poverty Action Report 2023 to 2024

From Alison Gordon, Chief Social Work Officer (Education, Families, Justice & Integrated Practice)

E-mail gordonal@northlan.gov.uk

Telephone 01698 332001

Executive Summary

The Policy and Strategy Committee approved the Tackling Poverty Strategy/Action Plan 2023 to 2026, on 28th September 2023.

In line with the Plan for North Lanarkshire Programme of Work, the purpose of this report is twofold, covering the following specific aspects of the Programme of Work (Resilient People)

- Providing an update report on implementation of the Tackling Poverty Strategy (Action Plan) and improved outcomes achieved; and
- Presenting our annual Local Child Poverty Action Report which covers previous year's activities and outlines future plans, in line with statutory requirements and aligned to The Plan for North Lanarkshire.

The Tackling Poverty Strategy (Action Plan) is a key component of the Plan for North Lanarkshire's new Programme of Work priorities and ambitions, promoting the strengths and skills of individuals and families, increasing economic activity, and providing practical and holistic support intervening upstream wherever possible to prevent the longer-term harms associated with poverty.

In addition, the Strategy encompasses the statutory requirement to prepare and publish a Local Child Poverty Action Report for North Lanarkshire for 2023/24. (Appendix 2) and reflects the ambition of the national Tackling Child Poverty Delivery Plan 2022-26 Best Start Bright Futures published by the Scottish Government in April 2022 as the second of 3 delivery plans required by the Child Poverty (Scotland) Act 2017.

Recommendations

It is recommended that the Committee:

- (1) Approve the updated *Towards a Fairer North Lanarkshire – Tackling Poverty* Action Plan as out lined in Appendix 1 of this report.
- (2) Approve the 2023 to 2024 Local Child Poverty Action report, as set out in Appendix 2 of this report.

- (3) Note that the Local Child Poverty Action Report 2023 to 2024 in line with the statutory requirements has been submitted to and approved by the NHS Lanarkshire Health and Population Board on 10th September 2024.
- (4) Note that the report has also been remitted to the North Lanarkshire Partnership Strategic Leadership Board for consideration.

The Plan for North Lanarkshire

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

1. Background

- 1.1 The '*Towards a Fairer North Lanarkshire*' Tackling Poverty Strategy 2023 to 2026 and its associated Action Plan was approved at the Policy and Strategy Committee Meeting on 28th September 2023.
- 1.2 The intent behind the *Towards a Fairer North Lanarkshire*, North Lanarkshire's Tackling Poverty Strategy, was to position the related outcome driven work as key to the successful delivery of The Plan for North Lanarkshire, reflecting the drive to secure and sustain inclusive growth and to reduce poverty and associated inequalities impacting on North Lanarkshire's communities.
- 1.3 This holistic and integrated approach is fundamental to the Plan for North Lanarkshire and whilst maintaining strong links with other elements of the Council's Programme of Work, Tackling Poverty is embedded as a core strand of the 'Resilient People' Programme, whose principal aim is to deliver whole family support locally, when families need it, in a way that is consistent with The Promise Principles and The Tackling Poverty Strategy. This will involve an integrated approach, working with partners, to provide an earlier and more effective response to need. More specifically this includes promoting the strengths and skills of individuals and families, increasing economic activity, and providing practical and emotional support, integrating this support with the roll out of town and community hubs to maximise opportunities for community-led and strengths-based approaches.
- 1.4 '*Towards a Fairer North Lanarkshire*' drives together work across the Council and community planning partners to ensure effective partnership co-ordination of planning and resources. In addition, the strategy's action plan encompasses the statutory data gathering and reporting requirement to prepare and publish a Local Child Poverty Action Report for North Lanarkshire.
- 1.5 At the Wellbeing and Tackling Poverty Committee on 3rd November 2023, the Committee was advised that the Tackling Poverty Officers Action Group (TPOAG) had agreed new monitoring templates for the tackling poverty drivers to allow the group to *track 'How we will know if are making a difference'*. To support the effectiveness of this process each tackling poverty driver in rotation is the focus of TPAOG meetings, to allow TPOAG to analyse in detail each action, using national and local data (quantitative and qualitative) and to ensure that the Actions within the scope of each driver, and the outcomes set by Scottish Government and our Action Plan are being met and delivered.

- 1.6 The TPOAG have also identified 20 new measures and approved by the Resilient People Board in January 2024 which will in turn form part of the Council's wider Strategic Performance Framework.
- 1.7 From 2021/22, The Tackling Poverty Officers Action Group also operated a RAGG system that will continue to be applied to the Action Plan, for each poverty drivers and support management of the programme: the details of which are:
- Red – Action remains outstanding.
 - Amber – work has started on this action but requires further work.
 - Green – action is completed and remains on-going.
 - Grey – action has been completed and requires no further action.
- 1.8 Using this approach, the Tackling Poverty Officer Action Group ensures a focus on areas of challenge with tasks that are completed (or ongoing), tasks that are amber or red which required to be taken to the Resilient People Board and the Wellbeing and Tackling Poverty Committee for further consideration and approval.
- 1.9 From September 2023, the Wellbeing and Tackling Poverty Committee has also received updated reports on each Tackling Poverty Driver (Action Plan) as follows:
- Income from Employment - 2nd February 2024
 - Holistic Supports – 26th April 2024
 - Reduce the Cost of Living and Income from benefits – 16th August 2024
- 1.10 This report provides a summary and illustrations of progress against each of these Tackling Poverty Drivers and updates the Tackling Poverty Action Plan (Appendix 1) to reflect all of the actions taken through the last year.

2. Report

Progress on Action Plan

Income from Employment

- 2.1.1 There are eight Actions in the 'Income from Employment' section of the plan – (Appendix 1), four of the Actions (Numbers 1,2, 4, and 8) are reported annually from either internal or external sources and the other four Actions (3, 5, 6, and 7), where reported to the Wellbeing and Tackling Poverty Committee on 2nd February 2024. which only highlighted activity from April 2023 to December 2023. This report provides a summary of all activity for April 2023 to March 2024.
- 2.1.2 NLC Employability Service also funded the NHS Lanarkshire Demonstrator 2 Programme. This initiative focused on placing 26 unemployed or low-earning parents into paid work placements for six months, earning just above the living wage within NHS posts, with 16 out of the 26 individuals taking part moved into positive destinations. This was resource internally and with a real commitment from NHS Lanarkshire and proved a really effective route for securing good quality employment opportunities for parents and will be repeated in 2024/25.

- 2.1.3 Nine projects were also funded through employability monies (cost £560,000) and delivered by the Third Sector in North Lanarkshire to work with parents on low incomes and focussed on engaging them in activities and removing barriers to make them more job ready. People Plus, One Parent Families Scotland, Enable and New College Lanarkshire were some of the organisations involved in these projects.
- 2.1.4 The Employability Service have renamed the Parental Employment Support Fund to 'Working Families' to reflect a more inclusive approach to assisting families into employment and to recognise the higher levels of support which will be delivered locally by the 'Working Families' Programme. In 2023/24 North Lanarkshire's Working and Routes to Work Ltd supported 85 parents into employment or into better paying jobs with 75% sustaining employment for at least 26 weeks.
- 2.1.5 All activities related to parents and increasing income from employment have access to advice and support from the Tackling Poverty team and there are close links with other services which supports parents both in the Council and among stakeholders. For 2024/25 an increased target of 192 low-income parents into employment is in place with a similar level of grant funded programmes within the third sector to support parents.
- 2.1.6 The name change referenced above will be reflected in the future Action Plans and Update reports.
- 2.1.7 Action 5 - (Supported Enterprise) – In 2022/2023 the Supported Employment Service supported 210 people on the different stages of the 5-stage employment model, with 129 people receiving various levels of work support and 41 people in the job finding phase. From April 2023, Supported Employment have worked with over 200 clients with 43 entering employment. The service has high levels of sustainable jobs, compared to other employability projects.
- 2.1.8 The Tackling Poverty Officer Action Group agreed that in the next review/update for 'Income from Employment Driver' Actions 6 and 7 will be merged into one named Action (Action 6) and to add new Actions to capture the work around Self Employment and activity on the work being done with those who are currently economically inactive, a cohort which is high within North Lanarkshire.
- 2.1.9 The Action Plan (Appendix 1) has been changed to reflect the outcomes and new Actions for 2024 to 2025.

Holistic Supports

- 2.2.1 Holistic Supports are the wrap around supports delivered collaboratively to address the impacts of poverty, not only the financial impact but the wider health and wellbeing impacts on individuals and families.
- 2.2.2 There was eight actions in "Holistic Supports" section (appendix 1), however, further consideration by the TPOAG and the Wellbeing and Tackling Poverty Committee of the Action Plan, resulted in changes to some actions, this means that the eight actions have reduced to seven, with 'Community Benefits' moved from 'Holistic Supports' to the 'Income from Employment' driver.
- 2.2.3 All reference to MACA/MACA Plus' has been removed from the Action Plan, and those actions referencing this or financial education under 'Reduce the Cost of Living' and 'Supporting the Plan' will be incorporated into two actions on Financial Education (one

for adults, the other for children and young people) in Holistic Supports. This reflects the broader and more tailored approaches being taken to financial education across the partnership, as detailed in our report to the previous Wellbeing and Tackling Poverty Committee.

- 2.2.4 Whole Family Support will concentrate on early intervention and prevention services at a universal level to children and families. The services delivered will be bespoke packages integrating into existing GIRFEC and GIRFE pathways. In line with the Tackling Poverty Strategy, Whole Family Support will adopt a cash first approach, the governance around this, together with ensuring work is targeted effectively and we are not duplicating but enhancing existing services, will be established and overseen by a Reference Group.
- 2.2.5 Bespoke Poverty Awareness Sessions have been created to meet the interests of a range of audiences and to promote the potential contribution a range of staff and community groups to this agenda. To date 328 people have attended these sessions; internally we have delivered the sessions to 254 staff from education, social work and Community Learning and Development as well as to 74 people from NHS Lanarkshire and third sector organisations.
- 2.2.6 The review of the Holistic Supports driver was submitted to the Wellbeing and Tackling Poverty Committee on 26th April 2024 and the Action Plan (Appendix 1) has been changed to reflect the outcomes and new Actions for 2024 to 2025.

Reduce the Cost of Living

- 2.3.1 The 'Reduce the Cost-of-Living' driver brings together a diverse range of practical measures of help available locally to people, all contributing to reducing the amounts which Individuals and families must pay out to provide the basics required for everyday life. Provision of high-quality Debt Advice for those who are in Financial Difficulty also sits under this Driver.
- 2.3.2 There are 21 Actions for the Reduce the Cost-of-Living Driver and following the review of the driver. The Tackling Poverty Officers Action Group have made a small number of additional adjustments to this area of the plan to remove two actions where funding is no longer available to support and aligning another with a more appropriate area of the plan. Positively, however progress on all but one of the broad portfolios of actions under this theme has been assessed as 'green' indicating delivery is on course but ongoing.
- 2.3.3 An affordable credit web page has been devised by Tackling Poverty Team and went live in June 2024 on the Council Web site to educate and provide choice of local affordable credit sources for residents.
- 2.3.4 NLC Tackling Poverty Team received 1992 referrals for Debt Advice in 2023/24, an increase from 1744 the previous year. The total amount of debt dealt with by Tackling Poverty Team was **£6,418,776**. Cases continue to increase in complexity with as many as 55% of service users also reporting mental health problems (Tackling Poverty Team 1st November 2023 – 23rd May 2024).
- 2.3.5 The review of the Reduce the Cost-of-Living driver was submitted to the Wellbeing and Tackling Poverty Committee on 16th August 2024 and the Action Plan (Appendix 1) has been changed to reflect the outcomes and new Actions for 2024 to 2025.

Income from Benefits

- 2.4.1 Whilst we are limited in our ability to lift people out of poverty through social security, it can provide people with a steady, sustainable income. The cost-of-living crisis has made it more important than ever to claim benefits to which individuals are entitled and to challenge unfavourable decisions to ensure people's income is fully maximised.
- 2.4.2 Information relating to Income maximisation for individuals is recorded internally within the social work MySwis system and changes have been made to allow the source of the referral to be identified, thus providing more detail to the Action Plan.
- 2.4.3 Since establishing the 'Cost of Living Helpline' in early 2023, supported by additional funding provided through the Joint Integration Board, there had been **an increase of 41.2%** in the number of benefit checks completed for residents; rising from 18,521 benefit checks completed in 2022/23 to **26,158 benefit checks completed in 2023/24**.
- 2.4.4 In parallel there has been a considerable increase in demand for the Tackling Poverty Team welfare rights service, with the average number of referrals per month received by the team rising from 945 in 2022/23 to **1180 referrals per month in 2023/24**. A 25% increase.
- 2.4.5 The additional benefit income generated by the Tackling Poverty Team and other council services **increased by 35.1%**, with a total of **£47,935,822** of *additional benefit* income generated via claims, mandatory reconsiderations and appeals for benefits. With the External Services commissioned by the Council generating **£8,256,352** in additional benefit income for the residents of North Lanarkshire.
- 2.4.6 Over this reporting period the continuing legacy of the pandemic and most significantly the Cost-of-Living Crisis have continued to impact disproportionately on our most disadvantaged residents and communities, bringing the importance of income maximisation and wider work to tackle poverty into sharp focus, with the impact of low paid and insecure work a particular challenge.
- 2.4.7 The review of the Income from Benefits driver was submitted to the Wellbeing and Tackling Poverty Committee on 16th August 2024 and the Action Plan (Appendix 1) has been changed to reflect the outcomes and new Actions for 2024 to 2025.

Supporting the Plan

- 2.5.1 Following the reviews of the four drivers of poverty in 2023/2024, the Tackling Poverty Officers Action Group decided to incorporate all of the Actions in the 'Supporting the Plan' in to the four main drivers to ensure consistency and assurances that the actions to supporting the plan were not looked at in isolation.

Local Child Poverty Action Report

- 2.6.1 The Child Poverty (Scotland) Act 2017, places a duty on Local Authorities and NHS Boards to jointly develop, publish and action an annual Local Child Poverty Action Report (LCPAR).
- 2.6.2 Our Tackling Poverty Strategy continues the approach of incorporating the Local Child Poverty Action Report (Action Plan), aligning both Plans into the same lifespan from 2023 to 2026. Both the local authority and NHSL have agreed that the Local Child Poverty Action Reports should be an integral part of the overall strategy enabling also our statutory duty to report to Scottish Government on an annual basis and recognising

that child poverty is integrally linked with poverty and wellbeing within the wider community. To support reporting and measuring impact amongst targeted groups the action plan details which “strategy/plan” each action relates to, identifying those actions that are specifically aimed at the child poverty priority groups.

- 2.6.3 The Local Child Poverty Action Report for 2023 to 2024, is attached for consideration and approval for publication and issue to the Scottish Government (Appendix 2). This is the sixth Local Child Poverty Action Report produced by North Lanarkshire’s Tackling Poverty Officer Action Group on behalf of North Lanarkshire Council and NHS Lanarkshire.

3. Measures of success

- 3.1 The successful delivery and outcomes of the 2023 – 26 Towards a Fairer North Lanarkshire Tackling Poverty Strategy Action Plan

4. Supporting documentation

Appendix 1 - Updated Tackling Poverty Action Plan with outcomes and new Actions for 2024 to 2026.

Appendix 2 – Local Child Poverty Action Report 2023 to 2024



Alison Gordon
Chief Social Work Officer

5. Impacts

5.1 Public Sector Equality Duty and Fairer Scotland Duty 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? The 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. If Yes, has an assessment been carried out and published on the council's website? https://www.northlanarkshire.gov.uk/your-community/equalities/equality-and-fairer-scotland-duty-impact-assessments Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>
5.2 Financial impact Does the report contain any financial impacts? Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 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?
5.3 HR policy impact 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?
5.4 Legal impact Does the report contain any legal impacts (such as general legal matters, statutory considerations (including employment law considerations), or new legislation)? Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> If Yes, have all relevant legal impacts been discussed and agreed with Legal and Democratic? Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> If Yes, please provide a brief summary of the impact? The production of an annual Local Child Poverty Action Report is a legal requirement for the Council and NHS Lanarkshire under the Child Poverty (Scotland) Act 2017.
5.5 Data protection impact 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? Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>

	<p>If Yes, has a Data Protection Impact Assessment (DPIA) been carried out and e-mailed to dataprotection@northlan.gov.uk</p> <p>Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/></p>
<p>5.6</p>	<p>Technology / Digital impact</p> <p>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?</p> <p>Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/></p> <p>If Yes, please provide a brief summary of the impact?</p> <p>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)?</p> <p>Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/></p>
<p>5.7</p>	<p>Environmental / Carbon impact</p> <p>Does the report / project / practice contain information that has an impact on any environmental or carbon matters?</p> <p>Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/></p> <p>If Yes, please provide a brief summary of the impact?</p>
<p>5.8</p>	<p>Communications impact</p> <p>Does the report contain any information that has an impact on the council's communications activities?</p> <p>Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/></p> <p>If Yes, please provide a brief summary of the impact?</p> <p>The Tackling Poverty Officers Action Group Sub Group developed a Communications Plan with Corporate Communications.</p>
<p>5.9</p>	<p>Risk impact</p> <p>Is there a risk impact?</p> <p>Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/></p> <p>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?</p> <p>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.</p>
<p>5.10</p>	<p>Armed Forces Covenant Duty</p> <p>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)?</p> <p>Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/></p> <p>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.</p>

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 ☐

	A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H	I	J	K	L	M	N	O	P	Q	R	S	T	U	V	W	X	Y	Z	AA	AB	AC	AD	AE	AF	AG	AH	AI	AJ	AK	AL	
1		Tackling Poverty Strategy Action Plan 2023 - 2026																																					
2					Key	TP Strategy Only	TP Strategy and LCPAR																																
3																																							
4																																							
5																																							
6	Number	Action	Brief Description	How We Measure Success	Links to Other Strategies	Link to Programme Of Work	2022/23 Baseline	2023/24 Outcomes	2024/25 Outcomes	2025/26 Outcomes	Timescales	Status	Identify if applies to TPS &/or LCPAR	Lead Team	Monitoring Information																								
7	1	North Lanarkshire to increase the number of people employed and receiving the real living wage	Payment of the living wage by employers is amongst those interventions that can support people out of poverty and is part of wider Fair Work commitments	There is an increase in the number of NL employers in public, business and community and voluntary sectors with real living wage accreditation	Workforce for the future Economic Regeneration Plan	Brighter Futures	123 employers have achieved accreditation, with 7053 employees benefitting from the living wage	135 NL based employers have achieved accreditation with 27,977 employees benefitting			Ongoing	Ongoing	TP Strategy and LCPAR	NLC Employability VANL for CVS	* Number of employers paying the living wage * Number of employees receiving the living wage																							TP Strategy Only	
8	2	Social Values	North Lanarkshire will look to integrate social values and the objectives into the tendering process that will allow the weighting for fair work to be flexible to ensure that social values and community benefits are embedded in the contract.	An increase in NL residents receiving the "real living wage".	Workforce for the future	transforming places	5% current weighting applied	5% current weighting applied			Ongoing	on	TP Strategy and LCPAR	Procurement	Number of tenders where higher weighting was applied to living wage providers																							TP Strategy and LCPAR	
9	3	Working for Families	Support families who are in or at risk of poverty to support/ access into work. Refreshed publicity to partners and public required	An increase in parents entering and progressing in employment	* Workforce for the future * Economic Regeneration Plan * Local Child Poverty Action Plan	Brighter Futures	22/23 - 40 parents have secured employment. Further 18 employed parents have progressed within employment. 104 parents have registered and are engaging with the Project.	In 2023/24 North Lanarkshire's Working and Routes to Work Ltd supported 85 parents into employment or into better paying jobs with 75% sustaining employment for at least 26 weeks. All activities related to parents and increasing income from employment have access to advice and support from the Tackling Poverty team and there are close links with other services which deal with parents both in the Council and among stakeholders. 22/23 - 40 parents have secured employment. Further 18 employed parents have progressed within employment. 104 parents have registered and are engaging with the Project.			subject to annual funding from the SG - further activity planned for 2023/24	2023 / 24, however, subject to funding may continue beyond this	TP Strategy and LCPAR	Employability Routes to Work	Number of parents entering and within target groups progressing in employment																							invest in North Lanarkshire	
10	4	Identify pathways within labour market growth sectors or areas of high replacement demand which will provide progression routes out of low pay in North Lanarkshire.	As part of the Council's Workforce for the Future Strategy and associated plan, work progression pathways will be identified for key labour market growth sectors or those with high replacement demand. These will focus on progression routes out of low pay and strategies for engaging young people (in schools) and those economically active in the labour market (through Routes to Work) to consider increasing their qualification levels and job prospects to improve average weekly wage levels and alleviate "in work" poverty.	Progression pathways identified for key growth sectors with qualifications and progression routes agreed, published and funded.	Workforce for the Future Economic Regeneration Plan Developing the Young Workforce	Brighter Futures	The gross weekly wage in North Lanarkshire (based on all full time workers) is £556.60	The gross weekly wage in North Lanarkshire (based on all fulltime workers) is £705.70 - increase of 25.3%			Ongoing	The gross weekly pay for local residents is now higher than the national average for the first time ever - an increase of 10% (£63.90 per week) for North Lanarkshire residents from the previous years results	TP Strategy and LCPAR	Enterprise Team	Number of people progressing to higher paid jobs within North Lanarkshire Noomis statistics for levels of qualifications within working age population and average weekly wage																						Resilient People		
11	5	Supported Enterprise	Targeted employability support on people with disabilities or other significant barriers to help them secure fair and sustained work. Also support for disabled parents to enter employment.	Reduction in the disability employment gap in NL	Workforce for the Future Economic Regeneration Plan Developing the Young Workforce	Brighter Futures	22/23 - Supported Employment currently supporting 210 people on the different stages of the 5 stage employment model - 129 people currently receiving various levels of work support 41 people currently job finding	NLC Employability also funded the NHS Lanarkshire Demonstrator 2 Programme. This initiative focused on placing 23 unemployed or low-earning parents into paid work placements for six months, earning just above the living wage within NHS posts. This was resource internally and with a real commitment from NHS Lanarkshire and proved a really effective route for securing good quality employment opportunities for parents and will be repeated in 2024/25.			Ongoing	Continued support planned for the next 3 years	TP Strategy and LCPAR	Employability	Number of people progressing to higher paid jobs within North Lanarkshire Noomis statistics for levels of qualifications within working age population and average weekly wage																							Brighter Futures	
12	6	No one Left Behind	Targeted employability support for vulnerable young people who have mental health problems, the BAME community and over 50s, with delivery through CVS organisations. In addition funding identified to support 200 young people.	Rise in employment figures in targeted groups. Targets met to support young people in gaining qualifications	Workforce for the Future Economic Regeneration Plan	Brighter Futures	22/23 - Engaged with 101 people and supported 49 into employment. The focus is on 2 groups, the over 50s and those of any age who are long term unemployed.	In 2023/24 147 16 -24 year olds were supported into employment – this was a mix of unemployed young people with little work experience or qualifications as well as a small group who were leaving school to a negative destination. In addition another 30 young people with additional support needs or who are care experienced were supported into year long work placements. In 2024/25 a target of 155 unemployed young people supported into work is in place with another 30 young people with additional support needs or who are care-experienced being supported into yearlong work placements. In tandem with these programmes in 2024/25 are our wider employability programmes which are targeting employment for 940			Ongoing	Continued support planned for the next 3 years	TP Strategy and LCPAR	Employability	Number of people in target groups employed. Number of young people supported to gain qualifications																								One Service
13	7	No One Left Behind Phase 2	implement grant programme in 2022/23 to distribute £1.6 million to employment projects across North Lanarkshire which target support on groups who may be in poverty due to unemployment	Rise in employment figures in targeted groups	Workforce for the future Economic Regeneration	Brighter Futures	N/A	Nine projects were funded (cost £560,000) and delivered by the Third Sector in North Lanarkshire to work with parents on low incomes and focus on engaging them in activities and removing barriers to make them more job ready. People Plus, One Parent Families Scotland, Enable and New College Lanarkshire were some of the organisations involved in these projects.			Ongoing	Continued support planned for the next 3 years	TP Strategy and LCPAR	Employability	Number of people in target groups employed																							transforming places	
14	8	Living Hours	Adequate income is reliant on both living wage rate and also sufficient working hours to provide a liveable income. Living hours are part of wider Fair Work commitments	There is an increase in the number of NL employers in public, business and community and voluntary sectors with real living wage accreditation.	Workforce for the future Economic Regeneration	Brighter Futures	N/A	N/A			ongoing	ongoing	TP Strategy and LCPAR	NLC Employability VANL for CVS	number of employers providing living hours employment. Number of employees working living hours																								
15	9	Increase entrepreneurship, self-employment and the business birth rate in North Lanarkshire	Deliver a range of interventions including school-based activities to increase the numbers of people considering or in self-employment in North Lanarkshire, to increase the business birth rate and to support those businesses to survive and grow	An increase in the percentage of economically active in North Lanarkshire in self-employment, an increase in the number of new business starts per 10,000 working age population and an increase in the 3-year business survival rate	Workforce for the future Economic Regeneration	Brighter Futures Invest in North Lanarkshire	N/A	All activities related to parents and increasing income from employment have access to advice and support from the Tackling Poverty team and there are close links with other services which deal with parents both in the Council and among stakeholders.			annual	ongoing	TP Strategy and LCPAR	Enterprise and Development	ONS annual population survey (Self employment statistics) Business Birth and Survival Rates – ONS Business Demography																								

REDUCE THE COST OF LIVING											
Action	Brief Description	How We Measure Success	2022 /23 Baseline	2023/24 Outcomes	2024/25 Outcomes	2025/26 Outcomes	Timescales	Status	Identify if applies to TPS &/or LCPAR	Lead Team	Monitoring Information
Increase uptake of School Clothing Grants	Introduce online application form for FSM & CG Continue to automatically award where we have customer consent Use automation to process our auto award caseload Introduce online application form for FSM & CG	The number of School Clothing Awards increases	12,784 Clothing Grants awarded from June 2022 - May 2023 For School Pupils. An additional 937 Grants for made for nursery pupils	11,864 Clothing Grants awarded from June 2023 - May 2024 For School Pupils.			Ongoing	Ongoing	TP Strategy and LCPAR	Revenues & Benefits	The number of clothing grants claimed and distributed
Increase uptake of Free School Meal Awards	Continue to automatically award where we have customer consent Use automation to process our auto award caseload	The number of Children entitled to Free School Meals increases	12,151 FSM awards in 2020, 11,176 awards in 2021, 10,683 awards in 2022	10,401 - FSM * No of school meal holiday vouchers issued 5999 pupils total value of £1,497,503			Ongoing	Ongoing	TP Strategy and LCPAR	Revenues & Benefits	The number of Children in receipt of Free School Meals
Club 365	Promote Activities and meal provision through Club 365 Initiative	Numbers of Children attending and meals provided. £2.50 per day paid during school holidays to those in receipt of FSM	Club 365 has provided over 88, 000 meals and activity sessions since inception	N/A			Ongoing	Ongoing	TP Strategy and LCPAR	Revenues & Benefits	Numbers of Meals and Activity Sessions Delivered
Increase uptake of education maintenance allowance (EMA)	Ensure full take of Education Maintenance Allowance. Promotion of EMA through Education Newsletter to schools and locally within schools to raise pupil awareness. Review publicity – posters leaflets etc not distributed recently Discussion within EMA and SMT meetings on improving uptake with parents and carers. eg attend parent council meetings and inviting parents for a school meal and information session New management information system to give insights into trends, most popular choices, which ages take up free meals Work with other local authorities developing menus, to improve sustainability and better safety and choice for those with special diets (>>ASST and APS) Work with schools around different “sittings”, and overflow areas. Capital investment to return more schools to Production kitchens Continued roll out of electronic menu notifications to parents and carers Consultation with secondary school pupils via a QR code (promoted via a ‘Tell us what you think’ poster displayed around schools allowing pupils to scan / access via mobiles) Primary school parents online survey (targeted via menu email / school newsletter email and also	Young People can access EMA	in 22/23 1327 applications. 876 awards. 66% award rate (down from 73% award rate in 21/22)	in 23/24 1537 applications. 944 awards. 61% award rate (down from 66% award rate in 22/23)			Ongoing	Ongoing	TP Strategy and LCPAR	Revenues & Benefits	The number of EMA grants claimed
Increase take up of Free School Meals in situ		Percentage of Children taking up free school meals when they have entitlement is increased	Currently (May 2023) at 65-70%	(May 2024) at 65-70%			Ongoing	launched and ongoing	TP Strategy and LCPAR	Facilities Support Services	Take up rates for Free School Meals
Fuel Poverty	Provision of a short term funded Energy Advice Service to comprehensively alleviate the levels of fuel poverty experienced by vulnerable households. HES no of referrals from NL CAB energy project nos of referrals	Number of households assisted	Unknown as SHCS data unavailable for Local Authorities however, zero has been used as the starting point for the introduction of this service	159 households assisted 2023/24			2 years	launched and ongoing	TP Strategy and LCPAR	Housing Solutions	will be monitored via NLAN and Wise Group reporting
Affordable Credit	To promote credit unions across North Lanarkshire employers and communities to encourage more people to join to increase access to affordable credit. To widen access to payroll deduction for credit unions and access to affordable credit. Establish a Credit Union Forum in North Lanarkshire	Credit union membership numbers *Local Employers signing up to CU payroll deductions	5 credit unions affiliated to the Scottish League of Credit Unions have 9,642 adult members and 1,462 junior members. Unable to get contacts for ABCUL credit unions at present.	5 credit unions affiliated to the Scottish League of Credit Unions have 10,250 adult members and 1,460 junior members. Unable to get contacts for ABCUL credit unions at present.			ongoing	ongoing	TP Strategy and LCPAR	The Tackling Poverty Team	The number of employers promoting payroll deductions The number of people joining the credit union
Debt Advice	Advice and support in relation to debt and budgeting advice provided by Council and Externally commissioned advice services	assist people out of debt and provide them with the tools to budget accordingly	1744 referrals received in 2022/23 NLC TPT)	1886 referrals received in 2023/24 (NLC TPT) 3,846 referrals (CAB)			Ongoing	Ongoing	TP Strategy and LCPAR	The Tackling Poverty Team	Number of referrals to the Debt Advice Team Level of debt assisted
New Affordable Homes	Deliver 5000 new affordable homes by 2035	reduce the cost of living by increasing the supply of energy efficient, affordable homes	At 1 December 2022, 1,566 homes delivered (970 new build + 596 DMPS)	Since 1 December 2023, 541 new homes delivered (381 new build + 160 DMPS)		2035	Ongoing		TP Strategy and LCPAR	Housing New Supply	Number of new homes built
New Affordable Homes	Support housing association and co-operative partners to deliver new homes	reduce the cost of living by increasing the supply of energy efficient, affordable homes	2126 homes have been delivered	318 homes have been built since 1st Dec 2022. 2444 homes have been delivered			ongoing	Ongoing	TP Strategy and LCPAR	Housing New Supply	Number of new homes built
Improved Energy Efficiency in NLC Housing Stock	Ensure all lettable housing stock is EPC D or above by 2025 by improving energy efficiency EESABS Scottish Government funding if available Provide advice to households on energy efficiency measures supported by online information and in person advice provided by council and CVS.	all housing stock is EPC D or above by 2025	At 2021/22, 99.2% of the homes are at D or above	99.5% of all NLC housing stock is rated EPC D or above			Ongoing	Ongoing	TP Strategy and LCPAR	Housing Investment	all housing stock is EPC D or above by 2025
Improve Energy Efficiency to owner occupied properties		Reduce the cost of living by increasing the energy efficiency of homeowners housing stock	£0.1 m spent	In 2023/24 it is expected that £2m will be spent on private owned properties			Ongoing	Ongoing	TP Strategy and LCPAR	Housing Solutions	Number of homes approved
Support homeowners to adapt their homes	Deliver advice and assistance to homeowner through the Scheme of Assistance Provides items beyond SWF- Community Care Grant items in place for Housing First clients and people who are homeless/at risk of homelessness	reduce the cost of living by preventing and addressing disrepair and improving health and wellbeing by supporting owners to adapt their homes Reduce the cost of living by providing financial support for better quality furniture to people who are homeless or at risk of homelessness to settle in their accommodation.	187 disabled adaptations grant provided in 2022 - the scheme has been revised with no funding available for owner grants	236 disabled adaptations grant provided in 2023 - the scheme has no funding available for owner grants			Ongoing	Ongoing	TP Strategy Only	Private Sector Housing	reduce the cost of living by preventing and addressing disrepair and improving health and wellbeing by supporting owners to adapt their homes. *Revision of scheme of assistance completed. Other than mandatory (Disabled Adaptation Grants) no funding available for owner grants for disrepair. Current grant funding for NLC capital programmes is scheduled to end this year and no new financial assistance has been identified. Owners will continue to be provided with advice/ assistance when possible but no financial assistance
Furniture Fund	Where NLC investment programme includes owners in blocks with NLC staff, liaise though voluntary agreement, enforcement where appropriate, EESABS programmes as appropriate		In 2021/22, 23 Housing First households assisted at an average figure of £861.39 per household from BRTP.	N/A			Ongoing	Ongoing	TP Strategy Only	Housing Solutions	Reduce the cost of living by providing financial support for better quality furniture to people who are homeless or at risk of homelessness to settle in their accommodation
Support homeowners to adapt, repair and maintain their homes (within mixed tenure blocks)	Promote and Maximise uptake of Free Bus Travel for 5-21 year olds Creating an enhancing active travel routes will improve the ability of all people to walk, wheel or cycle for any journey purpose within North Lanarkshire	Number of travel cards issued and in use	99.2% of the homes are at D or above 42,160 total number issued. 61.75% overall uptake	99.2% of the homes are EPC D or above 56,387 total number issued. 75% overall uptake			Ongoing	Ongoing	TP Strategy and LCPAR	Housing Solutions	Number of home owners assisted
Free Transport for Under 22's							ongoing	ongoing	TP Strategy and LCPAR	CLD	number of travel cards provided
Improved and accessible walking, wheeling and cycling network.		Equity of access for all our communities with mid-term target of 50km to be created by 2026/27	7.8 kms of active travel routes created in 2021/22	N/A - see 'Supporting the Plan' Driver			125kms to be created by 2032	Ongoing	TP Strategy and LCPAR	Transportation / Planning	number of travel routes
Address Period Poverty	Provide women with access to period products within education and other public buildings Develop Peer Support Programme Expand number of council building access points- expand community group partnerships from 8- 10 areas- develop recording to better understand demand and distribution consider period card scheme.	Distribution across all of North Lanarkshire. Number of products distributed	311, 767 products to NLC establishments (excluding education and culture venues) 87,396 to education	733,692 products were distributed in total. (82,596 to NHS sites & 651,096 to NLC sites)			Ongoing	Ongoing	TP Strategy and LCPAR	Enterprise and Communities	Number of products delivered and taken up

TP Strategy Only

TP Strategy and LCPAR

Invest in North Lanarkshire

Sustainable Futures

Brighter Futures

Digital NL

One Service

Resilient People

Transforming Places

INNAME?

Support people to stop smoking to reduce outgoings	Stopping smoking can have a positive impact of finances as well as health. Brief intervention and referral to the Quit Your Way service in Lanarkshire can support people to successfully quit smoking. Pregnant women are a particularly key target group.	Yearly target 23/24 for 52 pregnant women who live in 40% most deprived areas to successfully stop smoking at 12 weeks (to be reviewed in 2024 after national tobacco control action plan is published). Awareness raising training sessions to be completed with Tackling Poverty staff.	24 pregnant women living in the 40% most deprived areas successfully quit smoking at 12 weeks (April 2022-Dec 2022 data). Published and confirmed data for April 2022 – March 2023 will be available in January 2024. NL % of pregnant women smoking at booking in appt 12.6% year ending Dec 2022 (scotland rate 11.9%)	28 pregnant women living in the 40% most deprived areas successfully quit smoking at 12 weeks (April 2023-Dec 2023 data). NL % of pregnant women smoking at booking in appt 12.7% year ending Dec 2022 (scotland rate 11%)			Ongoing	Ongoing	TP Strategy and LCPAR	NHS Lanarkshire Quit Your Way Service	Number of Tackling Poverty staff members trained. Number of pregnant women supported to stop smoking.
Recycled Bicycle Initiatives	Individuals subject to unpaid work within the bicycle recycling project	Bicycles provided to low income families and donated to the Christmas Toy Appeals	320 bicycles recycled	320 bicycles recycled 2022/23. Programme of bike maintenance underway			ongoing	ongoing	TP Strategy and LCPAR	Restorative Justice	Number of bikes restored
Cost of Living Survey	Cost of Living Survey delivered to the residents of North Lanarkshire - this will help develop and deliver services	services and resources directed with the outcomes of the survey	N/A	N/A			Ongoing	Ongoing	TP Strategy Only	The Tackling Poverty Team	number of surveys completed

One Service

KeyTP Strategy OnlyTP Strategy and LCPAR													
INCREASE INCOME VIA SOCIAL SECURITY													
Action	Brief Description	How We Measure Success	Links to Other Strategies	Link to Programme Of Work	2022 / 23 Baseline	2023/ 24 Outcomes	2024/25 Outcomes	2025 / 26 Outcomes	Timescales	Status	Identify if applies to TPS &/or LCPAR	Lead Team	Monitoring Information
The Tackling Poverty Team and other council services to continue to maximise the income of the residents of North Lanarkshire	All residents are offered income maximisation and we continue to promote the "no wrong door" approach	Residents will be directed to the tackling poverty team to ensure income is fully maximised	The Plan for North Lanarkshire	Resilient People	18,521 benefit checks carried out in 2022/23 - £35,480,020 generated in additional income	26,158 benefit checks carried out in 23/24 (41.2% increase) - £47,935,822 generated in additional income (35.1% increase)			Ongoing	Ongoing	TP Strategy and LCPAR	The Tackling Poverty Team	Number of Benefit Checks / Benefit Claims / Resolutions Income Generated
Work with all social work services to ensure income maximisation is carried out for all vulnerable client groups	Social Work staff refer people to the Tackling Poverty Team who will carry out all income maximisation work	Referrals to the tackling poverty team from all social work staff	The Plan for North Lanarkshire	Resilient People	4888 benefit checks carried out in 2022/23	9639 benefit checks carried out in 23/24 (now able to report income gen - £5,062,066)			Ongoing	Ongoing	TP Strategy and LCPAR	The Tackling Poverty Team	Number of Benefit Checks / Benefit Claims / Resolutions Income Generated
MacMillan Advice Service	Maximise the income of cancer patients, their families and carers	Provide an income maximisation and debt advice service	The Cancer Strategy	Resilient People	700 referrals in 2022/23	700 referrals in 2023/24 (generating £3,542,782)			Ongoing	Ongoing	TP Strategy and LCPAR	The Tackling Poverty Team	Number of Benefit Checks / Benefit Claims / Resolutions Income Generated
Food Poverty Referral Gateway	Mitigate the need for foodbank use by ensuring access to advice services and claims to crisis grants	A decrease in the use of foodbanks	The Plan for North Lanarkshire	Resilient People	not available	work still being carried out on referral monitoring with food banks			Ongoing	Ongoing	TP Strategy and LCPAR	The Tackling Poverty Team	Number of referrals to foodbanks Number of Crisis Grant applications
Food Poverty Action Group	Group to consider uniform recording across all emergency food providers	Uniform recording adopted by all emergency food providers	The Plan for North Lanarkshire	Resilient People	n/a	21 food providers contacted - 3 currently working with co-ordinator			Nov-25	Ongoing	TP Strategy and LCPAR	The Tackling Poverty Team	Number of foodbanks recording
Welfare Reform Group	The welfare reform group to ensure services, elected members etc are kept fully abreast of welfare reform changes and their impact on our communities	updates are provided and action taken when necessary	The Plan for North Lanarkshire	Resilient People	n/a	NLAN - social media messages around managed migration			Ongoing	Ongoing	TP Strategy and LCPAR	North Lanarkshire Advice Network	Issues raised / campaigns
Health Staff refer to income maximisation and debt advice services	Health Staff will ensure money issues are addressed and referrals are made to the tackling poverty team	Increased number of teams and services in NHS Lanarkshire referring patients to the tackling poverty team to ensure income is fully maximised	NHS Cost of Living	Resilient People	394 referrals 22/23	591 referrals received in 23/24 (increase of 50%)			Ongoing	Ongoing	TP Strategy and LCPAR	The Tackling Poverty Team	Number of Benefit Checks / Benefit Claims / Resolutions Income Generated / Number of health teams or services referring
Improvement Service Project - GP Practices	GP Practices identified by the Improvement Service have a welfare rights officer in situ, with access to GP records	The welfare rights service is integrated into the GP Practice	The Plan for North Lanarkshire	Resilient People	357 referrals 22/23	608 referrals received in 23/24 (70% increase)			Ongoing	Ongoing	TP Strategy and LCPAR	The Tackling Poverty Team	Number of Benefit Checks / Benefit Claims / Resolutions Income Generated
Relaunch Health Visitor & District Nurse Referral Pathway	Poverty Awareness Training and pathway training to take place	Health visitor and district nurses make referrals to the tackling poverty team	NHS Cost of Living	Resilient People	n/a	119 referrals received in 23/24			Ongoing	Ongoing	TP Strategy and LCPAR	The Tackling Poverty Team	number of referrals to the tackling poverty team
GP Community Link Worker Programme	community link worker embedded within GP practices across North Lanarkshire making referrals to information and advice services	embed link workers and increase support to patients	NHS Cost of Living	Resilient People	482 welfare rights referrals (22/23) 146 debt advice referrals (22/23)	333 welfare rights referrals (23/24) 31% decrease 133 debt advice referrals (23/24) 9% decrease			Ongoing	Ongoing	TP Strategy and LCPAR	The Tackling Poverty Team	Number of Benefit Checks / Benefit Claims / Resolutions Income Generated
Commissioned Services - Income Maximisation via Benefit Uptake	All residents are offered income maximisation and we continue to promote the "no wrong door" approach	the successful commissioned service offer income maximisation to the residents of North Lanarkshire	NHS Cost of Living	Resilient People	£5,267,650 income generated for north lanarkshire residents 2022/23	£8,259,352 income generated for north lanarkshire residents 23/24 - 55% increase			Ongoing	Ongoing	TP Strategy and LCPAR	The Tackling Poverty Team	Number of Benefit Checks / Benefit Claims / Resolutions Income Generated
Rent Assistance Fund	Rent Assistance Fund – to assist people who have experienced/are experiencing financial difficulty due to the increase in the cost of living. If tenant has received a previous award of funding from SG – TGF or SC Lacer Fund – they will not be eligible. Tenants can receive a maximum award of £2250 and this funding is not repayable (fund allocation £1,000,000)												
		Fund directed to people in need	Local Housing Strategy	Resilient People	522 grants awarded in 22/23	1050 grants awarded in 23/24 (103% increase)			Ongoing	Ongoing	TP Strategy and LCPAR	Housing	Number of people Assisted
Universal Credit Assistance Fund	UCAF award is to assist tenants who have fallen behind with their rent due to the 5 week waiting period, and tenants who are in receipt of Universal credit are eligible to apply	People can access the fund, it requires to be paid back, however, this is at an affordable level - the fund ensures that people can remain in their own home with their arrears being managed	Local Housing Strategy	Resilient People	522 grants awarded in 2022/23	1908 grants awarded in 23/24 (265% increase)			ongoing	Ongoing	TP Strategy and LCPAR	Housing Services	number of loans provided / loan repayments
Welfare Rights Officer - Additional Support Needs Schools	Welfare Rights Officer to deliver income maximisation to families and carers	Number of referrals / income generated	The Plan for North Lanarkshire	Resilient People	introduced in 2024	* 293 Mandatory Reconsiderations			pilot for one year August 2025	starting in August 2024	TP Strategy and LCPAR	Education and The Tackling Poverty Team	Number of people accessing the service / income generated
Work with the commity and Services to encourage challenges to benefit decisions via Mandatory Reconsiderations and Appeals to Upper Tribunal level	Encourage residents to exhaust all challenges to benefit decisions	number of mandatory reconsiderations / number of appeals lodged / income generated via MR and Appeal	The Plan for North Lanarkshire	Resilient People	introduced in 2024 (however, stats available for 23/24)	* 124 appeals * £1,209,619 generated			Ongoing	Ongoing	TP Strategy and LCPAR	Tackling Poverty Team	number of mandatory reconsiderations / number of appeals lodged / income generated via MR and Appeal

Key	TP Strategy Only	TP Strategy and LCPAR
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HOLISTIC SUPPORTS													
Action	Brief Description	How We Measure Success	Links to Other Strategies	Link to Programme Of Work	2022/23 Baseline	2023/24 Outcomes	2024/25 Outcomes	2025/26 Outcomes	Timescales	Status	Identify if applies to TPS &/or LCPAR	Lead Team	Monitoring Information
Sustain Tenancies	Deliver increased financial advice and assistance via 8 income maximisers	increase incomes from social security, reducing rent arrears and sustaining tenancies in social rented homes	Local Housing Strategy	Resilient People	£15,041,070 income generated - 4007 benefit checks completed	£18,850,629 income generated - 7040 benefit checks completed			Ongoing	Ongoing	TP Strategy and LCPAR	Housing Solutions	Number of Benefit Checks / Benefit Claims / Resolutions Income Generated
	To create a flexible, reliable and integrated support for families to ensure that every family who needs support gets the right support at the right time.	People have access to income maximisation, employability and money advice services at the right time.				Barnardos awarded the contract - Families Here and Now Service started June 2024					TP Strategy and LCPAR	Education, Children and Families	inter service referrals
Whole Family Support			Childrens Services Plan	Resilient People	n/a				2023 - 26	ongoing			
	The North Lanarkshire Arrest Referral Service is focussed on early intervention by providing support to people whilst held in police custody and connecting them to services within the community to address individual needs.	Number of referrals to the tackling poverty team	Community Justice Improvement Plan	Resilient People	n/a	Meeting held - service leaflets provided			2025	ongoing	TP Strategy and LCPAR	The service is delivered by Scottish Drugs Forum and Phoenix Futures and funded by North Lanarkshire Alcohol and Drug Partnership for a period of 18 months as a Test of Change.	number of referrals / income generated / debt advice provided / financial education
Arrest / Referral Service						328 staff attended poverty awareness sessions (health/education/CLD/ social work/ngow/ NLADP/ One Parent families/NL Disability Forum							
Poverty Awareness Sessions	Bespoke poverty awareness sessions for council, NHS and third sector partners	Number of people attending the sessions and ultimately the number of referrals this leads to	The Plan for North Lan	Resilient People	n/a				ongoing	ongoing	TP Strategy and LCPAR	The Tackling Poverty Team	number of sessions delivered / number of people attending / referrals following the training
					Recent figures show the local economy continues to grow, reflecting a positive position in North Lanarkshire compared to a negative growth position locally, however, moving forward we must see more tackling poverty related interventions within community benefits								
Community Benefits	To increase the number of tackling poverty interventions / fair work interventions within community benefits	improve the economic, social or environmental well-being of our communities	The Plan for North Lan	transforming places		no update available			ongoing	ongoing	TP Strategy Only	Enterprise and Communities	Number of Tackling Poverty Interventions
	Wide ranging community supports provided by Community and Voluntary Sector organisations to support residents wellbeing including those in poverty or at risk of poverty including: food, mental health and wellbeing	improved wellbeing	Community Solutions Strategy and Investment Plan 2023 and HSCNL Commissioning Plan 2023 - 26	Resilient People	n/a	no update available			ongoing	ongoing	TP Strategy and LCPAR	VANL	Learning and impact reports
Community Solutions Programme	The Multiply Project is a government initiative helping adults to improve their numeracy skills, people can access numeracy qualifications with the access of the Community Learning and Development Service and will be able to access financial education from the Tackling Poverty Team.	people develop the knowledge, skills and attitudes needed to manage money well and make informed decisions.	The Plan for North Lan	Resilient People	n/a	start up and development	119 sessions delivered 420 people attended		Project ends March 2025	On going	TP Strategy and LCPAR	The Tackling Poverty Team	number of courses delivered / number of attendees
Financial Education (Adults)		the younger children asked for financial education - the programme will ensure that we meet the needs and requests of our children	The Plan for North Lan	Resilient People	n/a	*Audit of financial education activity in schools *Discussions with Scotland's Financial Schools re delivery			in development	in development	TP Strategy and LCPAR	The Tackling Poverty Team	number of sessions completed in schools Number of young people who attend the sessions
Financial Education (children and young people)	Following the "three questions" delivery of a revamped financial education for the primary children	Those representing communities understand their roles and responsibilities in raising awareness of key poverty messages, challenging stigma	The Plan for North Lanarkshire	Resilient People	n/a	Tackling Poverty on agendas of community boards	pilot focussed sessions in Coatbridge - in discussion - if successful will continue role out		Ongoing	Ongoing	TP Strategy and LCPAR	Local Planning Partnership Teams	Community Board Sub Groups Reports
Community Boards to support the tackling poverty agenda	Through tackling poverty awareness sessions and delivery of the councils tackling poverty agenda the community boards will support the Strategy												

TP Strategy Only
TP Strategy and LCPAR

transforming places

invest in North Lanarkshire

Sustainable Futures

Brighter Futures

Digital NL

One Service

Resilient People

NORTH LANARKSHIRE

LOCAL Child Poverty

Action Report

2023 - 2024



Foreword

Tackling poverty in our communities is at the heart of The Plan for North Lanarkshire and together with our Partners in NHS Lanarkshire and the Third Sector we are committed to addressing the cause and effects of poverty in all our communities.

To achieve the Plans' goal of North Lanarkshire being the place to Live, Learn, Work, Invest and Visit tackling child poverty and poverty in our communities has to be at the heart of all our services.

For our families and children, we need to use the drivers of increasing income via employment, increasing income via social security benefits, reducing the cost of living and holistic supports, together with strengthening referral pathways, to ensure that our children and young people will live in prosperous and thriving communities across North Lanarkshire.

If we are to tackle the poverty attainment gap, we must first of all tackle poverty. We are building on the work we reported in previous Local Child Poverty Action Reports, and are delighted in the new school term, to have a welfare rights officer dedicated to supporting Additional Support Needs schools across North Lanarkshire. Embodying the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child, the *“Three Questions”* activity reported on in last year’s reports, continues in our schools. This helps us shape our Action Plan to meet the expressed needs and concerns of our children and young people, but also ensures that all our families have access to tackling poverty referral gateways and North Lanarkshire is the place to **learn**.

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Increasing income via employment is working in North Lanarkshire, we must continue to build on the work with our employability teams. In North Lanarkshire our gross weekly pay for local residents is now higher than the national average for the first time ever, making this an attractive place for both employers and those seeking **work**.

£1.3 billion of capital investment will improve the physical environment of North Lanarkshire, creating the economic, social and community conditions that will attract further **investment** in our communities.

In creating our prosperous communities North Lanarkshire will be somewhere that people will want to **visit**.

The 2023/24 Local Child Poverty Action Report demonstrates the work being carried out to achieve the goals set out in our previous Action Plan and will introduce new actions to take forward embedding our commitment to tackling child poverty across council and partner services.



Councillor Jim Logue

Leader of the Council



Councillor Chris Costello

Convenor Wellbeing &
Tackling Poverty Committee



Martin Hill

Chair, NHS Lanarkshire

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“Poverty means not being able to heat your home, pay your rent or buy the essentials for your children. It means waking up every day facing insecurity, uncertainty, and impossible decisions about money. It means facing marginalisation – and even discrimination – because of your financial circumstances.

The constant stress it causes can lead to problems that deprive people of the chance to play a full part in society.”

Introduction

The Child Poverty (Scotland) Act 2017, places a duty on Local Authorities and NHS Boards to jointly develop, publish and action an annual Local Child Poverty Action Report (LCPAR). In this sixth report, we will look at work being carried out across our communities by all our planning partners.

Last year, North Lanarkshire adopted “*Holistic Supports*” as a fourth formal driver to tackling poverty and inequality in our community. It was important that we identified that the traditional drivers of; increasing income via employment, increasing income via social security benefits and reducing the cost of living, could not and would not work in isolation. The wrap around supports that do not always mean additional income to a family but are necessary to navigate a way out of poverty are equally important and at times essential to families in difficult situations.

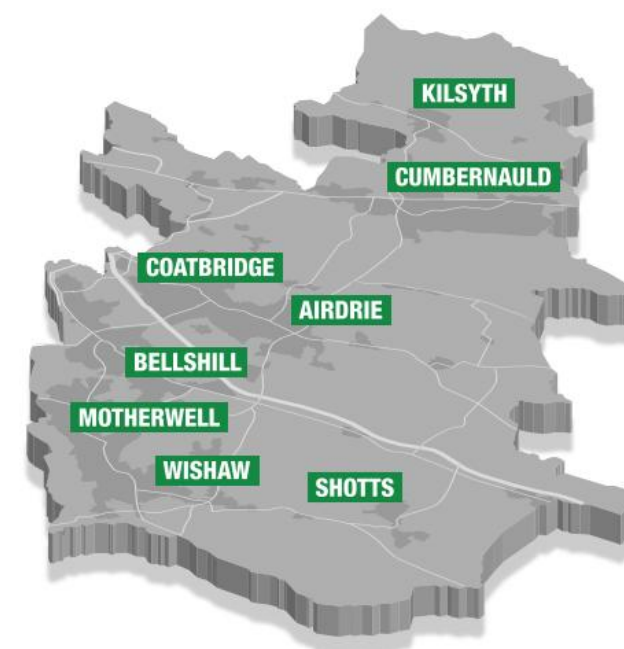
In recognising Holistic Supports we will look at the progress around **Whole Family Support**, the importance of each partners role in referral pathways and how embedding the **No Wrong Door** approach across our Services will ensure that those living in poverty and those at risk of poverty will receive the right support at the right time.

North Lanarkshire Child Poverty Profile

The Centre for Research in Social Policy and Loughborough University produced a report to update the local indicators of Child Poverty after housing costs. The data builds upon the Children in Low Income Families produced by the Department for Work and Pensions which reports on the rate of child poverty before housing costs.

The report produced used local administrative data and analysis of the household survey “*understanding society*”, to produce modelled estimates for housing costs, this therefore, provides a more accurate picture of how disposable incomes vary in different geographical areas.

The figures produced have shown an increase in child poverty in North Lanarkshire, despite the reported 3.3% fall we reported in 2020/21. The 2022/23 figures are shown below, with an overview from 2014 in tables i and ii.

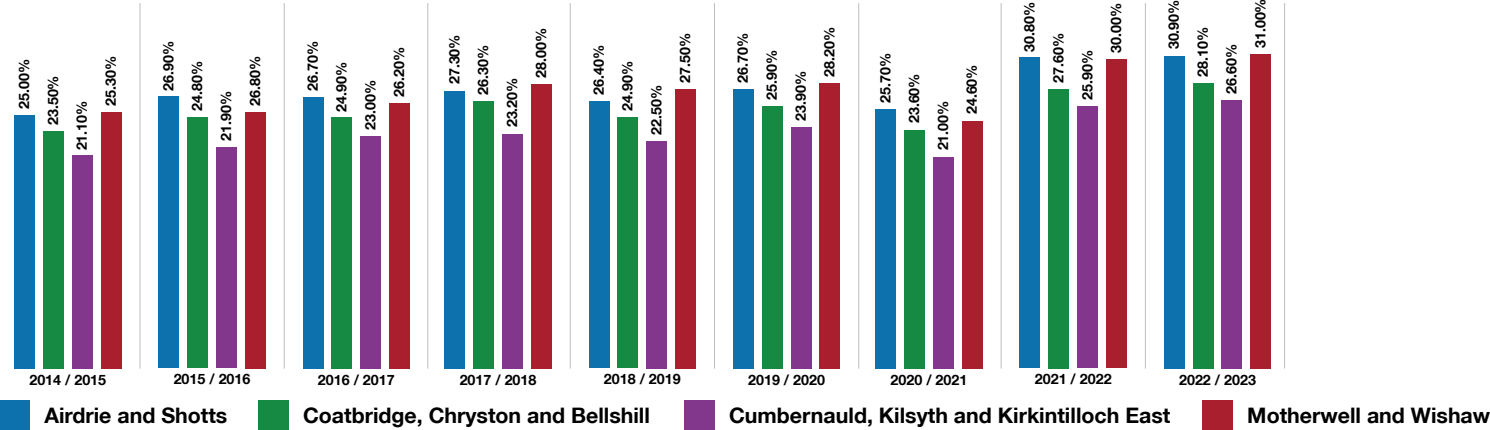


Parliamentary Constituency	Percentage of Children in Poverty in 22/23	Number of children in poverty in 22/23
Airdrie & Shotts	30.9%	5302
Coatbridge, Chryston and Bellshill	28.1%	5415
Cumbernauld, Kilsyth and Kirkintilloch*	26.6%	4670
Motherwell & Wishaw	31%	5793

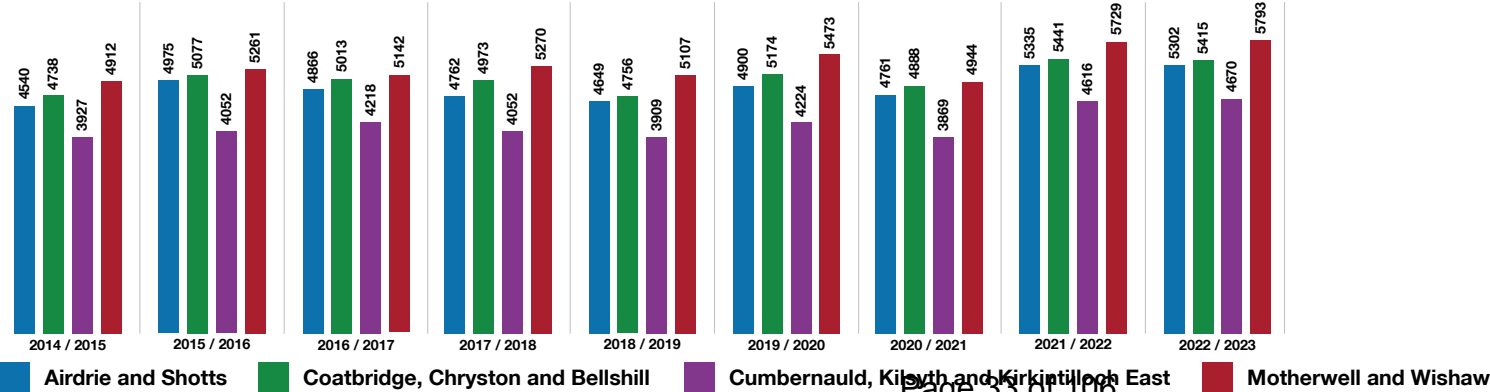
*Kirkintilloch is not within North Lanarkshire Council, therefore some figures will be attributed to East Dunbartonshire

The tables below identify both the percentages (table i) and the numbers of children (table ii) across North Lanarkshire Parliamentary constituencies:

(Table 1) Child Poverty % Level by North Lanarkshire parliamentary constituency



(Table 2) Number of children living in child poverty by North Lanarkshire parliamentary constituency



The Tackling Poverty Team have worked within our communities to increase income via social security, our recording systems as reported last year, are allowing us to record additional income generated for those priority groups within the community.

Priority Groups

The priority groups identified by the Scottish Government in Every Child, Every Chance in 2018 as being at the highest risk of child poverty continue to be so in 2024.

In June 2024, the Scottish Government reported that **24% of all children in Scotland are in relative poverty**. Children in the priority groups are more likely than average to be in relative poverty:

- 38% of children in lone parent families live in poverty
- 43% of children in minority ethnic families live in poverty
- 27% of children in families with a disabled person live in poverty
- 38% of children in families with three or more children live in poverty
- 9% of children not in the priority groups live in poverty



The Tackling Poverty Team endeavour to focus work in our communities with the priority groups. As reported last year, system changes have been made to allow us to record our activity, and whilst we do not report by Parliamentary Constituency, we can report as close to these as possible with the figures below for 23/24:

Parliamentary Constituency	Lone Parent	Families where a member of the household is disabled	Families with 3 or more children	Minority Ethnic Families	Families with the youngest child under 1	Mothers under the age of 25
Airdrie and Shotts	£1,580,639.20	£111,747.85	£33,692.55	£900.00	£11,584.47	£100.00
Coatbridge and Bellshill	£688,617.15	£158,272.21	£71,073.04	£5,730.66	£469.80	£0.00
Cumbernauld, Kilsyth and Chryston	£614,834.60	£248,705.18	£17,905.48	£22,472.76	£18,950.88	£6,962.81
Motherwell and Wishaw	£895,377.50	£209,895.23	£25,360.30	£5,196.82	£2,207.91	£5,678.09
Headquarters (covering all localities)	£52,819.59	£44,789.48	£6,149.50	£6,184.28	£400.65	£0.00

The Tackling Poverty Team assisted 5161 people from the Child Poverty Priority Groups generating **£4,846,718** in additional benefit income for families in the priority groups in 2023/24. This number of people assisted in the priority groups in relation to income maximisation has fallen by around 15%, as a result of this more targeted communications will require to be carried out in the coming year.

The Debt Advice service recently changed their recording system (November 23) and are now able to report on priority groups. This therefore means that from November 2023, in relation to Reducing the Cost of Living, we can report on the 209 lone parents who sought help from the tackling poverty team in relation to debts and budgeting. *Other priority group figures are relatively low and therefore due to distinguishing characteristics, would not be appropriate to identify numbers of people in these constituencies.*

Parliamentary Constituency	Number of Lone Parents seeking Help
Airdrie & Shotts	62
Coatbridge and Bellshill	47
Cumbernauld, Kilsyth and Chryston	43
Motherwell & Wishaw	57



What are we doing to reach families in these constituencies?

The Scottish Index of Multiple Deprivation (SIMD) is a tool for identifying the places in Scotland where people are experiencing disadvantage across different aspects of their lives. SIMD gives ranking for each small area, or data zone, which shows how deprived that area is compared to other areas. Whilst the latest SIMD information is from 2020, using the Loughborough University information around parliamentary constituencies together with what we know from the SIMD information we can identify where we will target resources.

During and following the pandemic, advice services had to adapt the way they delivered services, home working and limited office space meant that a lot of work moved to digital and telephony channels. North Lanarkshire's Tackling Poverty Team have been delivering services in this way with a lot of success, however, it is recognised that this should not be the only modes of contact, and for those who may be furthest away from digital services, locality based, and out-reach services need to be developed.

A remodel of the service will mean that there will be a presence across all localities, with outreach being delivered not only by the councils' tackling poverty team but will also be a condition of funding as we go forward to commission external advice services for 2025 -2028.



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How will we target resources?

The Income Domain measure within SIMD considers the number of people in receipt of income support, income-based employment support allowance, jobseekers allowance, guaranteed pension credit claims and universal credit claimants with no employment markers. It also includes the number of children in households accessing Jobseekers allowance, income support, employment support allowance and the number of adults and children dependent on adults in receipt of tax credits.

The income domain ranks all 447 data-zones according to income deprivation, as well as counting all people who are income deprived, including the dependants of adults who are income deprived.

Using the most recent parliamentary constituency information, all constituencies in North Lanarkshire have child poverty figures above the Scottish average of 24%:

Constituency	2022/23 Child Poverty Level
Airdrie and Shotts	30.9%
Coatbridge, Chryston and Bellshill	28.1%
Cumbernauld, Kilsyth and Kirkintilloch	26.6%
Motherwell and Wishaw	31.0%

Outreach in all our localities, is therefore really important, however, using SIMD figures we can look at specific areas for targeting resources, for example the following North Lanarkshire data-zones are within the 1% most deprived communities in Scotland:

- **Cliftonville** (Towers and Dunbeth Nursery)
- **Greenend** (John Smith Gardens to Southfield Street)
- **Craigneuk** (Meadowhead Street to Kimberley Street)
- **Gowkthrapple** (Birkenshaw Brae)
- **Craigneuk** (Flaximill Avenue to Aldersyde Avenue)

This data will allow us to ensure outreach is delivered at the heart of the communities where it is needed.

How will services be delivered?

The Tackling Poverty Team in addition to their current modes of service delivery will work with other council services, in the newly established **Community Hubs**. Community Hubs are centred around schools and learning centres in the heart of our towns and communities.

Members of the tackling poverty team will establish Advice Surgeries within these settings, providing face to face delivery, ensuring our community have multi-channel access to much needed services.



North Lanarkshire Children's Services Partnership

All Children and young people in Scotland, under the age of 18, have protected rights under The United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (Incorporation) (Scotland) Act 2024. This requires all Scotland's public authorities to take proactive steps to ensure the protection of children's rights in their decision-making and service delivery and makes it unlawful for public authorities, including NHS Lanarkshire and North Lanarkshire Council, to act incompatibly with the UNCRC requirements set out in the Act. UNCRC gives children, young people, and their representatives that ability to use the Courts to enforce their rights.

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NHS Lanarkshire and partners are committed to upholding children's rights and reporting on resulting activity. Key actions will include assessing current compatibility, ensuring children's voices are listened to in relation to decisions that affect them, implementing a new child friendly complaints procedure, and developing more child friendly information.

In addition to this, Children's Rights Wellbeing and Impact Assessments are now a requirement for significant developments, changes and NLC Committee Reports.

Our Children's Services Plan includes our vision, for how we best deliver services and supports for children, young people and families in North Lanarkshire. It states our ambitions and priorities and includes an action plan to detail these shall be achieved. In North Lanarkshire we do this through North Lanarkshire Children's Services Partnership (CS Partnership). The CS Partnership brings together key partners and stakeholders and works together to identify shared priorities.

Partners include children, young people and families, key public sector agencies, independent sector organisations and the community and voluntary sector. Rather than oversee the full breadth of work that directly or indirectly relates to children, young people and families, the focus of the CS Partnership is on the shared priorities identified in the CS Plan for the period 2023-26. Each partner has duties and responsibilities beyond the scope and work of the CS Partnership.

In developing our Children's Services Plan we recognise that children's rights, as stated in United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC), underpin each of the foundations of The Promise. The Children's Services Partnership will develop a rights- based approach to children's services in North Lanarkshire as well as advocate, promote and support, across and beyond the Children's Services Partnership, the responsibilities of partners as duty bearers.

On 16th July 2024, the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC) was incorporated into Scots Law.

The rights within the convention apply to everyone under 18. Scotland has become the first nation in the UK to implement the rights, with children being able to seek a remedy in Scottish Courts and Tribunals for a breach of their Convention rights by a public authority.

There are 54 articles and 42 rights, covering all aspects of a child's life, setting out the civil, political, economic, social and cultural rights all children have. The right to live free of poverty is not set out in a single article within UNCRC, instead we can see that this takes a holistic approach to ensure children have the right to live free from poverty, as can be seen in some articles identified below (full UNCRC articles appendix one)



Article 27

Every child has the right to a standard of living that is good enough to meet their physical and social needs and support their development.

Governments must help families who cannot afford to provide this.

Article 24

Every child has the right to the best possible health.

Governments must provide good quality health care, clean water and nutritious food, and a clean environment and education on health and wellbeing so that children can stay healthy.

Article 26

Every child has the right to benefit from social security.

Governments must provide social security, including financial support and other benefits, to families in need of assistance.

Article 28

Every child has the right to an education.

Primary education must be free and different forms of secondary education must be available to every child. Discipline in schools must respect children's dignity and their rights.

Article 32

Governments must protect children from economic exploitation and work that is dangerous or might harm their health, development or education.

Governments must set a minimum age for children to work and ensure that work conditions are safe and appropriate.

Article 6

Every child has the right to life.

Governments must do all they can to ensure that children survive and develop to their full potential.

Priorities and actions in the Children's Services Plan link with priorities and actions in the Tackling Poverty Strategy and LCPAR. Examples of partnership work linking with the Tackling Poverty Strategy:

- Promotion of free transport for young people through the Young Scot, National Entitlement Card.
- Supporting the Tackling Poverty team on 'The Three Questions' to engage those in school, those not in school and seldom heard voices in conversations around poverty.
- Supporting the delivery of Financial Education Package in schools and community settings.
- Launch of Cash First Project supported by funding from Scottish Government to focus on food poverty and insecurity. There is additional funding from NLC to include fuel poverty in this project.
- Whole Family Support task group are focused on reducing the cost of living.
- Through co-production with children, young people and families, there has been support to all partners and services to "*poverty proof*" community based activities to maximise attendance, participation and outcomes.

The Children's Services Partnership has six task groups to take forward the priorities of the Plan:

- **Voice (includes UNCRC)** We listen and respond to the needs and views of children, young people, parents and families and include them in plans and decisions that impact on their lives. Representatives on the task group have a role in the broad range of engagement and participation responsibilities and activities across the partnership. The group has an overview, makes connections, co-ordinates and supports engagement and participation.
- **Whole Family Support** The aim of this group is to drive forward multiagency activity to achieve the ambitions of the foundation of Family In The Promise and ensure that children, young people receive support that is relational and trauma-informed at the time they need it. There is a focus on the Whole Family Wellbeing Fund programme of work to support the transformation of the system of support to children, young people and their families.
- **The Promise and Me Partnership** This group lead on delivering the ambitions of The Promise foundation of Care. They have oversight of corporate parenting and develop and publish the corporate parenting strategy and plan, Corporate Parenting in North Lanarkshire, Families and Professionals Together 2023-2026.
- **Mental Health Wellbeing and Resilience** The key role of this task group is to promote the mental health, wellbeing and resilience of children

and young people in North Lanarkshire. There is a focus on a partnership approach to implement the Children and Young People Mental Health and Wellbeing Support and Services Framework and deploy the associated resources.

- **GIRFEC Delivery Group** This group is promoting a shared understanding of Getting It Right for Every Child (GIRFEC), embedding the National Practice Model and associated GIRFEC practice materials and guidance. It supports the development and delivery of GIRFEC within the Partnership, driving forward good practice in meeting the needs of families, children and young people so that they get the right help at the right time.
- **Continuous Improvement Group** The Continuous Improvement Group is a sub-group of both the Child Protection Committee and the Improving Children's Services Group, this provides the platform for taking forward areas of improvement across the partnership whether directly relating to the safeguarding of children and young people or wider children's services improvement.

Each of the subgroups consider how the actions impact on poverty as part of our Children's Services Partnership Planning and each subgroup will address poverty with actions to be delivered by them identified within the Local Child Poverty Action Report Action Plan.

The Drivers of Tackling Poverty

Increase Income via Employment

The Plan for North Lanarkshire has Brighter Futures as one of the 7 priorities within the Plan of Work with the aim to “Support and improve educational attainment, employment opportunities, entrepreneurship, and volunteering”.

The economy has not fully recovered since the pandemic, and North Lanarkshire like most authorities in Scotland are experiencing higher levels of economic inactivity, despite the 2.5% increase in the number of adults aged 16 – 64 employed from the previous year, North Lanarkshire still sits below the Scottish average of 74.7% at 70.5%. In relation to the number of adults unemployed, North Lanarkshire is sitting slightly lower at 3.2% than the national average of 3.5%, this is reflected with a decrease of 100 people claiming

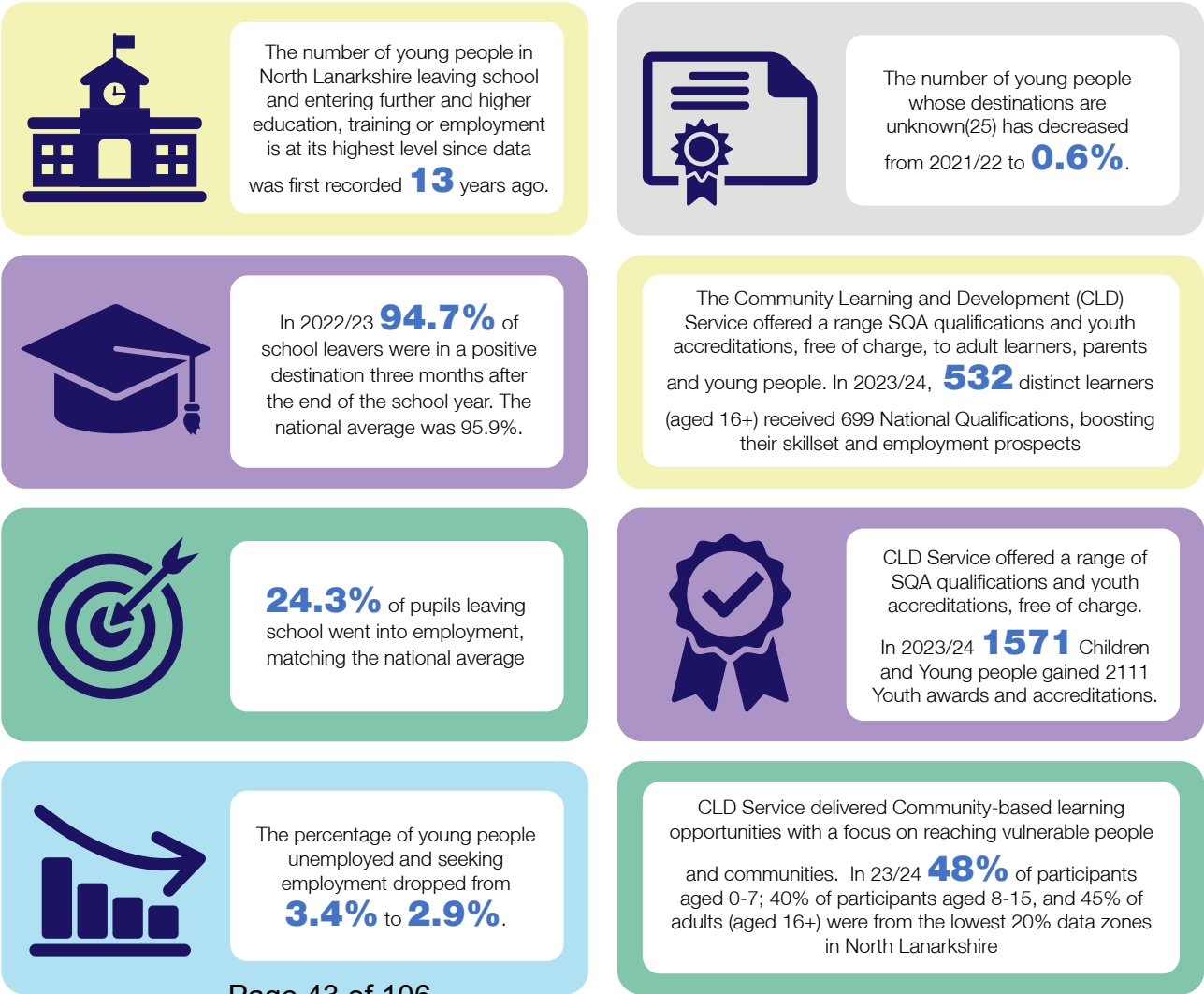
unemployment related benefits from March 23 to March 24.

People are classed as economically inactive if they are not in employment but don't meet the criteria for being unemployed, examples of this are people who have retired, are looking after family or disabled. In North Lanarkshire 27.6% were economically inactive in December 23, this figure again is higher than the Scottish average of 22.5% of people.

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The Brighter Futures programme of work in North Lanarkshire is developing a dynamic landscape in North Lanarkshire with many new and innovative initiatives underway. From Developing the Young Workforce Delivery Plan to the new Working for Families program of employability provision, the journey to employment starts early for young people still in school and targets provision at priority groups and those facing barriers to employment, ensuring the “no one left behind” approach is always taken.



Developing the Young Workforce Taskforce

Developing the Young Workforce Delivery plan brings three offerings to young people within Schools; Universal Guarantee for all children and young people from Early Level through to the Senior Phase, the Additional Offer allowing targeted groups of young people to experience a wide range of opportunities and work-related learning experiences and qualifications to best meet their needs and prepare them to succeed in life beyond school, and The Intensive Offer ensuring all young people have access to a rich curriculum where there is excellence and equity leading to positive outcomes for every child and young person, leaving no one behind. (appendix two)

Improving initial and sustained school leaver destinations remains an improvement priority within North Lanarkshire. For young people with multiple and complex barriers to learning, there is a risk that a negative post school destination could lead to long term unemployment and the associated consequences linked to poverty, poor health and wellbeing. North Lanarkshire Council has given all schools in the local authority a stretch aim of increasing positive destination rates.

A task force of multi-agency stakeholders including NLC Education Managers, NLC Secondary Schools, Skills Development Scotland, NLC Pathways/DYW, NLC Employability Support, NLC Social Work, NLC Virtual Schools, Routes to Work, Developing the Young Workforce (DYW) Regional Group, has been established to deliver the primary objective of driving improvement in positive, sustainable post school destinations for every young person, leaving no-one behind.

The task force will work with schools to provide targeted support for identified young people including home visits to offer support and guidance, career events and information sessions, access to wellbeing coaches, personal development and employability sessions, signposting to appropriate services and other bespoke activities to meet the needs of every young person, leaving no-one behind.



North Lanarkshire Summer Placement Programme

Over 100 young people from across North Lanarkshire will be earning money and gaining vital work experience during their school summer holidays, introducing our young people to employment and potential future careers with the Local Authority and its Partners.

127 students from local high schools, priority groups and New College Lanarkshire have been employed during the school summer break across a range of employment sectors.

The student placements are part of the councils' One Workforce Plan and Brighter Futures Programme and stem from a highly successful pilot last year that involved 23 high school pupils. 21 of the 23 pupils who took part last year secured a sessional contract with the council, one gained employment as a home support scheduler and the final young person accepted a Housing Modern Apprenticeship.

This year the 127 students have participated in various work placements with 19 local businesses, North Lanarkshire Council and NHS Lanarkshire. The students were matched to work in the following roles:

- Clerical Assistant
- Clerical Assistant NHS
- Customer Services Assistant
- Home Support Worker
- Locality Support Worker
- Integrated Day Services Worker
- Store Assistant Operative
- Joint Equipment Store
- Home Support Scheduler Assistant
- Summer Student Construction
- Assistant Sports Coach
- Early Years Support Worker

The placements are offered to students from across local secondary schools and colleges with individuals completing application forms and undertaking interviews. The students who are offered placements will be matched with various council, built environment sector and health and social care services providing them with real-life experiences and inspiring them about the diverse career opportunities within these fields.

A celebration event was held on 9th August 2024, bringing all the young people together to recognise the achievements and contributions of the participating students as they prepare to return to school or further education.

"The programme has proven to be an outstanding success and one we aim to build upon in the future. It was wonderful to welcome such a talented and enthusiastic group of young people into the workplace last year, and we were keen to get started with a much larger group this summer. Investing in our next generation workforce is a key priority for the council and is crucial to building a strong, vibrant working population to support North Lanarkshire's growing economy. We believe in fostering a positive introduction to the world of work, teaching essential skills and encouraging teamwork. These skills will help bolster their job applications, university or college admissions and provide possible career pathways. With the students being paid for their endeavours, they can also look forward to spending their earnings on things they enjoy such as driving lessons, holidays or socialising with friends. This all helps provide them with a greater feeling of independence and gaining an appreciation for the world of work. Our team will be on hand to give them all help and assistance they need to succeed during their placements."

**Fiona Whittaker – Chief Officer
People & Organisational Development**

Working For Families

The Working For Families employability initiative is part of a broader approach in providing support to Families. Taking a holistic key worker approach, parents are supported to upskill and/or re-train, increasing family income, lifting themselves and their families out of poverty.

Working For Families will provide personalised support for parents who face barriers to progressing their careers, including help to gain qualifications, improving skills or work experience, money advice, and motivational support. Working For Families is open to all parents but focusses on the priority families; lone parents, families with a disabled adult or child, young parents aged 25 years or younger, minority ethnic families, families with 3 or more children and families with a child under 1 year.

"Working for Families" in North Lanarkshire has been clearly branded with its own website and marketing to reach those parents who are furthest from the labour market and have significant barriers. Routes to Work have a dedicated Working For Families team to support all parents, as well as operating a place-based approach, targeting areas of high deprivation, with the team based in local venues for six months allowing them to deliver intensive, holistic support at those furthest from work.

A programme of employability projects has been commissioned through a range of 12 diverse third sector providers to engage with parents in the heart of our communities. One Parent Families Scotland (OPFS) is just one of these providers who have two projects – Transforming Lives and Parent Connections.



One Parent Families Scotland - Cheryl

Cheryl is a young single parent aged 23 years with a daughter at 3 years, she in receipt of Universal Credit and due to family circumstances within the home, her living situation had become unsustainable and she went into homeless accommodation. Cheryl was referred to OPFS by her health visitor for support and was allocated a Family Support Worker.

Cheryl was encouraged to take part in the OPFS Best Beginnings Parenting Programme, and as a result was able to access the support of a partner organisation to address her mental health and undertake counselling sessions to address her stress and anxiety and develop appropriate coping strategies. This gave Cheryl the motivation to progress onto the 10 week Transforming Lives Employability Programme funded by Working For Families.

Following the Programme Cheryl worked with her Employability Advisor (EA) to identify areas of potential employment, apply for jobs and prepare for interviews. Cheryl successfully secured a position as a carer working 14 hours per week at a rate of £13 per hour.

While employed, OPFS maintained regular contact, ensuring Cheryl felt supported in sustaining her job. Cheryl expressed an interest in exploring an online learning opportunity. With the support of her Employability Advisor, she successfully applied for and gained access to the course.

Cheryl has successfully sustained her employment and completed her online learning course.

As a result of Cheryl 's employment and changes to her benefits, the household income increased by over **£540** each month.



"I have never had help and support before, like what I have had with One Parent Families Scotland. When I first contacted you, it was because I was totally lost and in such a desperate situation. Now I am so happy! without you (OPFS), I would not be where I am now.

I cannot thank you enough. you have changed and made my life so much better! Thank you!"

Supported Enterprise

"No Limits", now in its 4th year and funded by Scottish Government No One Left Behind offers young school leavers with Additional Support Needs training and employability support. In addition to their work placement, young people also meet regularly with Supported Employment Job Coaches for tailored employability inputs together with other fun activities such as Hill Walking to develop their independence and life skills. Placements are with the Council or Local Employers with a view to permanent work opportunities for participants. Placements are for 25 hours per week for 52 weeks and paid at £6.40 per hour

Supported Enterprise - Tony

Scott, a work coach in Supported Employment Team first got to know Tony during his 5th year at Buchanan High School when working towards his Construction Skills Certification Scheme Card (CSCS) and then in 6th Year Tony had a lot of input into creating his own Vocational Profile, building up an in-depth picture of his education, skills, hobbies and interests. During this time Scott was able to source the ideal training placement for Tony as a trainee plumbing assistant with a plumbing contractor. Tony excelled in the job and grasped every opportunity to learn, even volunteering to increase his working week to full 5 days.

When Tony's year of placement came to an end his employer was delighted to offer him a job as a plumber's mate at an increased pay rate of £12 per hour. The longer-term career plan for Tony is to work as a plumber's mate for a further year and then enter the modern apprentice programme with an eventual goal of him achieving his dream of qualifying as a plumber.

Tony is valued by his colleagues and has earned his place in the "Squad". He particularly enjoys Fridays when the Squad goes together to the local Café for a big breakfast! Tony's next goal is to learn to drive which he hopes to do through an intensive driving course.

"work gives me freedom and I can be Independent"

Tony's Income:		
	Income at point of referral (per week)	Income when in employment (per week)
Universal Credit	£67.41	£82.61
Child Disability Payment (aged 16)	£68.10 standard care £26.90 standard mobility	£68.10 £26.90
Wage	N/A	£369.87
TOTAL WEEKLY INCOME	£162.41	£547.48
WEEKLY INCREASE	N/A	£385.07

The Roots Project

The Roots project is an employability programme for care experienced young people. Staff strive to support young people to significantly improve their chances of securing and sustaining employment, leading to increased income and improved outcomes for their health and wellbeing. Provision of placements within North Lanarkshire Council Services or arm's length and external organisations can last up to 12 months. In addition, a bespoke learning and development package enables young people to gain knowledge and skills in readiness for employment whilst ensuring the young person is supported before, during, and after they enter the programme.

Joe's Income:		
	Income at point of referral (per week)	Income when in employment (per week)
Universal Credit	N/A	N/A* currently awaiting decision
Child Disability Payment (aged 16)	£108.55 enhanced care £75.75 enhanced mobility	£108.55 enhanced care £75.75 enhanced mobility
Wage	N/A	£137.90 * 16 hours
TOTAL WEEKLY INCOME	£184.30	£322.20
WEEKLY INCREASE	N/A	£137.90

The Roots Project – Joe

Joe has a mild learning disability which makes following instructions difficult and can lead to frustration. After leaving School aged 16 with a lack of qualifications, experience, and social skills he needed support to find and maintain a job that suited him. Joe struggled with several barriers, including a lack of self-belief and difficulty in communicating with new people and expressing his thoughts and feelings.

Joe wanted to work but the idea of moving into a workplace was overwhelming, causing uncertainty and low confidence. Joe had regular meetings with his Job Coach to build his confidence and get him “job ready”. Joe and his Job Coach reached out to several potential employers, including a local supermarket just a short five-minute walk from home. Meetings with the employer to discuss Joe’s support needs and concerns led to an in-work mentor being assigned to help him understand his role and after meeting his mentor and the rest of the staff Joe felt more at ease. Following several job tasters with his Job Coach, Joe was offered a full time Roots work placement for one with year. Adaptations were agreed and made which helped Joe success in his role, this included a phased start, beginning with two days per week and gradually increasing to five days shifts allowing Joe to establish a routine.

After completing his placement in March 2024, John secured a permanent 16-hour contract with his employer, with his manager stating; “*continuing to do well and push himself to try new things. His attendance and timekeeping have been great, and we are proud to have him as part of our team.*” Although his contract is for 16 hours, Joe regularly works up to 30 hours a week, earning a higher salary and taking on more responsibilities. His Salary lets him buy computer games and go on holiday with his family which he would not otherwise be able to afford.

“I never knew I could push myself so far out of my comfort zone, but I’m glad I have. My Job Coach and mentor have really encouraged me.”

Demonstrator Programme

Anchor organisations are typically large local employers that can have a strong and positive influence on the health and wellbeing of their local communities. Organisations who are able to do this can make a difference to health and wellbeing outcomes and reduce inequalities through their work across five pillars. These pillars include; being an exemplar employer, adopting procurement practices which support and encourage local investment, designing services to better meet the needs of vulnerable populations, and through managing their assets for the good of the community. As an anchor organisation, NHS Lanarkshire is also dedicated to widening access to employment opportunities for local residents. One of our goals is to help remove barriers and support our most vulnerable groups in finding and sustaining good quality, well paid, fulfilling work. An example of this work locally is through the Demonstrator 2 Programme, placing unemployed or low-earning parents into paid work placements for six months, earning just above the living wage.

The programme provides wraparound support, access to vocational training and a paid work placement. Twenty-six individuals started on paid placements in the first cohort, running from September 2022 to March 2023. Placements ran for six months across various sites in a variety of roles and the success was clear to see with 16 out of the 26 moving into positive destinations with many citing that their confidence, wellbeing and financial situations had improved.

Following this success, the NHS Demonstrator 2 Programme was launched in October 2023, this time aimed at helping parents 18+ back into the workplace or encouraging parents already working, to upskill by coming to the NHS, in line with the child poverty action plan aims and NHS Lanarkshire's commitment as an anchor organisation.



39 individuals across Lanarkshire participated in the programme this year, run by NHS Lanarkshire's Employability Hub Team, in collaboration with International Service System (ISS) at University Hospital Hairmyres and with support from local employability partners.

To support the individuals as much as possible, a flexible approach was taken with regards to their working hours to account for factors such as settling back into a routine and childcare responsibilities. There are a variety of job roles, such as admin, domestic, catering, porter and health care support worker, and while on the placement participants undergo on-the-job training and receive support from their onsite supervisors/buddies.

The programme is a great example of the importance of partnership working as individuals were referred via the local employability partnerships. The employability staff from these partnerships provided the individuals with useful information sessions on the recruitment process and vocational training before their start dates.

Supervisors, managers, and buddies help the individuals that are placed in their department, along with the Employability Hub Team, who provide bi-monthly sessions on topics such as goal setting and interviews to help them plan their next steps after the programme.

Nicole, joined the NHS Demonstrator Programme as Clerical Officer, based in University Hospital Monklands.



When asked about the main benefit of the programme, Nicole said:

“For me the main benefits in doing the Demonstrator Programme has been that my confidence has been boosted and I have been able to get myself into a routine with my kids. It has given me the opportunity to get back onto work when I thought it would have been so difficult and even though it has been as bit of a struggle with childcare at times, all of my colleagues and manager have been very supportive from the beginning and throughout the programme.”

When asked about what challenges she had overcome along the way, Nicole said:

“The biggest challenges for me were my confidence and childcare, because I hadn’t worked in a while it had diminished my confidence, but I really wanted to do the Demonstrator Programme as I knew it would allow me to get back my confidence and provide for my family financially. I would be able to get the financial support for my family. I was able to get the support from my family with childcare and this gave me the opportunity to participate.”

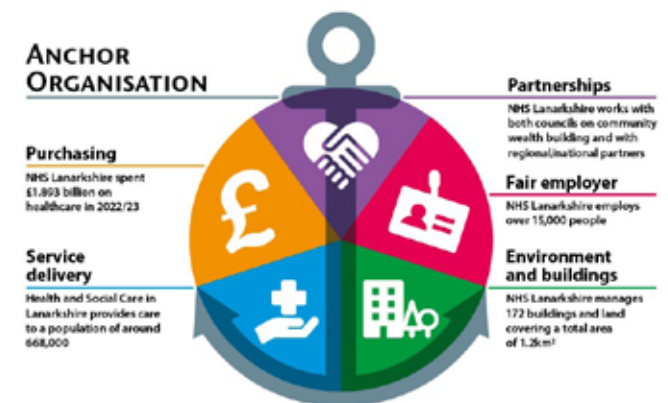
The senior employability advisor from NHS Lanarkshire’s employability hub team, said:

“Seeing this programme run for the second-year running is amazing. We have watched it grow this year and it’s been great to see so many NHS managers on-board, offering their support to these individuals.

The feedback has been positive with 100% of the individuals that completed our survey rating the support they have received from their department as good or very good (4 or 5 out of 5). The true success has been seeing the individuals progress from their first day until now, with the confidence and personal growth being clear to see.

It’s a pleasure to work on this programme along with the local councils, Routes to work and ISS. It shows the power of partnership working as we all have the same goal which is to enhance the life chances of those in our local communities.”

For the individuals completing the programme, the world is their oyster. They can apply for vacancies in NHS Lanarkshire, or they can take their new experience and seek a different opportunity. The programme provides them with valuable skills and knowledge to help them succeed within their careers and improve their quality of life, as well as that of their families.



The HIVE

The HIVE is a new workspace in Airdrie helping North Lanarkshire women get started and grow in business. The centre has been designed to help encourage and support more women realise their dream of being a business owner. The HIVE provides a mix of:

- Desks
- Office / meeting rooms
- Treatment rooms
- Onsite business advice and support
- Events and networking meetings

The space has been designed to be a welcoming space to meet the needs of the female business owners that will emerge within it. There is a quiet space for concentration, open spaces for making conversations and collaboration possible, and treatment space fitted out to allow pop-up beauty and health and wellbeing businesses to operate discreetly.

The HIVE is launching an event designed to help North Lanarkshire women explore childminding as a self-employment option. The event will be a major lever in helping women in North Lanarkshire increase their income via employment, not only for those attending the course to become childminders, but also providing more available childcare for parents who wish to take up employment but face childcare as a barrier.

Future reports will monitor the success of The HIVE for women in the priority groups looking at self-employment as a lever to increase income from employment.



Early Learning and Childcare

Provision of Childcare is one of the main levers available to assist parents to **increase their income via employment**. In North Lanarkshire, quality is at the heart of delivery with a provider neutral approach ensuring flexibility, affordability, and accessibility for families. In line with Scottish Government's *"funding follows the child"* approach, families can select the most appropriate provision to suit their individual needs. This includes local authority nurseries, partner nurseries and childminders with availability for term time or all year-round provision. Parents can search a directory for all providers by name or location.

Child Care Provision in North Lanarkshire		
Local Authority nurseries	Partner nurseries	Childminders
103	41	95

All children aged 3 are entitled to receive up to 1140 hours statutory funded childcare. To allow more flexibility for working parents, consideration can be given to requests for additional hours for children aged 3-5 years, where available, with associated costs.

In addition, some children who are two years old, may meet the criteria for an eligible place if their parents are on a low income and/or receiving one of the qualifying benefits or if a parent or child is/has been care

experienced. 239 two-year-olds currently take up their eligible free childcare place. We do not currently hold data on how many two-year-olds could be entitled to a place but are not taking up this offer. It is known that nationally the take-up rate for eligible two-year-olds was 52% in 2023.

Parents face many barriers to taking up their Childcare offer and we recognise the need to address these barriers by communicating with parents and increase take-up in 2024 to 2025.

The *"Birth - Three Admissions and Interventions Policy"* sets out provision for Children from Birth to 3 years and reflects the principles of GIRFEC. Applications for Childcare places under this provision are made via a Request for Assistance from a supporting agency, and places awarded to families when a professional agency e.g. Social Work has identified that a placement would reduce risk of harm to a child. Children identified as having additional support needs arising from disability or developmental concerns and Children of young parents still attending School themselves may also be awarded a Childcare place.

74 children aged 0-2 receive Childcare support due to their particular circumstances and 120 children aged 2-3 years.

Early Intervention

The Early Learning and Childcare Family Engagement Service works in collaboration with partner services to deliver flexible and responsive family support. Early Learning Staff hold a range of information on family supports available within local communities and staff work hard to break down barriers and allow them to get to know the needs of individual families. Staff can then signpost or request assistance from supporting agencies as required. The majority of our ELC settings and the Family Engagement Service have established close working relationships with services such as the Tackling Poverty Team and support families in accessing appropriate support.

Reduce the Cost of Living

The Institute for Fiscal Studies stated that it is likely that the official statistics measured in the usual way actually understate how badly living standards have deteriorated for the poorest parts of the population, and that evidence suggests that those living on the lowest incomes will be more affected than the wider population.

Priority families face further inequalities meaning the cost-of-living crisis, which has seen food prices rise by around 25% between January 22 and January 24, cut even deeper. For example, lone parent families do not have economies of scale which couple families do.

The increase in living expenses is ongoing and is felt more deeply by families with children, which makes **reducing the cost of living** a priority for families living in poverty.

Debt Advice

NLC Tackling Poverty Team (TPT) received 1992 referrals for Debt Advice from residents in 2023/24, an increase from 1744 the previous year. The total amount of debt dealt with by Tackling Poverty Team was **£6,418,776**. Citizens Advice Bureaux (CABx) across North Lanarkshire dealt with 3846 Debt advice enquiries over the same period.

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Both NLC TPT and CABx anticipate an increase in referrals due to the lifting of the evictions ban in April 2024 and engagement with Fuel Providers continues to be extremely difficult and time consuming for all advice agencies.

In November 23, NLC Tackling Poverty Team introduced a new recording and management information system. The new system provides better recording and means that we can monitor advice provided to priority groups and specific localities.

Since November, we have been able to identify that lone parents are the second highest demographic group using our debt advice service, after single adults, and represented 15% of all enquiries to the service. 119 lone parents presented with nearly £222,000 of debt, with low-income being the main reason for presentation.

Research has shown that debt has a detrimental effect on the wellbeing of both adults and children within a family, this has been evident in the referrals received by the Tackling Poverty Team with 55% of people presenting to the team since November 23 – May 24, reporting mental health problems. The stress and anxiety experienced by a parent dealing with debt may impact on the wellbeing of children within the family.

Affordable Credit

We often talk about the “*poverty premium*” that people living on low incomes have to incur, the highest premium for people is the price they pay for credit, with limited access to affordable creditors, people living in poverty are often pushed toward high interest lenders. The Affordable Credit Group in North Lanarkshire chaired by the Tackling Poverty Team, wanted to address this by raising awareness and widening access to affordable credit.

The Affordable Credit Group has members from the local authority services including, tackling poverty team, multiply project and housing services, together with representation from NHS Lanarkshire, Citizens Advice Bureaux, Scottish Illegal Money Lending Unit, Credit Unions, ACS (local business) and Housing Associations.

Affordable Credit is a key part of the financial education programme in North Lanarkshire, with the Multiply Project delivering sessions throughout North Lanarkshire to a wide variety of groups to ensure that people living in the priority groups have access to these. The sessions cover a wide variety of topics to assist people living on low incomes to budget appropriately. A common theme in the groups is “*when money is tight, how do you plan for the*

unexpected”. Credit Unions play a key role in delivering savings and affordable credit to our communities, and it was important that they became a key member of the Affordable Credit Group.

The Affordable Credit Group tasked themselves with encouraging staff and employers to use payroll deductions to credit unions, this gives the person choice and control over the amount they would want deducted from their salary, there is the added advantage, that when people save or repay a loan through their salary, they don’t have to worry about forgetting or overspending.

Together with the Multiply Project, credit unions have delivered information sessions throughout the year, with NLC Modern Apprentices, Mears Group PLC, ACS clothing and participants in the Summer Placement Programme all learning the value of them in both saving and lending with a credit union.

ACS Clothing is a local business specialising in rental fulfilment and clothing renewal, employing parents, people with disabilities and are part of a programme where prisoners will work with them during sentence with a job awaiting them on release. ACS approached the Council as they were interested to provide financial education to their employees.

Following the work carried out within ACS with the employees, the Managing Director discussed that after the success they had seen through these programmes, they wanted to engage with other small-medium enterprises in our local communities. In partnership with the Affordable Credit Group and North Lanarkshire's Business Enterprise, ACS volunteered to host a "*Business Breakfast*" on 25th June 2024, inviting local employers to attend the event with a theme of Affordable Credit.

Seven local businesses attended and heard presentations from Joseph Rowntree Foundation, Poverty Alliance, The Scottish League of Credit Unions and Lazy Day Foods, a local company discussing the benefits of joining a credit union for their workforce. ACS spoke to the businesses about the benefits of the Multiply Project and the payroll deductions for their workforce.

Following the event, companies have approached the Multiply Project to deliver sessions to their employees, and a local credit union Newarthill, are engaging with local employers around payroll deductions.

The council has launched an affordable credit page both on its intranet to ensure all employees have access to information around credit unions, as well as a web page for all North Lanarkshire residents to find information on local services. Following the Business Breakfast the Affordable Credit Group are working with the Scottish League of Credit Unions and the Association of British Credit Unions Limited (Scotland) to compile a directory of credit unions (local and national) and what financial services they can provide. This will allow local employers to make informed decisions around payroll deductions based on what each can deliver e.g. Mortgage provider, Christmas savings plan etc.



Free Travel for Under 22s

Free Travel is a lifeline for Young People in North Lanarkshire, enabling equality of access to learning, leisure and work opportunities. Take up rates continue to improve through the work of Local Networks.

The Community Learning and Development team together with schools, Skills Development Scotland, social work and employability providers all promote take-up with families and young people. Every parent/ carer of a child receives a text detailing the application process and the assistance available. Outreach in schools and community events target the hardest to reach young people including refugees and minority ethnic children and young people. Publicity materials including Tik Toks targeted at young people themselves and videos for parents have seen take up rates peak at 75% with 56,387 cards issued in total.

An awareness raising campaign targeting the new Primary One intake and the current S3 and S4 who seem to have a lower uptake of cards is planned in August 2024.



93% of 11-21 year olds in North Lanarkshire now have a free bus pass

"If we're going on daytime activities, I don't need that extra money for travel – gives me more money for food, more money for bigger activities we can go to, we don't just have to go to the park that's free, we can go all over North Lanarkshire, South Lanarkshire, we can go everywhere. That saves me a fortune, I can just google somewhere, £4 for me on the bus, we take a packed lunch and go!Other families should go for it.....go to your local school, the school will help you fill in the forms"

Laura, parent of 5, Wishaw

Free Bus Travel Card uptake stats 31/3/24

Age Group	No. of cards	Population	% of uptake by age range
Junior age (ages 5-10)	13427	23606	57%
Secondary (ages 11-18)	28290	32816	86%
All age ranges (ages 5-22)	48579	67737	72%

*Note: National average uptake is 73%

Helping People to Quit Your Way

Smoking is expensive and prices will continue to rise. Smoking 20 cigarettes a day will cost around £5,000 a year. This is based on the average cost of over £14 for a pack of 20 cigarettes, the effects on often already strained family finances are severe.

Smoking rates are highest in the most deprived areas, highlighting an ongoing health inequality challenge. 42% of all households in Scotland containing people who smoke live in relative poverty. Smoking is more prevalent in areas of high deprivation with as much as 24% of adults in the most deprived areas smoking compared to only 5% in the least deprived areas. Research also shows that children in deprived areas are significantly more likely to become lifelong smokers. Tackling the issue of smoking and inequality should be a shared approach and messaging must be framed positively with emphasis on support available.

The Quit Your Way service targets pregnant women in the most deprived communities, embedding smoking support as early as possible in a woman's pregnancy

journey. Over the last year, 17 newly qualified midwives received smoking in pregnancy training, 81 student midwives also received training and 70 NHSL staff have completed a brief online training course on Smoking in Pregnancy.

Pregnant women and families are routinely offered a referral to partner agencies to maximise their income.

The scale of the challenge remains however, with 12.7% of pregnant women in North Lanarkshire smoking at their 12 week booking stage (January 2023 – December 2023). 11% of pregnant women in Scotland are smoking at the 12 week booking stage therefore North Lanarkshire is performing below the Scottish average.

Moving Forward Increased capacity will be available in 2024/25 to support pregnant women and partners in Quit Your Way pregnancy specialist service. Training will continue to partners/organisations working with pregnant women and families. Referral pathways with advice and income maximisation services will be further developed, recognising the links between smoking, health inequalities and poverty.

QUIT YOUR WAY
with our support



Quit Your Way - Emma

Emma wanted to stop smoking as together with her partner she was expecting her first baby. At her midwifery booking appointment Emma was informed about the free 'quit your way' service and this gave her the motivation to attempt to quit and so asked to be referred. Emma had attempted to quit previously however stresses in life such as her partner losing his job made this too challenging without help.

Combination therapy of nicotine patches and gum were the best option for Emma and weekly support was provided by telephone due to Emma's work commitments which meant she did not have to travel to see her nurse advisor. Emma advised her nurse advisor that she particularly enjoyed colouring books and so used this as a distraction technique when cravings occurred.

Emma stopped smoking and is now 8 months smoke-free. She has a baby daughter and is proud that her daughter now has a smoke-free home. Emma believes that she could not have managed on her own and the support from the service along with the nicotine replacement therapy made such a difference to her quit attempt. **The Family's financial position has improved massively due to the savings made and they are able to purchase items for the baby that should she still be smoking, would not be possible.**

"Using support from quit your way and nicotine replacement therapy made stopping smoking a reality and my baby now has a smoke-free home, which I am very proud of"



The Drivers of Tackling Poverty

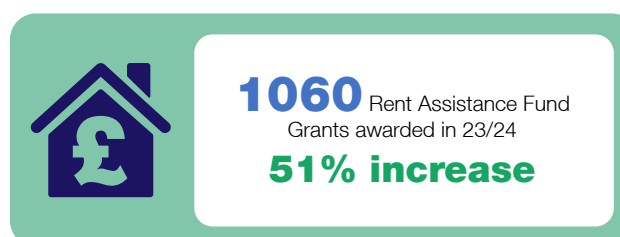
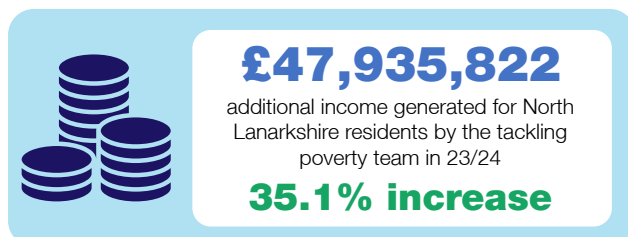
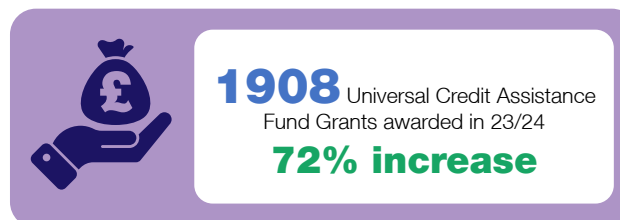
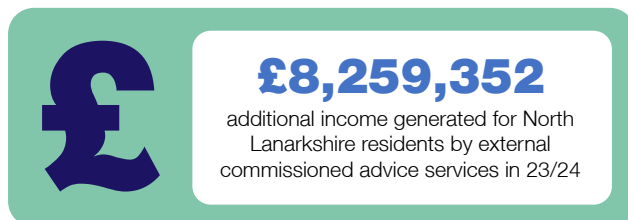
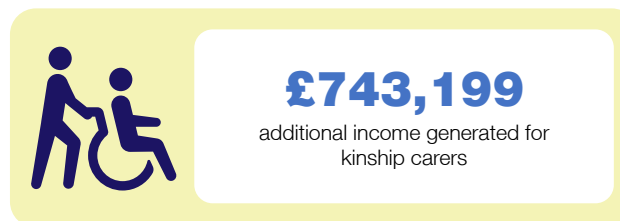
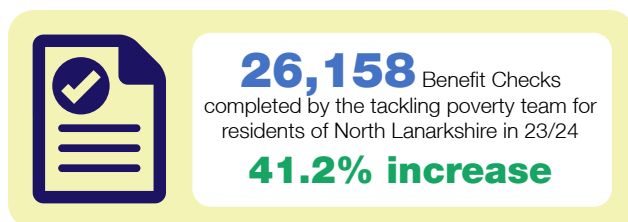
Making a Difference – It Starts with a Benefit Check

Increasing income via social security benefits is a key driver in tackling poverty and inequality in our communities. The demand on the Council and external commissioned services in 2023/24 has been unprecedented, with the internal service seeing a 41.2% increase in referrals to the service.

The Team carried out **26,158 benefit checks** for residents across North Lanarkshire, resulting in social security benefit increases of **£47,935,822** in 2023/24.

“Just a few words to say a huge thank you for all your hard work.....it is greatly appreciated, and it will make a massive difference in our lives” (service user – tackling poverty team)





All roads lead to the Tackling Poverty Team

The Tackling Poverty Team have been delivering Poverty Awareness Sessions to internal and external services to not only raise awareness of the impacts of poverty, but, more importantly, to give them the referral pathways to help answer their concerns, such as those posed below.

“I am working with a family who I think might need some additional help.....”

“I think my patient should be entitled to some benefits to help them.....”

“Do I need to fill in a referral form....”

Listening to those agencies referring to us, and to the people who use our service, the Tackling Poverty Team simplified the referral process into the team. We recognised that cumbersome or lengthy referral forms can be a barrier for some services to refer in, but, more importantly, the people who use the service told us that they didn't like having to repeat their story to different people. The outcome of this was that all a service has to do is send the team an email with the basic details; name, address, date of birth and contact number, and the team will do the rest. People can also self-refer into the Team, using a multi-channel approach; phone, email, online form. The First Point of Contact Team will call the person within 3-5 days of receiving the referral (same day call back if urgent food/fuel issues).



Self Referral

Recognising the impact the cost-of-living crisis was having in our communities, the Integrated Joint Board provided additional funding to the Tackling Poverty Team to ensure that we had additional staff to deal with the demand on the service. Promotional work has been done via social media and press releases, to ensure that the public are aware of key changes in the benefit system and where they can go to for help. Universal Credit migration has been a key issue for people, with some people going to be worse off, some better off and some with no change to their income at all, the key message that has been delivered is to seek help as early as possible and the Team will support you through this.

That is what Lana did, she had heard about migration but didn't know what it meant for her and her family:

Self Referral Case Study

Lana lives with her adult daughter and young son both of whom have disabilities. Lana was on income support and contacted the Service as she had heard about migration to Universal Credit (UC) and was worried about this.

The Welfare Rights Officer (WRO) carried out a benefit check and looked at the impact Universal Credit would have on Lana, noting that with the severe disability premium transitional protection that would be afforded to her, Lana would be better to claim UC prior to managed migration. The WRO identified that Lana's youngest son was not in receipt of Child Disability Payment.

With an annual increase of **£5291** in Child Disability Payment and an annual financial gain of **£9500** from Universal Credit, this will be a massive help to the family.

The WRO did point out to the family that they will have the challenge of the 5 week wait for UC, this would be mitigated by the 2 week run on of income support and housing benefit, Lana will still be liable for 3 weeks rent and loss of income replacement for 3 weeks. Lana was happy to migrate over as the additional income would ***"make such a difference to her family."***

Education

The Tackling Poverty Team has been doing a lot of work in our schools not only with the children and young people through the previously reported “*Three Questions Programme*”, but also with the school staff taking in part in Poverty Awareness Sessions, that not only shape their Poverty Proofing Schools document, but also, promote the referral pathway to the Team.

Following on from the sessions the Team have been invited along to enrolment days for new school starts, as well as parents’ evenings and other events in the schools. The valuable work for children and families the team do was recognised by Additional Support Needs schools, who came together using Pupil Equity Funding to fund a Welfare Rights Officer dedicated to their schools. This is an exciting addition to the Team and will commence at the start of the new school year in August 2024.

Education Referral Case Study

The school sent an email to the Tackling Poverty Team referring Katie and her parents. Katie who has a learning difficulty was due to leave school, both Katie’s parents (Colin & Brenda) have a disability and they were concerned about what would happen to the family income if Katie were to leave school.

Colin and Brenda had a younger son who was still in school.

The welfare rights officer (WRO) met with Colin and Brenda and completed a benefit check, the WRO identified a shortfall in the couple’s income, a premium had been missing from their Employment & Support Allowance and had been for 6 years. The WRO had asked about disability benefits for Katie, but the family had never claimed this.

Child Disability Payment was claimed and awarded for Katie, and the missing premium pursued by the WRO. The WRO pursued the missing premium as a DWP error, and the family were awarded a backdate of **£30,672**. Katie’s child disability payment and the additional premium now added to the parent’s benefit amounted to a weekly benefit increase of **£209.07**.

Colin and Brenda stated; “*we want to thank the welfare rights officer for sorting out our benefits, we didn’t know that there was a shortfall. This resulted in a nice backdate that we got just before Christmas, this and the extra money has made a big difference to us. Its good to see North Lanarkshire are recognising a need for this vital service.*”

Social Work

Recognising that our social work teams work with some of the most vulnerable people in our communities, the tackling poverty team works closely with social work colleagues, with some staff co-located in the social work offices to ensure support and advice is on hand.

Simplifying the referral route for social workers has made significant improvements in the work we are doing with **9639 benefit checks carried out** by the team last year, generating a total of **£5,062,066** in additional income for those children, families and adults referred to the team by social work.

A direct referral route was set up for Kinship Carers, with every application for kinship care being sent to the Tackling Poverty Team for income maximisation, this has resulted in **£743,199 additional benefit income being generated for our kinship care children.**

Social Work Referral Case Study

Nadia was referred to the Tackling Poverty Team via Social Work. Nadia is a Syrian national with settled status, she has 3 dependent children. Nadia had child benefit for her oldest daughter, but not for her twins who had been born prematurely the year before. Nadia was in receipt of Employment & Support Allowance, Child Benefit and Child Tax Credit totalling £224.15 per week.

Nadia is married to Amun, an Egyptian national with no recourse to public funds.

The Welfare Rights Officer assisted with claims for;

- Child benefit for the twins
- Best Start Grant
- Best Start Food Payments
- Scottish Child Payment for 3 children
- New Universal Credit claim as a single person with 3 dependent children (LCWRA already accepted via ESA)
- New claim for council tax reduction
- 2 claims for Child Disability Payment (enhanced rate daily living awarded for both babies)

- Adult Disability Payment for Mona (enhanced rate daily living and enhanced rate mobility awarded)
- Community Care application made for moving home
- Crisis Grant application

The weekly increase to the family income is **£1132.32**, due to the lengthy delays with processing claims, **a backdate of £19,441.72** was awarded.

Nadia stated: *"financial matters were very bad, so when we asked for help, she was the best helper we could get.... Our situation was bad and she was giving everything she had to help. She waited for hours for the calls to make a better life for me and my children."*

NHS Lanarkshire

The inequalities of poverty can increase the chances of children experiencing adversity in childhood, impacting negatively on health and wellbeing, attainment and life chances. Poverty contributes to poor health and inequalities and requires NHS Lanarkshire to work collaboratively with community partners to provide support which focuses on prevention and early intervention to break the cycle of poor outcomes for children and families.

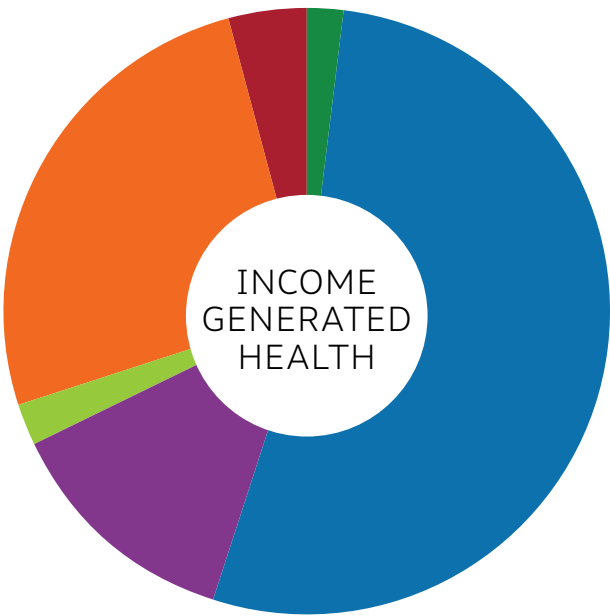
NHS Lanarkshire provide funding to the Tackling Poverty Team, Citizen Advice Bureaux and Royal Hospital for Sick Children. The Improvement Service provide funding for the Wealth & Health Project which has a welfare rights officer based in 4 GP practices across North Lanarkshire. As a result, Health Partners have a number of referral routes to information and advice services:

- General referral route is set up for health visitors and district nurses
- GP Link Worker Programme
- Wealth & Health Project (funded by The Improvement Service)
- MacMillan Services
- Royal Hospital for Sick Children *

The Partnership between Health and the Tackling Poverty Team has resulted in over 2350 patients receiving a benefit check in 2023/24, with £6,550,056 in additional benefit income being generated.

Team	Total income
MacMillan	£3,542,782
Health General	£872,366
Health Visitor Referrals	£144,251
Health and Wealth Project	£1,738,154
GP Link Workers	£252,504
Royal Hospital for Sick Children	£101,725
Total	£6,651,782.00

*The Royal Hospital for Sick Children have a team providing welfare rights support for children from Glasgow, North and South Lanarkshire and surrounding areas. Twenty-one children and their families from North Lanarkshire were helped by this team; 14 were provided support in respect of debt and money advice. In addition, 96 claims for social security benefits were made with £101,725 being generated in additional income for children and families using the Service.



- 2%** Royal Hospital for Sick Children
- 2%** Health Visitor Referrals
- 53%** MacMillan
- 26%** Health and Wealth Project
- 13%** Health General
- 4%** GP Link Worker

NHS Lanarkshire also promote the Scottish Government's Young Patient Family Fund (YPFF) to help with the costs of visiting and providing essential care that supports the health and wellbeing of their child whilst in hospital.

The fund works to remove some of the financial barriers for families visiting a baby, child or young person in hospital. Parents and siblings can reclaim expenses for travel, food and overnight accommodation costs associated with visiting a child under 18 years old.

To encourage uptake of the fund, NHS Lanarkshire staff have made information available through social media platforms and within staff newsletters and briefings, to ensure staff on site are aware of the fund and how to help families access it.

In 2023/24 NHS Lanarkshire paediatric and neonatal units received funding, which meant 20 families from North Lanarkshire were able to make claims via the paediatric unit alone and were reimbursed a total of £5,319. Additional monies were provided to support families via the neonatal unit.

NHS Lanarkshire and the Tackling Poverty Team have identified that further work needs to be done with the Health Visitors and District Nurses in terms of refresher training or training for new staff and teams. NHS Lanarkshire Health Improvement staff are delivering sessions centred around the *"Worrying About Money?"* leaflet, working with a range of staff and volunteers in clinical and community roles, to introduce conversations around money and signposting to appropriate support. In 2023/24, 8 sessions were delivered to 146 participants and collated figures from pre- and post-session evaluation showed an overall increase in confidence in raising the topic of money worries and knowledge of support services available. NHS Lanarkshire and The Tackling Poverty Team will continue to work in partnership and more in-depth training programmes are being worked on for clinical teams and will be delivered throughout 2024/25.



Health Referral Case Study

Melissa and her husband Calum live with their 6-year-old twins. Melissa and Calum have recently had to move back home with her parents as their private landlord increased their rent beyond their affordability.

Melissa is currently off her work and was referred to the Wealth & Health Project by her GP. The Welfare Rights Officer (WRO) assisted Melissa with an Adult Disability Payment (ADP) claim, through discussions it became apparent that Calum would also be able to claim ADP and the WRO assisted with this.

Melissa was awarded Enhanced Rate Care of Adult Disability Payment, she contacted the WRO to ask if she could review the award as she felt that she should have been awarded the mobility component, the WRO advised of the risks involved in reviewing awards. Melissa later advised that she had been made redundant through ill health and was assisted to apply for new style Employment and Support Allowance.

The WRO referred Melissa and her family to a local councillor and housing services to look at their accommodation situation. Melissa and her husband have recently been given a new build council property and are delighted.

“Due to circumstances with my chronic health conditions declining I found myself having to look for financial support within the benefits system. This was very difficult for me as I have always been employed and knew nothing in terms of navigating the system. It was all new and extremely daunting. I had no idea where to start. I spent hours on the phone to various places looking for support and it just wasn’t there. I explained this to the reception staff within my GP surgery who explained to me about Pauline (welfare rights officer) and the role she had and how fantastic she was at supporting people in situations like mine. I then spoke to Pauline over the telephone who gave me a wealth of advice and even provided me with print outs of my health conditions/diagnosis which helped my application for ADP which I have since been awarded. I then had to make a decision to leave my employment. I reached out to Pauline again and she was so helpful, reassuring and again provided me with the information I needed to move forward. I then met with Pauline and she took so much pressure away from me as she helped me to complete medical questionnaires which were so difficult and stressful. As Pauline is based within my practice, she was able to access the medical information/ evidence I needed to complete the forms. She was so efficient and again reassuring which helped put my mind at ease during these difficult processes. Pauline followed up with me numerous times to see how I was and the status of my applications. If it wasn’t for Pauline and her caring and reassuring manner and all of her valuable help over the last year or so I would not be where I am. I can’t stress enough the importance of having these roles in the practices to help people like me navigate the benefits system and to help provide advice and support where there isn’t any.”

The Third Sector

North Lanarkshire Council provide grant funding to third sector advice services, the funding is provided on a 2-year basis, with service from North Lanarkshire Advice Network being invited to bid for the grant funding. The Citizens Advice Bureaux across North Lanarkshire have been the successful applicants in the last round of bidding.

The Citizens Advice Bureaux (CABx) are commissioned to provide Type II welfare rights and Type I debt advice. The CABx completed 5,957 benefit checks and generated **£8,256,352** in additional benefit income for the residents of North Lanarkshire. It is important to note that this information relates only to activity supported through the funding that these services receive from North Lanarkshire.

The CABx are partners of the Tackling Poverty Team and members of North Lanarkshire Advice Network (NLAN) and will jointly deliver information sessions in Monklands Hospital.

NLAN is also responsible for taking forward the Welfare Reform agenda, this is a group that has been relatively dormant following Covid due to the relative inactivity in welfare reform changes. The group will now focus on the managed migration from legacy benefits to universal credit, with social media messages and attendance at events to highlight the need for early support in these cases.

Third Sector Case Study

Katie a 25-year-old single parent with a 3 week old baby, approached her local CAB and advised that she was currently on maternity leave from her part time post, she was currently receiving occupational maternity pay but was struggling to pay for food, nappies and her fuel.

Katie advised that she was not in receipt of any benefits for her child, the CAB advisor identified that she was also entitled to Universal Credit. The advisor assisted Katie to claim Universal Credit, Scottish Child Payment and Child Benefit increasing her annual income by **£10,067**.

The advisor was also able to assist with the immediate need by assisting with a crisis grant application, a shopping cart and fuel voucher.

Cash First

North Lanarkshire has led the way since 2014 in promoting a **Cash First** approach to tackling food poverty and insecurity by ensuring that people do not only have access to crisis grants for the immediate need, but also to information and advice services to ensure sustainable solutions to food crisis, an approach that the Trussell Trust, Independent Food Aid Network (IFAN) and the Scottish Government has now adopted in their publication **Cash First: Towards ending the need for food banks**.

Cash First in North Lanarkshire means that when someone approaches any agency in North Lanarkshire in food crisis, they should be referred to either the Tackling Poverty Team who will carry out a benefit check, complete any claims including the immediate need for the **Crisis Grant** and assist with any budgeting/debt issues or refer directly to Scottish Welfare Fund.

North Lanarkshire's approach has always been **No one is left without food**, whilst dealing with the cause of the crisis, i.e. **"poverty"**.

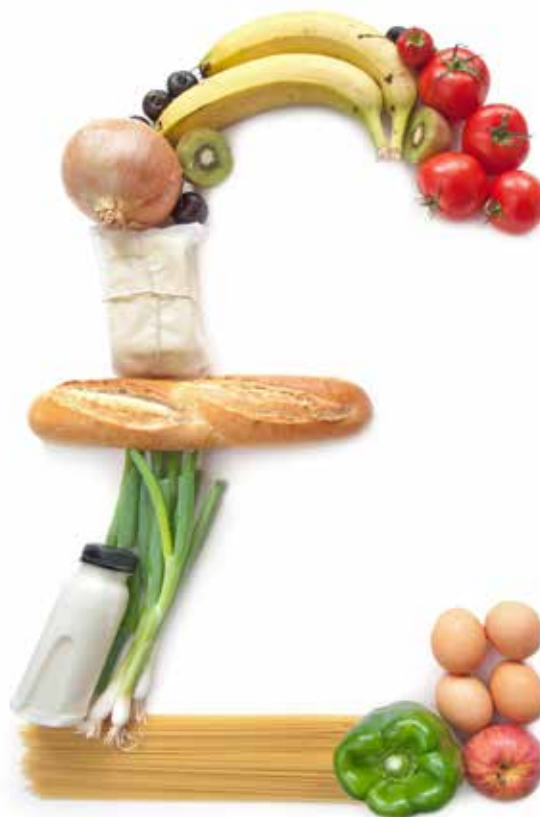
In reviewing our approach, it was apparent that one of the barriers to using this approach was the 48-hour delay in waiting for a crisis grant decision. North Lanarkshire submitted a successful application to the Scottish Government's Cash First Partnership Fund which will provide people and families with an interim payment whilst waiting on the crisis decision, thus eliminating this barrier.

To access the fund people are referred to the Tackling Poverty Team who will carry out a benefit check and assist with the claim for the crisis grant.

While there have been criticisms of this approach, North Lanarkshire's Tackling Poverty Team generated **£1,211,758** in additional benefit for residents presenting in food crisis. Claims for benefits such as; Scottish child payment, child disability payment adult disability payment, council tax reduction etc., thus evidencing that accessing advice services can provide long term solutions to tackling food poverty and insecurity.

The Scottish Government funding will also allow for work to be done with emergency food providers, to allow for more uniform reporting, therefore, allowing us to better measure the impact this approach is having on demand for emergency food providers.

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96% of the people responding to the survey said they were extremely concerned about their situation prior to contacting the Cash First Service, stating:

“my son and I had nothing after my husband passed away this was a lifesaver to us”

“very fast service the person I spoke to was understanding over my call”

“thankful to the service being able to help me during this extremely difficult time”



83% of the people accessing the Cash First Service stated that the service made a difference to them, with 63% stating they no longer had the concerns they had when they first called. With 83% stating they would refer the Service to others.

“Great service for emergency circumstances”

“Great people dealing with helping others through hardship these people were amazing”

Having worked in welfare rights for over 20 years I have witnessed many changes, with various governments introducing different benefits and changing previous ones, our job has always been complex. However, with the roll out of Universal Credit and since 2023 the managed migration to Universal Credit, the complexity has increased considerably. With this is an increasing demand to support the residents and families within North Lanarkshire to navigate an ever-increasing complex system.

*With measures such as the 2-child limit, complexity around Universal Credit as well as other benefit reforms our workload has increased significantly. The impact of being able to support some of the most vulnerable people and families in our area is significant not only in the income generated but also knowing that we are so valued by those that use our service and can **make positive differences in their lives.***

Lynne Whitelaw – Welfare Rights Officer

John Campbell, Business Manager of the Tackling Poverty Team reflected on the demand on his Team: *“I have been involved in welfare rights since 1991 and seen many changes from major benefit changes, to the impacts of austerity on our communities in 2010, through covid, to this cost-of-living crisis. The numbers of people and families who are currently affected and seeking support from my team are unprecedented.*

It is not just about social security, but wellbeing and mental health security, and giving people the chance to take opportunities that are available to them.

*When I see the work my team are doing and **the difference we can make to people**, I am assured that the Joseph Rowntree definition of poverty adopted by North Lanarkshire is the right one.”*

Holistic Supports

In North Lanarkshire we recognise that children living in poverty will face countless challenges whilst growing up, through the work we have done with children and young people they have told us of the challenges they face in education, challenges in housing, the impact on family relationships, even at times facing social exclusion due to the inability to participate in extra-curricular activities or other experiences that their friends can.



Families Here and Now Service (Whole Family Support)

A newly commissioned family support service, developed as a resource to enhance the landscape of early and preventative support for families is now up and running in North Lanarkshire. Recently named the 'Families Here and Now Service', it is delivered by a partnership of providers, led by Barnardo's.

Having commenced in the Wishaw area in April, the service is now expanding to cover other areas of North Lanarkshire, with availability across North Lanarkshire expected by December. This service is aligned with community hubs, offering a variety of individual and group-based support to whole families, with the aim to offer support at the right time and place, in a responsive manner.

In the first quarter, Families Here and Now received 23 referrals, opening 52 cases for children, young people, parents/carers for a wide range of issues. From the referrals received the service has worked with 6 lone parents, and 8 families affected by additional needs. Given the service is in early stages, reporting on impact will be undertaken next reporting period.

The aim of the Families Here and Now Service funded via the Whole Family Wellbeing Fund is to deliver the earliest, accessible help to families.

The Families Here and Now Service will take part in Poverty Awareness Sessions in September 24 and establish a referral route to the Tackling Poverty Team to ensure easy access to income maximisation, money advice and financial education.



Community Learning and Development - Supporting and Empowering Families

Community Learning and Development's (CLD) family learning programs work alongside families with children who have Additional Support Needs (ASN) diagnosis. Empowering parents/carers by providing resources, workshops and activities tailored to their child's needs.

This can be learning together or gaining specific knowledge on supporting their child.

The programmes include:

- Solihull – Understanding Your Child
- Relax Kids
- Sleep Action
- ASN parent support groups
- Mood for Food
- Let's introduce anxiety management (LIAM)
- Family learning – whole family approach

- Transition programmes
- Parenting workshops

The CLD programs are inclusive and link in with various partners including, income maximisations and third sector supports. In 2023/24 the programme supported:

- CLD have supported **106** families with children who have an ASN diagnosis, **59** of the children attend mainstream establishments
- CLD have supported **93** families who have children awaiting and ASN diagnosis through the neuro-developmental pathway, **87** of these children attend mainstream establishments
- CLD have supported **19** parents who have an ASN diagnosis to access health and wellbeing programmes
- Given the service is in early stages, reporting on impact will be undertaken next reporting period.

"The group has been a lifeline for me, as there is not much support available for families with kids who have ASN, but I appreciate the support I get from other parents and CLD staff."

"As a parent of a child with ASN, the Solihull understanding your child has really helped me. I have gained so much from our group; support, guidance, friendship and a sense of community. I feel more confident and feel like I attach less shame and guilt to my parenting. I understand my children more and this makes me a better parent."

Poverty Awareness Sessions

Bespoke Poverty Awareness Sessions are delivered across all our partners. Designed specifically to address each service, be it location, type of services, client group etc, they ensure that all partners recognise their role in tackling child poverty. The Sessions challenge Services to recognise that whilst they may not be involved in the delivery of services that will increase a persons' income or reduce their cost of living, they are dealing with the symptoms of the person/families not having enough money to live on.

Services such as mental health, education, health, social work are all dealing with people where poverty is often a cause of their symptom. The Services are given effective referral routes to the appropriate services allowing us to work together to ensure that people's income is fully maximised, supports to lead them to the job market and where required, financial education / budgeting etc is available to them.

In 23/24 Poverty Awareness Sessions were delivered to around 400 staff from health, education, community learning and development, social work, North Lanarkshire Alcohol & Drug Partnership, One Parent Families Scotland and the North Lanarkshire Disability Forum as well as a session to our Elected Members.

In 24/25 the Tackling Poverty Team would like to work with Community Boards and take the Poverty Awareness Sessions out to our communities, making local communities aware of the services and taking "The Three Questions" to them. The Team will also be basing themselves within the Community Hubs across North Lanarkshire to increase their presence and availability to our residents.

This is an area within the LCPAR Action Plan that will remain ongoing to ensure that effective referral routes are embedded in all our work.



Breastfeeding

Breast milk is widely recognised as the most complete form of nutrition for babies. Former UNICEF Executive Director, James P Grant, stated that *“breastfeeding is a natural ‘safety net’ against the worst effects of poverty.....exclusive breastfeeding goes a long way toward cancelling out the health difference between being born into poverty and being born into affluence....it is almost as if breastfeeding takes the infant out of poverty for those first few months in order to give the child a fairer start in life and compensate for the injustice of the world into which it was born.”*

More babies across North Lanarkshire are now being given the best possible start in life every year as a result of a range of breastfeeding initiatives across the whole system. NHS Lanarkshire maternity unit, together with North and South Health and Social Care partnerships, were delighted to be awarded the *“Baby Friendly Achieving Sustainability Gold award”*. In addition, the neonatal unit was delighted to be awarded their stage 2 award in March 2024 and work is continuing towards stage 3. Information on breastfeeding and associated policy has been embedded into the NHS Lanarkshire corporate induction for all new staff and there are 20 breastfeeding groups running across Lanarkshire, as well as further support offered by Community Learning and Development Community Breastfeeding

Champions. Additionally, this year, a scoping exercise and initial work on local pathways for staff and partners to support families in financial crisis to maximise breastfeeding and/or emergency provision of formula where required, has been carried out by key staff and work will continue into 2024/25. This was in response to a nationally produced infant food insecurity toolkit.

The number of babies breastfed in their first days in North Lanarkshire’s most deprived areas has increased by more than 12% in the last five years, this was recognised in February 2024, when North Lanarkshire Council became Scotland’s first local authority to achieve gold status in the Breastfeeding Friendly Scotland (BFS) Local Authority Award. This sees all departments and areas within the council accredited. This is a systems wide approach to training, policies and procedures and supporting both staff and members of the public to promote, support and protect breastfeeding. Education is included, with 100% of Early learning settings achieving the BFS Early Learning Scheme award and >80% of Primary and Secondary schools achieving the BFS Schools scheme award. This award is recredited every 3 years, so work is ongoing to ensure the standards are maintained and the appropriate governance procedures are in place.

Now in North Lanarkshire, 30.4% of babies are being breastfed by their 6-8 weeks review. This is a 3.8 point increase on the previous year and an 8.8 point increase since 2016/17.

Professor Jann Gardner, Chief Executive, NHS Lanarkshire stated; *“This accreditation for North Lanarkshire Council is well deserved and clearly demonstrates the positive impact of giving our children the best possible start in life.”*

The Council recognises that breastfeeding is one of the biggest levellers of inequity that we naturally have and is committed to cultivating a more welcoming environment to encourage more mums to breastfeed.



North Lanarkshire's Virtual School

The Strengthening Families Summer Programme 2024

North Lanarkshire's vision is for all children and young people to achieve their full potential. The virtual school is a small multi-disciplinary team, delivering an intensive service supporting children and young people who are care experienced.

In North Lanarkshire the virtual school not only offers this support to those who are currently, but also those children and young people who have been previously care experienced.

The priorities of the virtual school are:

- To improve the health and wellbeing of care experienced children and young people
- To improve the educational attainment of care experienced children and young people

The virtual school works in collaboration with young people, their families and a variety of staff including teachers, social workers, support staff and educational psychologists.

The commitment from the Virtual School's Team does not end with the school term, co-ordinated by North Lanarkshire's Virtual School, the Strengthening Families Summer Programme 2024 provided support to **216 local families**.

Referrals made from Social Workers for families under the criteria of Kinship, Looked After at Home or Child Protection allowed support to be provided where most needed, over the school summer holiday period. A variety of activities were offered to keep children entertained and to enhance relationships through having fun together whilst minimising the financial impact on families. Activities including a family cinema treat, swimming passes, swim and skate tickets, a visit to M&D's and a family trip to Five Sisters Zoo in West Lothian were available. The Virtual School's Team ensured that all families could take part by providing funding for all activities including the cost of entry and lunch or snacks per person. Vouchers for kiddie rides were also included for the zoo.

Transport was also provided for families who would struggle to get to the Five Sisters Zoo. Virtual School staff organised six individual day trips in July which included local bus pick up and return. **44 families took up this offer**.

The families and staff involved in The Strengthening Families Summer Programme were enthusiastic about its value to them:

"This allowed our family to spend quality time together without the financial barrier." – carer

"We had amazing days out, we would not have been able to afford to do these." – parent

"The summer activities allowed the families I support to have experiences they may not have been able to afford to do, it gave the opportunity for my families to build memories and enjoy days out together. They had a really positive impact and made the summer holidays less stressful for parents who are struggling financially."

Social Worker



Financial Education

In North Lanarkshire we believe that Financial Education is one of the most important skills that you can develop, regardless of whether you are a child, young person or adult.



Financial Education (children and young people)

In 2023 we reported on the work done in our schools via the Three Questions; ***“how is the cost of living affecting you”, “how is the cost of living affecting others in the community” and “what would you like us to do about it”***. The children and young people identified financial education as a priority for them.

Initial planning for this was to have the Tackling Poverty Team develop and deliver these sessions, however, further work and exploration was done around this. Education wanted to commit to financial education being delivered across all year groups and at all 119 schools, and it quickly became apparent that this would not be possible to do with the limited resources within the tackling poverty team.

Education identified that there was financial education being carried out in some schools, however, this was sporadic, and pupils weren't necessarily recognising the lessons as financial education. It was agreed to ensure a universal approach to financial education is robust and maximises opportunities to embed financial education across the core curriculum for all learner's education leads have also begun auditing existing NLC pathways and programmes to highlight to teachers' core and additional opportunities to teach financial knowledge and skills.

Education have identified a programme delivered by Young Enterprise Scotland which can provide an alternative vehicle to deliver financial education senior phase workshops and also provide other materials available for teacher to access and use in the class.

The Three Questions have been instrumental in schools' considering how they will address the “cost of a school day” and it has been agreed that the Tackling Poverty Team will roll this programme out in all schools throughout the 24/25 school term.



Financial Education – Adults (Sum It Up Project)

The Sum It Up Project delivers financial education to adults in our communities. The sessions are free and open to anyone who wishes to take part.

The programme comprises of different modules covering;

- Budgeting
- How to reduce costs
- Affordable credit
- Savings
- Using online tools
- Payslips
- Preparing for Christmas
- Scam awareness
- Fuel and energy
- Surviving the holidays

The sessions can be adapted to provide bespoke sessions to meet the needs of groups attending.

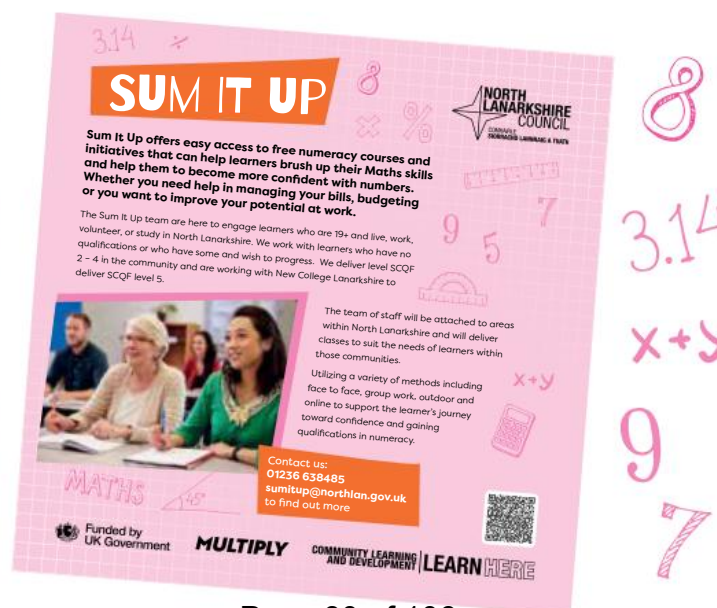
The Sum It Up Project delivered 54 sessions in 2023/24, to 334 people covering 79 topics. Sessions have been delivered to modern apprentices, the young people taking part in the Summer Placement Programme, the Disability Forum, mothers' groups, CAB to Careers. The sessions have been delivered to a number of parents across all the priority groups.

We asked some of the parents who took part in the sessions what difference the course had made to them:

"Everything I learned was great. I can do my money budgeting and plan my shopping"

"I love this group, it has helped me to be better with my money, and the apps provided are brilliant"

"I can now use various shopping apps on my phone for savvy shopping and save on grocery bills. I can budget really well"



Family Nurse Partnership

Family Nurse Partnership (FNP) is an evidence-based programme to support young mums aged 19 and under who are pregnant with their first child. Specially trained NHS Lanarkshire staff first meet women early in pregnancy and work with them quite intensively. Fortnightly visits are often the case, to develop strong, trusting relationships. This unique relationship allows for sensitive conversations about many issues and a safe space to discuss things like financial worries, often caused by the changes in their circumstances. Once a baby arrives, regular visits continue, to follow the programme guidance in terms of visiting pattern and to meet the client's needs. Visits and support with the family continue up until the baby is two years old and then they will transfer into the health visiting pathway after that stage.

Family Nurse Partnership

Rebecca (17) enrolled with the Family Nurse Partnership in early pregnancy. Rebecca has been the kinship care of a relative for several years prior to her pregnancy. At the time, the family disclosed they were experiencing significant financial challenges, struggling to pay for food and other household bills. Rebecca's carer also disclosed that he was unable to read and had shown the nurse a number of unopened letters that he had received. Through this disclosure and with the nurses help it was apparent that the family had not received any kinship care payments, nor additional universal credit premiums to support the children. Following a referral to the Tackling Poverty Team Rebecca's carers income was maximised and they received a large sum of money. This allowed the family to support Rebecca to fully prepare for her baby and feel more financially secure, having a positive impact on their mental and physical health.



"My daughter and I have been with my family nurse Stacey for the last year and a half. From being pregnant to now it has been a rollercoaster, Stacey has been through it all with us and supported me through some of the toughest times in my life, when my daughter was diagnosed with hydrocephalus back in 2022 I was so overwhelmed with emotion and so scared for what was to come, we would have never known if it wasn't for the home visit and regular checkups from Stacey, she went well beyond to support me and my family through such a scary time. Stacey is a credit and has gave me so much courage and strength helping me transform form a pregnant scared teenager into the mother I am today and I will be forever grateful for everything she has done."

Housing

North Lanarkshire Council have an ambitious New Supply Programme, which aims to provide 5000 new affordable homes by 2035. This includes new housing across North Lanarkshire.

The provision of affordable and accessible housing makes an important contribution to tackling child poverty. The council has delivered 1,779 family homes from a total of 2,104 new affordable homes (includes open market purchase scheme / empty homes purchase scheme) since 2010 (up to 31 March 2024). During 2023/24, there were 296 family homes built from a total of 335 homes delivered in this period. Expansions to the OMPS which were made during 2022/23 have further helped to increase supply whilst preventing homelessness and contributing to tackling child poverty in North Lanarkshire.

Since 2010/11 to 31st March 2024, NLC built 104 wheelchair standard homes have been built for families with a disability in the household with 34 of these built during 2023/24. RSLs have built 26 wheelchair standard homes suitable for families since 2010/11.

Additionally, we build new homes with a study space which meets the current Housing for Varying Needs (HFVN) guidance for a household with 3 people. The proposed new HFVN 2025/26 extends this requirement that any new build home must have a study space, regardless of the size or occupancy which is intended to have a positive impact on educational attainment.

All new build developments now have CAT5e cabling installed as standard ensuring the digital infrastructure is in place to support families with a disability.



Reducing Energy Costs

Energy efficiency improvements were made to 1446 council homes with the installation of new heating systems during 2023/24, as well as a range of other energy efficiency measures such as external wall insulation, triple glazed windows and solar panels. During 2023/24, we spent £1.96m Social Housing Net Zero Heat Fund from the Scottish Government on upgrading non-traditionally constructed homes in Wishaw, Motherwell, Newmains, Newarthill and Airdrie. Our new build net zero project at Dykehead Road in Airdrie completed a further 8 low-carbon homes during 2023/24, bringing this to a total of 19 low-carbon homes which are piloting renewable technologies including air source heat pumps. All these energy efficiency measures to our existing homes as well as new build homes intend to reduce energy costs for tenants and help tackle fuel poverty.

North Lanarkshire Energy Advice and Assistance Service is delivered by the Wise Group through their HEAT team (Home Energy Advice Team). The service is provided via home visits with dedicated mentors providing help over the phone to households experiencing an energy crisis. The service works with households to manage fuel debt and related issues,

save money on fuel bills, optimise energy usage as well as access energy grants, crisis funds and targeted schemes and initiatives. The aim is to reduce fuel poverty and ensure that no one has to choose between heating their home and eating.



Tenancy Sustainment

There are 10 income maximiser/sustainability officers within Housing Solutions who work closely with locality teams to improve income maximisation levels for tenants and residents. We use income maximisation as a first step to help manage tenancy sustainment levels. All housing advisors have a remit to maximise income when they have contact with the tenant. In 2023/24 £18,850,629 was generated in additional income by housing staff for tenants of North Lanarkshire properties.

Homelessness

We have embedded a trauma informed approach in homelessness practice with a focus on improving joint assessment and operational processes. This ensures we have a person-centred approach to prevent/reduce homelessness and tenancy sustainment.

We have a Care Experienced Young Person's (CEYP) housing operations group and have developed a robust Care Experienced Young People's Protocol and pathway, in conjunction with the HSCP, to try to prevent homelessness from occurring. Bespoke housing and support solutions are delivered for Care Experienced Young People facing housing crisis and we have established Youth Housing Champions in localities. We provide reception flats and a training flat to help build confidence and independent living skills, improve the overall level of tenancy sustainment, and avoid homelessness wherever possible. During 2024/25, we will be seeking to optimise this model with an additional two reception flats and another training flat.

Barnardo's Family Plus Service funded by North Lanarkshire Alcohol and Drug Partnership supports families experiencing homelessness after being adversely affected by domestic abuse and substance misuse to alleviate trauma. Referrals to this specialist service can be made from Housing, Health and Social Work as well as self-referrals. The Family Plus Service aims to resettle families within their community by providing families with practical and emotional support, assistance with housing needs and finance as well as health needs, advocacy, a whole family approach and building the confidence and resilience of children.

All our homeless temporary accommodation will start to have Wi-Fi installed from 2024/25, which is intended to improve digital inclusion amongst homeless families.



Case Study – Care Experienced Young Persons Operation Group

The Care Experienced Young Persons Operations Group is a network of staff from across a wide range of operational services in North Lanarkshire including Social Work, The Promise Development Staff, Health, Housing, Community Learning & Development, Job Centre Plus, and the third sector such as Barnardo's, Who Cares Scotland and Blue Triangle Housing Association. The group meets to explore the themes and issues that arise for Care Experienced Young Person (CEYP) and raise awareness on how these issues impact on care leavers to identify resolutions. The actions of the group are aligned with the principles and values of UNCRC, GIRFEC, and GIRFE.

In relation to the housing needs of care leavers, the CEYP group seeks to consider the operational challenges and barriers to reduce homelessness and support care leavers establish a stable home. The group ensure income is maximised, and care leavers access their right and entitlements to benefits and financial support, receive support around budgeting and managing bills, including rent and utilities.

The group provide a networking opportunity across the partnership to promote the supports and services available to young people, identify gaps in support and services considering solutions and responses; and importantly, seeks the views of care experienced young people to inform the actions of the group.

The key to the success of the CEYP Operations Group is the collaborative and coordinated approach, which has proved to be more effective in supporting care experienced young people. This approach ensures the most appropriate housing option is identified with support to provide the best possible chances for tenancy sustainment and wider life outcomes.

Housing Services and Social Work Services work closely in partnership to ensure homelessness is prevented for care experienced young people, and that a pathway plan is in place, whereby planning takes place at the earliest stage possible with the young person at the heart of their plan.

As part of the CEYP, an initiative developed includes the establishment of Youth Housing Champions, which has helped to embed a shared culture of improved understanding of the needs, challenges and barriers that young people face in relation to housing and housing related support and crucially, how housing can meet needs within housing teams. Youth Housing Champions have an important role in improving the quality of planning and support for children and young people to improve outcomes across North Lanarkshire.

This CEYP partnership has a unique way of working. It is different from routine/mainstream service delivery as it considers and applies innovative approaches and solutions putting young people at the heart to best meet their needs.

Case Study - Barnardo's

Family B was facing eviction from their previous private let due to rent arrears. After presenting as homeless the family were relocated into a homeless unit out with their own locality and away from their support network. A referral was initially made to **Barnardo's Keys to the Future** to support the family with housing and education needs as the children had poor school attendance. The family consisting of mum, a teenage child and three children under the age of 12 years.

Mum had difficulties with her own mental health and anxiety, which were augmented by the lack of her normal support network and changes in health care after the locality move.

The teenage daughter was managing issues of trauma through substance misuse. The younger children were attempting to cope with not seeing dad, their mum's mental health and their sibling's change in mood and behaviour. The Keys to the Future worker identified that each family member required individual support along with overall family support to allow the family unit to become less fractured.

The family did not settle in the homeless unit and there were concerns about the children not attending school regularly because mum was not managing well, and her own support network would generally help with childcare. The children were travelling to and from to their previous school.

Mum was supported by Barnardo's to contact housing to discuss moving temporary accommodation to allow the family to be closer to their schools and support network.

The family were moved into their permanent home and began the resettlement process. Mum was supported to complete relevant household tasks,

managing the household routine and budgeting as due to mum's own experience she spent a substantial amount of money buying items for her children to show her "love", which significantly impacted her household budget. Barnardo's supported mum to build her own parenting skills and work on healthy ways to show her emotions. The children became more settled in routines, with a much calmer household overall. The children also benefited from intensive one to one support which focused on building their self-esteem overall, reducing worries and identifying individuals to speak to if they need to.

North Lanarkshire Tackling Poverty Conference

“Do the one thing”

North Lanarkshire’s Tackling Poverty Officers Action Group (TPOAG) brings inhouse Services together with our Partners from NHS Lanarkshire and the Third Sector and is the governing body for the Tackling Poverty Strategy which incorporates the Local Child Poverty Action Report.

The TPOAG brought together over 160 delegates from all sectors and services at a conference held on 23rd April 2024.

The conference heard the health perspective on child poverty from Professor Josephine Pravinkumar of NHS Lanarkshire, and were asked What Can We Do? From

Peter Kelly of Poverty Alliance. Hannah McCulloch of the Improvement Service discussed the challenges of tackling poverty. Whilst Peter and Hannah presented the Scotland perspective, Alison Gordon, Chief Social Work Officer, and Des Murray, Chief Executive (NLC), were able to provide a North Lanarkshire perspective.

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Delegates attended workshops based around the four drivers; Income from Employment, Income via Social Security, Reduce the Cost of Living and Holistic Supports, a further workshop on Financial Education was provided.

The Tackling Poverty Team replicated the work of the “Three Questions” carried out in our schools with the delegates at the Conference;

- How is the cost of living affecting you?
- How is the cost of living affecting others in the community?
- What can we do to help?

The delegates answered in much the same way as the children and young people, both in terms of how it was affecting them, recognising the impact on the community and also in what we can do to help.

Following this exercise, Conference were asked to look at the “*what we can do to help*” question again and were asked what was the one thing that their service, be them an internal or external partner.

To ensure the work goes beyond the Conference, the TPOAG will focus on one service at each meeting, asking them to do a presentation on each of their Services’ “*Do the one thing*” commitment. The actions identified will help shape our Action Plan, with the Tackling Poverty Officers Action Group taking

evidence around these, this ensures that Tackling Poverty remains embedded across our Services and will ensure that the steps we take will become part of our normal everyday practice. These commitments are fed through to the Wellbeing and Tackling Poverty Committee.



Achievements and Challenges

North Lanarkshire Council and its partners are committed to tackling poverty and inequality in our communities. There have been some considerable achievements in doing this in 23/24, however, there is still a considerable amount more that can be done. The challenges come in doing so in a backdrop of economic uncertainty. The Cost-of-Living crisis has hit a huge number of families, Joseph Rowntree Foundation reported that in October 2023;

- 47% of the poorest fifth of households were in arrears with their household bills or behind on scheduled lending repayments
- 72% were going without essentials
- 58% reported not having enough money for food

The work done by all the Partners is essential in helping to lift our families out of poverty. Below we list some of the notable achievements in 23/24 and challenges we face in 24 and onwards.

Achievements	Challenges
£56,195,174 in additional benefit income generated by the partners for residents of North Lanarkshire.	Temporary funding and uncertainty around this remains a challenge for all partners.
North Lanarkshire Council had its highest level of new home completions in 23/24 delivering 355 additional affordable council homes, 296 of which were family homes .	Emergency food providers lack of engagement with Cash First Project making it difficult to identify if referrals are going up or down.
A five-year improvement in the number of S4 pupils achieving National 3,4 and 5 awards in 2024 compared to 2019.	Higher than average economic inactivity among the working age population remains a challenge for all partners alongside unfilled vacancies for employers.
Additional Support Needs schools in North Lanarkshire have funded a dedicated welfare rights officer to work with the children and families from their schools.	A key labour market challenge is bringing disabled people and people with long term health issues into the workforce in a manner which allows them to sustain employment.
Education have committed to the role out of the Three Questions Programme across all schools in North Lanarkshire	
All probationary teaching staff and newly qualified social workers will receive poverty awareness sessions as part of their induction.	
Families Here and Now Service has started and is expanding to make holistic family support more accessible and support families to address barriers, including poverty at the earliest stage.	
The Council's No One Left Behind employability programmes supported 850 residents into sustained and fair employment, this number included 85 parents and 92 people with disabilities	

Appendix One

The Articles of the UN Convention on The Rights of The Child

Article 1 – definition of the child	Article 2 – non discrimination	Article 3 – best interests of the child	Article 4 – implementation of the Convention
Article 5 – parental guidance and a child's evolving capacities	Article 6 – life, survival and development	Article 7 – birth registration, name, nationality, care	Article 8 – protection and preservation of identity
Article 9 – separation from parents	Article 10 – family reunification	Article 11 – abduction and non return of children	Article 12 – respect for the views of the child
Article 13 – freedom of expression	Article 14 – freedom of thought, belief and religion	Article 15 – freedom of association	Article 16 – right to privacy
Article 17 – access to information from the media	Article 18 – parental Responsibilities and state assistance	Article 19 – protection from violence, abuse and neglect	Article 20 – children unable to live with their family
Article 21 – adoption	Article 22 – refugee children	Article 23 – children with a disability	Article 24 – health and health services
Article 25 – review of treatment in care	Article 26 – social security	Article 27 – adequate standard of living	Article 28 – right to education
Article 29 – goals of education	Article Thirty – children from minority or indigenous groups	Article 31 – leisure, play and culture	Article 32 – child labour
Article 33 – drug abuse	Article 34 – sexual exploitation	Article 35 – abduction, sale and trafficking	Article 36 – other forms of exploitation
Article 37 – inhumane treatment and detention	Article 38 – war and armed conflicts	Article 39 – recovery from trauma and reintegration	Article 40 – juvenile justice
Article 41 – respect for higher national standards	Article 42 – knowledge of rights	Article 43 – 54 The convention has 54 articles 43-54 are about how adults and governments must work together to make sure all children can enjoy all their rights, including Article 45	Article 45 – UNICEF can provide expert advice and assistance on children's rights

Appendix Two

Developing the Young Workforce Plan

UNIVERSAL GUARANTEE	THE ADDITIONAL OFFER	INTENSIVE OFFER
<p>All children and young people from Early Level through to the Senior Phase of Learning are entitled to:</p>	<p>Allowing targeted groups of young people to experience a wide range of opportunities and work-related learning experiences and qualifications to best meet their needs and prepare them to succeed in life beyond school</p>	<p>Ensuring all young people have access to a rich curriculum where there is excellence and equity leading to positive outcomes for every child and young person, leaving no-one behind</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • a new and simplified career development model • experience a curriculum through which they learn about the world of work, job possibilities, and the strengths and skills needed to take advantage of these opportunities • access to a curriculum which is aligned to the needs of our key growth sectors and meets the skills required by employers • develop skills and habits for learning, life and work as an integral part of their education and be able to articulate how their achievements relate to these opportunities to engage in profiling that supports learning and development of skills for work and future career choices • a learning environment that recognises and promotes diversity and supports them to understand their responsibility to challenge discrimination develop an understanding of the responsibilities and duties placed on employers and employees • develop an understanding of enterprise, entrepreneurship, and self-employment as a career opportunity y know where to find information and access online resources such as My World of Work y develop Career Management Skills as an integral part of their curriculum • further develop Career Management Skills through groupwork and individual sessions with SDS careers advisers 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Vocational, Education and Work-Based Learning – linked to growth employment sectors with predicted skills shortages including Early Education and Childcare, Health and Social Care, Construction and Hospitality • Apprenticeships – Opportunities at every level >> • Wider Achievement – access to recognized qualifications/awards including Prince's Trust Achieve, Duke of Edinburgh, Dynamic Youth • Leadership Academy – Wide range of Council Services will deliver training and support in areas such as sport, dance, drama, enterprise, digital and STEM. This will allow young people to deliver activities to younger children further enhancing their own opportunities • Employability Mentoring – Targeted young people matched with a trained mentor from local business or NLC who will build a supportive relationship, encouraging personal growth, nurture talent and build networks to help lead to a desired positive destination • Digital School – targeted opportunities including coding programme, Smarthub CoBot pilot project in collaboration with New College Lanarkshire and working collaboratively with NHSL to highlight pathways into key roles within NHS • Widening Access and Participation to Higher Education – innovative employability pathways, and partnerships including HNC Pathway with New College Lanarkshire and the University of the West of Scotland • Academy NL – mapping current and future labour market demand, stimulating further growth and opportunities for apprenticeships and other placements aligned to employment growth sectors including Health and Social Care, Construction and Digital Skills • STEM – access to high quality STEM opportunities. Digital literacy in the world of work focus, Gender imbalance/ inequalities will be addressed through a programme of positive action. • Creativity, Enterprise, and Employability – Dragons Lair initiative -S3 in all Secondary Schools. Supported by Lanarkshire Business Gateway to identify a product/ service to promote and sell, create a business plan, and pitch their idea to a team of dragons – local 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Virtual School • Routes to Work in Schools • Supported Employment • Roots/No limits/Project Ability

Appendix Three

Tackling Poverty Strategy Action Plan 2023-2026

INCREASE INCOME VIA EMPLOYMENT														
No.	Action	Brief Description	How We Measure Success	Links to Other Strategies	Link to Programme Of Work	2022/23 Baseline	2023/24 Outcomes	2024/25 Outcomes	2025/26 Outcomes	Timescales	Status	Identify if applies to TPS &/or LCPAR	Lead Team	Monitoring Information
1	North Lanarkshire to increase the number of people employed and receiving the real living wage	Payment of the living wage by employers is amongst those interventions that can support people out of poverty and is part of wider Fair Work commitments	There is an increase in the number of NL employers in public, business and community and voluntary sectors with real living wage accreditation	Workforce for the future Economic Regeneration Plan	Brighter Futures	123 employers have achieved accreditation, with 7053 employees benefiting from the living wage	135 NL based employers have achieved accreditation with 27,977 employees benefitting			Ongoing	Ongoing	TP Strategy and LCPAR	NLC Employability VANL for CVS	* Number of employers paying the living wage * Number of employees receiving the living wage
2	Social Values	North Lanarkshire will look to integrate social values and the objectives into the tendering process that will allow the weighting for fair work to be flexible to ensure that social values and community benefits are embedded in the contract .	An increase in NL residents receiving the "real living wage".	Workforce for the future	transforming places	5% current weighting applied	5% current weighting applied			Ongoing	Ongoing	TP Strategy and LCPAR	Procurement	Number of tenders where higher weighting was applied to living wage providers

INCREASE INCOME VIA EMPLOYMENT														
No.	Action	Brief Description	How We Measure Success	Links to Other Strategies	Link to Programme Of Work	2022/23 Baseline	2023/24 Outcomes	2024/25 Outcomes	2025/26 Outcomes	Timescales	Status	Identify if applies to TPS &/or LCPAR	Lead Team	Monitoring Information
3	Working for Families	Support families who are in or at risk of poverty to support/ access into work. Refreshed publicity to partners and public required	An increase in parents entering and progressing in employment	* Workforce for the Future * Economic Regeneration Plan * Local Child Poverty Action Plan	Brighter Futures	22/23 - 40 parents have secured employment. Further 18 employed parents have progressed within employment. 104 parents have registered and are engaging with the Project.	"In 2023/24 North Lanarkshire's Working and Routes to Work Ltd supported 85 parents into employment or into better paying jobs with 75% sustaining employment for at least 26 weeks. All activities related to parents and increasing income from employment have access to advice and support from the Tackling Poverty team and there are close links with other services which deal with parents both in the Council and among stakeholders. In 2024/25 an increased target of 192 low income parents into employment is in place with a similar level of grant funded programmes within the third sector to support parents."			Subject to annual funding from the SG - further activity planned for 2023/24	2023 / 24, however, subject to funding may continue beyond this	TP Strategy and LCPAR	Employability Routes to Work	Number of parents entering and within target groups progressing in employment
4	Identify pathways within labour market growth sectors or areas of high replacement demand which will provide progression routes out of low pay in North Lanarkshire.	As part of the Council's Workforce for the Future Strategy and associated plan, work progression pathways will be identified for key labour market growth sectors or those with high replacement demand. These will focus on progression routes out of low pay and strategies for engaging young people (in schools) and those economically active in the labour market (through Routes to Work) to consider increasing their qualification levels and job prospects to improve average weekly wage levels and alleviate "in work" poverty.	Progression pathways identified for key growth sectors with qualifications and progression routes agreed, published and funded.	Workforce for the Future Economic Regeneration Plan Developing the Young Workforce	Brighter Futures	The gross weekly wage in North Lanarkshire (based on all full time workers) was £656.60 in 2022	The gross weekly wage in North Lanarkshire (based on all full time workers) is £705.70, an increase of 29.3%			Ongoing	The gross weekly pay for local residents is now higher than the national average for the first time ever - an increase of 10% (£63.90 per week) for North Lanarkshire residents from the previous years results	TP Strategy and LCPAR	Enterprise Team	Number of people progressing to higher paid jobs within North Lanarkshire Noomis statistics for levels of qualifications within working age population and average weekly wage

INCREASE INCOME VIA EMPLOYMENT														
No.	Action	Brief Description	How We Measure Success	Links to Other Strategies	Link to Programme Of Work	2022/23 Baseline	2023/24 Outcomes	2024/25 Outcomes	2025/26 Outcomes	Timescales	Status	Identify if applies to TPS &/or LCPAR	Lead Team	Monitoring Information
5	Supported Enterprise	Targeted employability support on people with disabilities or other significant barriers to help them secure fair and sustained work. Also support for disabled parents to enter employment.	Reduction in the disability employment gap in NL	Workforce for the Future Economic Regeneration Plan Developing the Young Workforce	Brighter Futures	22/23 - Supported Employment currently supporting 210 people on the different stages of the 5 stage employment model - 129 people currently receiving various levels of work support 41 people currently job finding	NLC Employability also funded the NHS Lanarkshire Demonstrator 2 Programme. This initiative focused on placing 23 unemployed or low-earning parents into paid work placements for six months, earning just above the living wage within NHS posts. This was resource internally and with a real commitment from NHS Lanarkshire and proved a really effective route for securing good quality employment opportunities for parents and will be repeated in 2024/25.			Ongoing	Continued support planned for the next 3 years	TP Strategy and LCPAR	Employability	Number of people progressing to higher paid jobs within North Lanarkshire Noomis statistics for levels of qualifications within working age population and average weekly wage
6	No one Left Behind	Targeted employability support for vulnerable young people who have mental health problems, the BAME community and over 50s, with delivery through CVS organisations. In addition funding identified to support 200 young people.	Rise in employment figures in targeted groups. Targets met to support young people in gaining qualifications	Workforce for the Future Economic Regeneration Plan	Brighter Futures	22/23 - Engaged with 101 people and supported 49 into employment. The focus is on 2 groups, the over 50s and those of any age who are long term unemployed.	In 2023/24 147 16 -24 year olds were supported into employment – this was a mix of unemployed young people with little work experience or qualifications as well as a small group who were leaving school to a negative destination. In addition another 30 young people with additional support needs or who are care experienced were supported into year long work placements. In 2024/25 a target of 155 unemployed young people supported into work is in place with another 30 young people with additional support needs or who are care-experienced being supported into yearlong work placements. In tandem with these programmes in 2024/25 are our wider employability programmes which are targeting employment for 940 unemployed or economically inactive residents this year."			Ongoing	Continued support planned for the next 3 years	TP Strategy and LCPAR	Employability	Number of people in target groups employed. Number of young people supported to gain qualifications

INCREASE INCOME VIA EMPLOYMENT														
No.	Action	Brief Description	How We Measure Success	Links to Other Strategies	Link to Programme Of Work	2022/23 Baseline	2023/24 Outcomes	2024/25 Outcomes	2025/26 Outcomes	Timescales	Status	Identify if applies to TPS &/or LCPAR	Lead Team	Monitoring Information
7	No One Left Behind Phase 2	implement grant programme in 2022/23 to distribute £1.6 million to employment projects across North Lanarkshire which target support on groups who may be in poverty due to unemployment	Rise in employment figures in targeted groups	Workforce for the future Economic Regeneration	Brighter Futures	N/A	Nine projects were funded (cost £560,000) and delivered by the Third Sector in North Lanarkshire to work with parents on low incomes and focus on engaging them in activities and removing barriers to make them more job ready. People Plus, One Parent Families Scotland, Enable and New College Lanarkshire were some of the organisations involved in these projects.			Ongoing	Continued support planned for the next 3 years	TP Strategy and LCPAR	Employability	Number of people in target groups employed
8	Living Hours	Adequate income is reliant on both living wage rate and also sufficient working hours to provide a liveable income. Living hours are part of wider Fair Work commitments	There is an increase in the number of NL employers in public, business and community and voluntary sectors with real living wage accreditation.	Workforce for the future Economic Regeneration	Brighter Futures	N/A	N/A			Ongoing	Ongoing	TP Strategy and LCPAR	NLC Employability VANL for CVS	Number of employers providing living hours employment. Number of employees working living hours
9	Increase entrepreneurship, self-employment and the business birth rate in North Lanarkshire	Deliver a range of interventions including school-based activities to increase the numbers of people considering or in self-employment in North Lanarkshire, to increase the business birth rate and to support those businesses to survive and grow	An increase in the percentage of economically active in North Lanarkshire in self-employment, an increase in the number of new business starts per 10,000 working age population and an increase in the 3-year business survival rate	Workforce for the future Economic Regeneration	Brighter Futures Invest in North Lanarkshire	n/a	All activities related to parents and increasing income from employment have access to advice and support from the Tackling Poverty team and there are close links with other services which deal with parents both in the Council and among stakeholders.			Annual	Ongoing	TP Strategy and LCPAR	Enterprise and Development	ONS annual population survey (Self employment statistics) Business Birth and Survival Rates – ONS Business Demography

REDUCE THE COST OF LIVING												
No.	Action	Brief Description	How We Measure Success	2022 /23 Baseline	2023/24 Outcomes	2024/25 Outcomes	2025/26 Outcomes	Timescales	Status	Identify if applies to TPS &/or LCPAR	Lead Team	Monitoring Information
1	Increase uptake of School Clothing Grants	Introduce online application form for FSM & CG Continue to automatically award where we have customer consent Use automation to process our auto award caseload	The number of School Clothing Awards increases	12,784 Clothing Grants awarded from June 2022 - May 2023 For School Pupils. An additional 937 Grants for made for nursery pupils	11,864 Clothing Grants awarded from June 2023 - May 2024 For School Pupils.			Ongoing	Ongoing	TP Strategy and LCPAR	Revenues & Benefits	The number of clothing grants claimed and distributed
2	Increase uptake of Free School Meal Awards	Introduce online application form for FSM & CG Continue to automatically award where we have customer consent Use automation to process our auto award caseload	The number of Children entitled to Free School Meals increases	12,151 FSM awards in 2020, 11,176 awards in 2021, 10,683 awards in 2022	10,401 FSM * No of school meal holiday vouchers issued 9999 pupils total value of £1, 497,503			Ongoing	Ongoing	TP Strategy and LCPAR	Revenues & Benefits	The number of Children in receipt of Free School Meals
3	Club 365	Promote Activities and meal provision through Club 365 Initiative	Numbers of Children attending and meals provided. £2.50 per day paid during school holidays to those in receipt of FSM	Club 365 has provided over 88, 000 meals and activity sessions since inception	N/A			Ongoing	Ongoing	TP Strategy and LCPAR	Revenues & Benefits	Numbers of Meals and Activity Sessions Delivered
4	Increase uptake of education maintenance allowance (EMA)	Ensure full take of Education Maintenance Allowance. Promotion of EMA through Education Newsletter to schools and locally within schools to raise pupil awareness. Review publicity - posters leaflets etc not distributed recently Discussion within EMA and SMT meetings on improving up-take.	Young People can access EMA	In 22/23 1327 applications. 876 awards. 66% award rate (down from 73% award rate in 21/22)	In 23/24 1537 applications. 944 awards. 61% award rate (down from 66% award rate in 22/23)			Ongoing	Ongoing	TP Strategy and LCPAR	Revenues & Benefits	The number of EMA grants claimed
5	Increase take up of Free School Meals In situ	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Trial new methods of engagement with parents and carers, e.g attend parent council meetings and inviting parents for a school meal and information session • New management information system to give insights into trends, most popular choices, which ages take up free meals • Work with other local authorities developing menus, to improve sustainability and better safety and choice for those with special diets (>>ASIST and APSI) • Work with schools around different "sittings", and overflow areas. • Capital investment to return more schools to Production kitchens • Continued roll out of electronic menu notifications to parents and carers • Consultation with secondary school pupils via a QR code (promoted via a 'Tell us what you think' poster displayed around schools allowing pupils to scan / access via mobiles) • Primary school parents online survey (targeted via menu email / school newsletter email and also placed on NLC website on menu page) • Primary pupil surveys (via either focus groups / school meals mystery shopping / pupil surveys designed specific to age groups (P1-3 / P4-7) 	Percentage of Children taking up free school meals when they have entitlement is increased	Currently (May 2023) at 65-70%	(May 2024) at 65-70%			Ongoing	Launched and ongoing	TP Strategy and LCPAR	Facilities Support Services	Take up rates for Free School Meals

REDUCE THE COST OF LIVING												
No.	Action	Brief Description	How We Measure Success	2022 /23 Baseline	2023/24 Outcomes	2024/25 Outcomes	2025/26 Outcomes	Timescales	Status	Identify if applies to TPS &/or LCPAR	Lead Team	Monitoring Information
6	Fuel Poverty	Provision of a short term funded Energy Advice Service to comprehensively alleviate the levels of fuel poverty experienced by vulnerable households. HES no of referrals from NL. CAB energy project nos of referrals	Number of households assisted	Unknown as SHCS data unavailable for Local Authorities however, zero has been used as the starting point for the introduction of this service	159 households assisted 2023/24			2 years	Launched and ongoing	TP Strategy and LCPAR	Housing Solutions	will be monitored via NLAN and Wise Group reporting
7	Affordable Credit	To promote credit unions across North Lanarkshire employers and communities to encourage more people to join to increase access to affordable credit. To widen access to payroll deduction for credit unions and access to affordable credit. Establish a Credit Union Forum in North Lanarkshire	Credit union membership numbers *Local Employers signing up to CU payroll deductions	5 credit unions affiliated to the Scottish League of Credit Unions have 9,642 adult members and 1,462 junior members. Unable to get contacts for ABCUL credit unions at present.	5 credit unions affiliated to the Scottish League of Credit Unions have 10,250 adult members and 1,460 junior members. Unable to get contacts for ABCUL credit unions at present.			Ongoing	Ongoing	TP Strategy and LCPAR	The Tackling Poverty Team	The number of employers promoting payslip deductions The number of people joining the credit union
8	Debt Advice	Advice and support in relation to debt and budgeting advice provided by Council and Externally commissioned advice services	Assist people out of debt and provide them with the tools to budget accordingly	1744 referrals received in 2022/23 NLC TPT)	1886 referrals received in 2023/24. (NLC TPT) 3,846 referrals (CABx)			Ongoing	Ongoing	TP Strategy and LCPAR	The Tackling Poverty Team	Number of referrals to the Debt Advice Team Level of debt assisted
9	New Affordable Homes	Deliver 5000 new affordable homes by 2035	Reduce the cost of living by increasing the supply of energy efficient, affordable homes	At 1 December 2022, 1,566 homes delivered (970 new build + 596 OMPS)	Since 1 December 2023, 541 new homes delivered (381 new build + 160 OMPS)			2035	Ongoing	TP Strategy and LCPAR	Housing New Supply	Number of new homes built
10	New Affordable Homes	Support housing association and co-operative partners to deliver new homes	Reduce the cost of living by increasing the supply of energy efficient, affordable homes	2126 homes have been delivered	318 homes have been built since 1st Dec 2022. 2444 homes have been delivered			Ongoing	Ongoing	TP Strategy and LCPAR	Housing New Supply	Number of new homes built
11	Improved Energy Efficiency in NLC Housing Stock	Ensure all lettable housing stock is EPC D or above by 2025 by improving energy efficiency	All housing stock is EPC D or above by 2025	At 2021/22, 99.2% of the homes are at D or above	99.5% of all NLC housing stock is rated EPC D or above			Ongoing	Ongoing	TP Strategy and LCPAR	Housing Investment	All housing stock is EPC D or above by 2025
12	Improve Energy Efficiency to owner occupied properties	EES:ABS Scottish Government funding if available Provide advice to households on energy efficiency measures supported by online information and in person advice provided by council and CVS.	Reduce the cost of living by increasing the energy efficiency of homeowners housing stock	£0.1 m spent	In 2023/24 it is expected that £2m will be spent on private owned properties			Ongoing	Ongoing	TP Strategy and LCPAR	Housing Solutions	Number of homes approved

REDUCE THE COST OF LIVING												
No.	Action	Brief Description	How We Measure Success	2022 /23 Baseline	2023/24 Outcomes	2024/25 Outcomes	2025/26 Outcomes	Timescales	Status	Identify if applies to TPS &/or LCPAR	Lead Team	Monitoring Information
13	Support homeowners to adapt their homes	Deliver advice and assistance to homeowner through the Scheme of Assistance	Reduce the cost of living by preventing and addressing disrepair and improving health and wellbeing by supporting owners to adapt their homes	187 disabled adaptations grant provided in 2022 - the scheme has been revised with no funding available for owner grants	236 disabled adaptations grant provided in 2023 - the scheme has no funding available for owner grants			Ongoing	Ongoing	TP Strategy Only	Private Sector Housing	Reduce the cost of living by preventing and addressing disrepair and improving health and wellbeing by supporting owners to adapt their homes. *Revision of scheme of assistance completed. Other than mandatory (Disabled Adaptation Grants) no funding available for owner grants for disrepair. Current grant funding for NLC capital programmes is scheduled to end this year and no new financial assistance has been identified. Owners will continue to be provided with advice/ assistance when possible but no financial assistance
14	Furniture Fund	Provides items beyond SWF-Community Care Grant items in place for Housing First clients and people who are homeless/at risk of homelessness	Reduce the cost of living by providing financial support for better quality furniture to people who are homeless or at risk of homelessness to settle in their accommodation.	In 2021/22, 23 Housing First households assisted at an average figure of £861.39 per household from RRTP.	N/A			Ongoing	Ongoing	TP Strategy Only	Housing Solutions	Reduce the cost of living by providing financial support for better quality furniture to people who are homeless or at risk of homelessness to settle in their accommodation
15	Support homeowners to adapt, repair and maintain their homes (within mixed tenure blocks)	Where NLC investment programme includes owners in blocks with NLC staff, liaise through voluntary agreement, enforcement where appropriate, EES:ABS programmes as appropriate	Reduce the cost of living by increasing the supply of energy efficiency of housing stock across all tenures	99.2% of the homes are at D or above	99.2% of the homes are EPC D or above			Ongoing	Ongoing	TP Strategy and LCPAR	Housing Solutions	Number of home owners assisted
16	Free Transport for Under 22's	Promote and Maximise uptake of Free Bus Travel for 5-21 year olds	Number of travel cards issued and in use	42,160 total number issued. 61.75% overall uptake	56,387 total number issued. 75% overall uptake			Ongoing	Ongoing	TP Strategy and LCPAR	CLD	number of travel cards provided

REDUCE THE COST OF LIVING												
No.	Action	Brief Description	How We Measure Success	2022 /23 Baseline	2023/24 Outcomes	2024/25 Outcomes	2025/26 Outcomes	Timescales	Status	Identify if applies to TPS &/or LCPAR	Lead Team	Monitoring Information
17	Improved and accessible walking, wheeling and cycling network.	Creating or enhancing active travel routes will improve the ability of all people to walk, wheel or cycle for any journey purpose within North Lanarkshire	Equity of access for all our communities with mid term target of 50km to be created by 2026/27	7.8 kms of active travel routes created in 2021/22	N/A - see 'Supporting the Plan' Driver			125kms to be created by 2032	Ongoing	TP Strategy and LCPAR	Transportation / Planning	number of travel routes
18	Address Period Poverty	Provide women with access to period products within education and other public buildings Develop Peer Support Programme Expand number of council building access points-expand community group partnerships from 8- 10 areas-develop recording to better understand demand and distribution-consider period card scheme.	Distribution across all of North Lanarkshire. Number of products distributed	311, 767 products to NLC establishments (excluding education and culture venues) 87,396 to education	733,692 products were distributed in total. (82,596 to NHS sites & 651,096 to NLC sites)			Ongoing	Ongoing	TP Strategy and LCPAR	Enterprise and Communities	Number of products delivered and taken up
19	Support people to stop smoking to reduce outgoings	Stopping smoking can have a positive impact of finances as well as health. Brief intervention and referral to the Quit Your Way service in Lanarkshire can support people to successfully quit smoking. Pregnant women are a particularly key target group.	Yearly target 23/24 for 52 pregnant women who live in 40% most deprived areas to successfully stop smoking at 12 weeks (to be reviewed in 2024 after national tobacco control action plan is published). Awareness raising training sessions to be completed with Tackling Poverty staff.	"24 pregnant women living in the 40% most deprived areas successfully quit smoking at 12 weeks (April 2022-Dec 2022 data). Published and confirmed data for April 2022 – March 2023 will be available in January 2024. NL % of pregnant women smoking at booking in appt 12.6% year ending Dec 2022 (scotland rate 11.9%)"	28 pregnant women living in the 40% most deprived areas successfully quit smoking at 12 weeks (April 2023-Dec 2023 data). NL % of pregnant women smoking at booking in appt 12.7% year ending Dec 2022 (scotland rate 11%)			Ongoing	Ongoing	TP Strategy and LCPAR	NHS Lanarkshire Quit Your Way Service	Number of Tackling Poverty staff members trained. Number of pregnant women supported to stop smoking.
20	Recycled Bicycle Initiatives	Individuals subject to unpaid work work within the bicycle recycling project	Bicycles provided to low income families and donated to the Christmas Toy Appeals	320 bicycles recycled	320 bicycles recycled 2022/23. Programme of bike maintenance underway			Ongoing	Ongoing	TP Strategy and LCPAR	Restorative Justice	Number of bikes restored
21	Cost of Living Survey	Cost of Living Survey delivered to the residents of North Lanarkshire - this will help develop and deliver services	Services and resources directed with the outcomes of the survey	N/A	N/A			Ongoing	Ongoing	TP Strategy Only	The Tackling Poverty Team	number of surveys completed

INCREASE INCOME VIA SOCIAL SECURITY														
No.	Action	Brief Description	How We Measure Success	Links to Other Strategies	Link to Programme Of Work	2022/2023 Baseline	2023/2024 Outcomes	2024/2025 Outcomes	2025/2026 Outcomes	Timescales	Status	Identify if applies to TPS &/or LCPAR	Lead Team	Monitoring Information
1	The Tackling Poverty Team and other council services to continue to maximise the income of the residents of North Lanarkshire	All residents are offered income maximisation and we continue to promote the "no wrong door" approach	Residents will be directed to the tackling poverty team to ensure income is fully maximised	The Plan for North Lanarkshire	Resilient People	18,521 benefit checks carried out in 2022/23 - £35,480,020 generated in additional income	26,158 benefit checks carried out in 23/24 (41.2% increase) - £47,935,822 generated in additional income (35.1% increase)			Ongoing	Ongoing	TP Strategy and LCPAR	0	Number of Benefit Checks / Benefit Claims / Resolutions Income Generated
2	Work with all social work services to ensure income maximisation is carried out for all vulnerable client groups	Social Work staff refer people to the Tackling Poverty Team who will carry out all income maximisation work	Referrals to the tackling poverty team from all social work staff	The Plan for North Lanarkshire	Resilient People	4888 benefit checks carried out in 2022/23	9639 benefit checks carried out in 23/24 (now able to report income gen - £5,062,066)			Ongoing	Ongoing	TP Strategy and LCPAR	The Tackling Poverty Team	Number of Benefit Checks / Benefit Claims / Resolutions Income Generated
3	MacMillan Advice Service	Maximise the income of cancer patients, their families and carers	Provide an income maximisation and debt advice service	The Cancer Strategy	Resilient People	700 referrals in 2022/23	700 referrals in 2023/24 (generating £3,542,782)			Ongoing	Ongoing	TP Strategy and LCPAR	The Tackling Poverty Team	Number of Benefit Checks / Benefit Claims / Resolutions Income Generated
4	Food Poverty Referral Gateway	Mitigate the need for foodbank use by ensuring access to advice services and claims to crisis grants	A decrease in the use of foodbanks	The Plan for North Lanarkshire	Resilient People	not available	work still being carried out on referral monitoring with food banks			Ongoing	Ongoing	TP Strategy and LCPAR	The Tackling Poverty Team	Number of referrals to foodbanks Number of Crisis Grant applications
5	Food Poverty Action Group	Group to consider uniform recording across all emergency food providers	Uniform recording adopted by all emergency food providers	The Plan for North Lanarkshire	Resilient People	n/a	21 food providers contacted - 3 currently working with co-ordinator			Nov-25	Ongoing	TP Strategy and LCPAR	The Tackling Poverty Team	Number of foodbanks recording
6	Welfare Reform Group	The welfare reform group to ensure serviced, elected members etc are kept fully abreast of welfare reform changes and their impact on our communities	Updates are provided and action taken when necessary	The Plan for North Lanarkshire	Resilient People	n/a	NLAN - social media messages around managed migration.			Ongoing	Ongoing	TP Strategy and LCPAR	North Lanarkshire Advice Network	Issues raised / campaigns
7	Health Staff refer to income maximisation and debt advice services	Health Staff will ensure money issues are addressed and referrals are made to the tackling poverty team	Increased number of teams and services in NHS Lanarkshire referring patients to the tackling poverty team to ensure income is fully maximised	NHS Cost of Living	Resilient People	394 referrals 22/23	591 referrals received in 23/24 (increase of 50%)			Ongoing	Ongoing	TP Strategy and LCPAR	The Tackling Poverty Team	Number of Benefit Checks / Benefit Claims / Resolutions Income Generated / Number of health teams or services referring
8	Improvement Service Project - GP Practices	GP Practices identified by the Improvement Service have a welfare rights officer in situ, with access to GP records	The welfare rights service is integrated into the GP Practice	The Plan for North Lanarkshire	Resilient People	357 referrals 22/23	608 referrals received in 23/24 (70% increase)			Ongoing	Ongoing	TP Strategy and LCPAR	The Tackling Poverty Team	Number of Benefit Checks / Benefit Claims / Resolutions Income Generated
9	Relaunch Health Visitor & District Nurse Referral Pathway	Poverty Awareness Training and pathway training to take place	Health visitor and district nurses make referrals to the tackling poverty team	NHS Cost of Living	Resilient People	n/a	119 referrals received in 23/24			Ongoing	Ongoing	TP Strategy and LCPAR	The Tackling Poverty Team	Number of referrals to the tackling poverty team

INCREASE INCOME VIA SOCIAL SECURITY														
No.	Action	Brief Description	How We Measure Success	Links to Other Strategies	Link to Programme Of Work	2022/2023 Baseline	2023/2024 Outcomes	2024/2025 Outcomes	2025/2026 Outcomes	Timescales	Status	Identify if applies to TPS &/or LCPAR	Lead Team	Monitoring Information
10	GP Community Link Worker Programme	community link worker embedded within GP practices across North Lanarkshire making referrals to information and advice services	Embed link workers and increase support to patients	NHS Cost of Living	Resilient People	482 welfare rights referrals (22/23) 146 debt advice referrals (22/23)	333 welfare rights referrals (23/24) 31% decrease 133 debt advice referrals (23/24) 9% decrease			Ongoing	Ongoing	TP Strategy and LCPAR	The Tackling Poverty Team	Number of Benefit Checks / Benefit Claims / Resolutions Income Generated
11	Commissioned Services - Income Maximisation via Benefit Uptake	All residents are offered income maximisation and we continue to promote the "no wrong door" approach	The successful commissioned service offer income maximisation to the residents of North Lanarkshire	NHS Cost of Living	Resilient People	£5,267,650 income generated for north lanarkshire residents 2022/23	£8,259,352 income generated for north lanarkshire residents 23/24 - 55% increase			Ongoing	Ongoing	TP Strategy and LCPAR	The Tackling Poverty Team	Number of Benefit Checks / Benefit Claims / Resolutions Income Generated
12	Rent Assistance Fund	Rent Assistance Fund – to assist people who have experienced/are experiencing financial difficulty due to the increase in the cost of living. If tenant has received a previous award of funding from SG – TGF or SC Lacer Fund – they will not be eligible. Tenants can receive a maximum award of £2250 and this funding is not re-payable (fund allocation £1,000,000)	Fund directed to people in need	Local Housing Strategy	Resilient People	522 grants awarded in 22/23	1050 grants awarded in 23/24 (103% increase)			Ongoing	Ongoing	TP Strategy and LCPAR	Housing	Number of people Assisted
13	Universal Credit Assistance Fund	UCAF award is to assist tenants who have fallen behind with their rent due to the 5 week waiting period, and tenants who are in receipt of Universal credit are eligible to apply	People can access the fund, it requires to be paid back, however, this is at an affordable level - the fund ensures that people can remain in their own home with their arrears being managed.	Local Housing Strategy	Resilient People	522 grants awarded in 2022/23	1908 grants awarded in 23/24 (265% increase)			Ongoing	Ongoing	TP Strategy and LCPAR	Housing Services	Number of loans provided / loan repayments
14	Welfare Rights Officer - Additional Support Needs Schools	Welfare Rights Officer to deliver income maximisation to families and carers	Number of referrals / income generated	The Plan for North Lanarkshire	Resilient People	introduced in 2024				Pilot for one year August 2025	Starting in August 2024	TP Strategy and LCPAR	Education and The Tackling Poverty Team	Number of people accessing the service / income generated
15	Work with the community and Services to encourage challenges to benefit decisions via Mandatory Reconsiderations and Appeals to Upper Tribunal level	Encourage residents to exhaust all challenges to benefit decisions	Number of mandatory reconsiderations / number of appeals lodged / income generated via MR and Appeal	The Plan for North Lanarkshire	Resilient People	introduced in 2024 (however, stats available for 23/24)	* 293 Mandatory Reconsiderations * 124 appeals * £1,269,619 generated			Ongoing	Ongoing	TP Strategy and LCPAR	Tackling Poverty Team	Number of mandatory reconsiderations / number of appeals lodged / income generated via MR and Appeal

HOLISTIC SUPPORTS														
No.	Action	Brief Description	How We Measure Success	Links to Other Strategies	Link to Programme Of Work	2022/2023 Baseline	2023/2024 Outcomes	2024/2025 Outcomes	2025/2026 Outcomes	Timescales	Status	Identify if applies to TPS &/or LCPAR	Lead Team	Monitoring Information
1	Sustain Tenancies	Deliver increased financial advice and assistance via 8 income maximisers	increase incomes from social security, reducing rent arrears and sustaining tenancies in social rented homes	Local Housing Strategy	Resilient People	£15,041,070 income generated - 4007 benefit checks completed	£18,850,629 income generated - 7040 benefit checks completed			Ongoing	Ongoing	TP Strategy and LCPAR	Housing Solutions	Number of Benefit Checks / Benefit Claims / Resolutions Income Generated
2	Whole Family Support	To create a flexible, reliable and integrated support for families to ensure that every family who needs support gets the right support at the right time.	People have access to income maximisation, employability and money advice services at the right time.	Childrens Services Plan	Resilient People	n/a	Barnardos awarded the contract - Families Here and Now Service started June 2024			2023 - 26	Ongoing	TP Strategy and LCPAR	Education, Children and Families	Inter service referrals
3	Arrest / Referral Service	The North Lanarkshire Arrest Referral Service is focussed on early intervention by providing support to people whilst held in police custody and connecting them to services within the community to address individual needs.	Number of referrals to the tackling poverty team	Community Justice Improvement Plan	Resilient People	n/a	Meeting held - service leaflets provided			2025	Ongoing	TP Strategy and LCPAR	The service is delivered by Scottish Drugs Forum and Phoenix Futures and funded by North Lanarkshire Alcohol and Drug Partnership for a period of 18 months as a Test of Change.	Number of referrals / income generated / debt advice provided / financial education
4	Poverty Awareness Sessions	Bespoke poverty awareness sessions for council, NHS and third sector partners	Number of people attending the sessions and ultimately the number of referrals this leads to	The Plan for North Lan	Resilient People	n/a	328 staff attended poverty awareness sessions (health/ education/CLD/ social work/nqsw/ NLADP/ One Parent families/NL Disability Forum			Ongoing	Ongoing	TP Strategy and LCPAR	The Tackling Poverty Team	Number of sessions delivered / number of people attending / referrals following the training

HOLISTIC SUPPORTS														
No.	Action	Brief Description	How We Measure Success	Links to Other Strategies	Link to Programme Of Work	2022/2023 Baseline	2023/2024 Outcomes	2024/2025 Outcomes	2025/2026 Outcomes	Timescales	Status	Identify if applies to TPS &/or LCPAR	Lead Team	Monitoring Information
5	Community Benefits	To increase the number of tackling poverty interventions / fair work interventions within community benefits	Improve the economic, social or environmental well-being of our communities	The Plan for North Lan	transforming places	Recent figures show the local economy continues to grow, reflecting a positive position in North Lanarkshire compared to a negative growth position locally, however, moving forward we must see more tackling poverty related interventions within community benefits	no update available			Ongoing	Ongoing	TP Strategy Only	Enterprise and Communities	Number of Tackling Poverty Interventions
6	Community Solutions Programme	Wide ranging community supports provided by Community and Voluntary Sector organisations to support residents wellbeing including those in poverty or at risk of poverty including; food, mental health and wellbeing	Improved wellbeing	Community Solutions Strategy and Investment Plan 2023 and HSCNL Commissioning Plan 2023 -26	Resilient People	n/a	no update available			Ongoing	Ongoing	TP Strategy and LCPAR	VANL	Learning and impact reports
7	Financial Education (Adults)	The Multiply Project is a government initiative helping adults to improve their numeracy skills, people can access numeracy qualifications with the access of the Community Learning and Development Service and will be able to access financial education from the Tackling Poverty Team.	People develop the knowledge, skills and attitudes needed to manage money well and make informed decisions.	The Plan for North Lan	Resilient People	Start up and development	119 sessions delivered 420 people attended			Project ends March 2025	Ongoing	TP Strategy and LCPAR	The Tackling Poverty Team	Number of courses delivered / number of attendees
8	Financial Education (children and young people)	Following the "three questions" delivery of a revamped financial education for the primary children	The younger children asked for financial education - the programme will ensure that we meet the needs and requests of our children	The Plan for North Lan	Resilient People	n/a	Audit of financial education activity in schools *Discussions with Scotland's Financial Schools re delivery			In development	In development	TP Strategy and LCPAR	The Tackling Poverty Team	Number of sessions completed in schools Number of young people who attend the sessions
9	Community Boards to support the tackling poverty agenda	Through tackling poverty awareness sessions and delivery of the councils tackling poverty agenda the community boards will support the Strategy	Those representing communities understand their roles and responsibilities in raising awareness of key poverty messages, challenging stigma	The Plan for North Lanarkshire	Resilient People	Tackling Poverty on agendas of community boards	Pilot focussed sessions in Coatbridge - in discussion - if successful will continue role out			Ongoing	Ongoing	TP Strategy and LCPAR	Local Planning Partnership Teams	Community Board Sub Groups Reports

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