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**To:** Leadership Board

**On:** 8<sup>th</sup> June 2015

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**Report by:** Chief Executive

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**Heading:** Tackling Poverty Programme – Progress Update

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**1. Summary**

- 1.1 The report details progress against the Tackling Poverty Action Plan approved by Council on 25 June 2015. The report is attached at Appendix A.
- 1.2 The report outlines key progress highlights against the priority areas within Renfrewshire Council's Tackling Poverty strategy, covering the last 12 months since the Tackling Poverty Action Plan was approved.
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**2. Recommendations**

- 2.1 It is recommended that the Board
- Note progress on the delivery of the Tackling Poverty Action Plan
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**3. Background**

- 3.1 The Renfrewshire Tackling Poverty Commission, the first of its kind to be established in Scotland, was set up by the Council in February 2014. The Commission was asked by the Council to consider the nature, causes and impact of poverty in Renfrewshire and to make

recommendations to mitigate and minimise the impact of child poverty in Renfrewshire. The Commission published its report on Friday 13 March 2015, submitting the report to the Council and Community Planning Partners for consideration.

- 3.2 In June 2015, Council approved an action plan to tackle poverty developed by the Community Planning Partnership. This action plan fully committed the total of £6M set aside in the 2015/16 budget to enable an early response to the work of the Tackling Poverty Commission.
- 3.3 In September 2015, Council approved a Tackling Poverty Strategy for Renfrewshire, which sets the £6 million Council investment within the context of the current opportunities and challenges that Renfrewshire will face in coming years.
- 3.4 In December 2015, Leadership Board noted progress against the Tackling Poverty Action Plan, covering the first six months of delivery against the action plan.

#### **4. Overview of progress**

- 4.1 Since the Commission's recommendations were published, the Council has made significant progress in the delivery of the Tackling Poverty Programme. The Council has now produced a Tackling Poverty Action Plan and Strategy, and developed projects to deliver the recommendations of the Commission.
- 4.2 The Tackling Poverty Programme is a big, fast and ambitious programme which shows a real commitment to delivering change for people in Renfrewshire. The programme comprises approximately 50 projects which vary in scale and scope, but represent a significant programme of work being undertaken within all services across the Council and a number of our partners.
- 4.3 In less than a year, real benefits are already being delivered on the ground, and are providing immediate and practical support for families. Projects within the Tackling Poverty Programme have been moving into delivery since the approval of the action plan, and the vast majority of projects are now in delivery. Projects which provide direct support to citizens on the ground have been prioritised within the programme.
- 4.4 The programme also continues to build a longer term and sustainable plan, based on the evidence of what really works in Renfrewshire. There are a number of projects which seek to deliver long-term change in the way that the Council and our partners work. As learning from projects is gathered, and evaluations are completed, an evidence-based approach to tackling poverty in Renfrewshire can be

developed.

## **5 Pockets – Maximising household resources of families on low incomes**

- 5.1 Renfrewshire Council continues to make progress in addressing youth unemployment and achieving its goals of full youth employment. Following the continued work of Invest in Renfrewshire in providing job creation opportunities and employability support, the youth unemployment rate in Renfrewshire has dropped from 10.5 per cent to 1.9 per cent, and the overall unemployment rate has fallen from 4.9 per cent down to 1.9 per cent.
- 5.2 The Commission highlighted transport and childcare as two key barriers to finding and sustaining work. Two funds have been launched to support people with the costs of childcare and transport in their first month of work, through Invest in Renfrewshire and the Department for Work and Pensions.
- 5.3 Building on the Council's existing commitments around Living Wage in Renfrewshire, over 60 local employers attended an event hosted by Invest in Renfrewshire and the Chamber of Commerce to hear about Living Wage Accreditation, and the number of accredited Living Wage organisations in Renfrewshire has now risen to 23. Renfrewshire Council will apply for Living Wage accreditation this summer as part of its commitment to Living Wage. This will form the basis of a campaign to further increase the number of living wage employers across Renfrewshire, as well as the number who are accredited by the Living Wage Foundation. This will build on work already undertaken this year to weight fair working practices (such as family friendly policies) in procurement exercises.
- 5.4 The Energy Advice team has continued to tackle fuel poverty by helping local families to reduce their energy costs, getting them a fairer deal, offering fuel debt support, and making sure they receive any help they're entitled to, like the Warm Home Discount. This project was extended in July 2015, following a successful pilot as part of the Welfare Reform Resilience Fund. Since July, the team have secured £185,904 of energy savings for households.
- 5.5 Affordable credit remains one of the key ways that low income households can manage limited finances and tackle the poverty premium, and work has continued to strengthen credit union membership in Renfrewshire. In 2015, a further £180,000 was allocated from the Credit Union Development Fund to support credit unions in Renfrewshire. Over 600 people have signed up for memberships in Renfrewshire's Credit Unions in the last 6 months, and credit unions have issued 217 'FastCash' loans as an alternative to using payday lenders. Credit Unions are also now offering ethical funeral loans and plans in order to tackle funeral poverty.

- 5.6 A new Advice Partnership Renfrewshire has been formed, which brings together key advice-giving agencies in Renfrewshire in order to maintain a strategic view of advice services. The partnership is currently developing an 'Advice Renfrewshire' website and phone line which will act as a simple 'one-stop-shop' for accessing all advice services in Renfrewshire, making it as easy as possible for citizens to access the right advice at a suitable time, and in a convenient location. Advice agencies are also piloting an advice referral and tracking system which will mean smoother referrals between advice agencies.
- 5.7 There has been good progress in increasing the uptake of the Young Scot card in Renfrewshire, and with the help of our new Modern Apprentice, we now have a new 'Young Renfrewshire' social media channel and new content on Renfrewshire's Young Scot pages. The take-up of Young Scot cards has significantly increased to 11,000 card holders, and approximately 2,000 young people are using the new rewards scheme which offers experiences and activities in exchange for activities such as volunteering. Work is underway to explore using the Young Scot card in other ways, to allow the targeting of benefits and rewards at young people living in poverty.

## **6 Prospects – Improving life chances of children living in poverty**

- 6.1 Seven young people are being trained within the 'Sports Coach Academy' with Renfrewshire Leisure, and will have the opportunity for employment with Renfrewshire Leisure at the end of their traineeship. The seven young people started in October and all have looked after or accommodated backgrounds. The trainees have already taken a wide range of courses and qualifications. The trainees also provide support to a range of community based initiatives such as Breakfast Clubs, Families First holiday clubs and schools events. They have participated in intergenerational walking programmes bridging the gap between young people and older adults, and at the same time helping to break down barriers working with clients with mental health issues.
- 6.2 New Breakfast clubs were launched in early 2016 in four schools: St Catherine's, Gallowhill Primary, St David's and Cochrane Castle. Since the launch we have provided over 5,661 healthy breakfasts over 135 sessions, and take-up of the clubs across all schools are high. Breakfasts are offered universally with no age or income limit, and include activity and information days where pupils participate in fun activities and learn about topics such as healthy eating. The Breakfast Clubs contribute to a number of the tackling poverty priorities by supporting health and wellbeing through activities and healthy eating, and attainment by supporting children to be ready to learn at the beginning of the school day.

- 6.3 The Cost of the School Day fund was launched in September 2015 and addresses the cost of the school day by giving schools a budget to support the costs of trips, uniform, equipment etc for pupils from low income households. All schools in Renfrewshire have a budget and are spending against their budget, with more funding allocated to primary and Additional Support Needs schools, and schools with the highest number of pupils living in areas with the highest levels of deprivation.
- 6.4 The Families First programme continues to be successful, and has been extended to another three new localities as part of the Tackling Poverty Programme. Community consultation was carried out in 2015, followed by works to establish new locality bases and recruiting the staff team and third sector partner that will support the new localities. New Families First teams were launched to the public in Foxbar, Gallowhill and Johnstone in early 2016 and are now receiving referrals.
- 6.5 Our Literacy Development Programme is an innovative new programme which will transform the teaching of reading in Renfrewshire schools. We are working in partnership with Strathclyde University to deliver a range of training programmes involving head teachers and class teachers across primary and secondary schools in Renfrewshire to support the teaching of literacy.

## **7 Places – Children from low income households live in well-designed sustainable places**

- 7.1 The Street Stuff activities programme for young people has been expanded, with two new Street Stuff buses now in use and an extended programme of activities in new locations. Between April 2015 and March 2016, there have been 2,073 Street Stuff sessions, with a total of 37,269 attendances. In particular, Street Stuff has been able to offer an enhanced programme of activities in the holiday periods, including providing hot food for young people participating in the activities. 3,538 young people have attended holiday provision in October, festive and spring camps.
- 7.2 An additional enforcement officer has been recruited to work within the private rented housing sector making sure that private landlords are registered, and undertaken a full review of how the council works with the private rented sector.
- 7.3 We have offered a number of employability opportunities within community safety, with seven young people working as Special Wardens and four young people working as Streetstuff Coaches. The training programme for this initiative was developed and delivered with the assistance of Police Scotland with the intention of also supporting volunteering and trainee applications. This element of

the programme has not proceeded and alternatives are being considered.

- 7.4 Invest in Renfrewshire has refocused one of its teams to look more closely at supporting community based organisations with funding support. The team has provided advice to 32 organisations on the social enterprise small grants fund, and 6 with developing new community projects.

### **Principles – How organisations should work**

- 8 The programme continues to engage with people living in poverty throughout the life of the project, and in particular working with local third sector organisations to facilitate discussions with citizens. The latest discussions asked citizens whether they could see the impacts of some of our projects on the ground, and asked how citizens want the Council to report progress back to the individuals and communities that are most affected by the programme. Our aim is to create an ongoing conversation with citizens, rather than do traditional consultation exercises with a start and end date.

- 8.1
- 8.2 Addressing the stigma experienced by people living in poverty was a key finding of the Commission. In February 2015, the Council signed up to the 'Stick Your Labels' campaign to tackle poverty related stigma, run by the Poverty Alliance. We are currently undertaking a stigma project with the Customer Service Centre, which will look at how we can support staff to provide the best customer service that doesn't stigmatise.

- 8.3 A Digital Participation Plan has been developed, which will be the centre of our new Digital Strategy for Renfrewshire. A Digital Participation Officer and Digital Volunteer Co-ordinator are currently working with local third sector organisations (Reaching Older Adults in Renfrewshire and the Disability Resource Centre ) to provide targeted digital support to the most digitally excluded groups. In addition to this, a Digital Skills Trainer is working with libraries staff across Renfrewshire so they can better support citizens looking to develop digital skills in the library.

### **Next steps - Public Performance Reporting**

- 9 The report of Renfrewshire's Tackling Poverty Commission states that progress reporting should be 'done in a way which is transparent, accessible and meaningful across the community as a whole.'
- 9.1
- 9.2 Over the summer months, there will be engagement and consultation with citizens focused on the content of the attached progress report. This will focus on capturing voices and perceptions of people living in poverty in Renfrewshire, capturing key successes of projects to date

and identifying areas for development over the coming year.

There will also be work to produce information around the programme in formats which are more transparent and accessible to citizens.

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### **Implications of the Report**

1. **Financial** - There are no financial implications for this report. The Tackling Poverty Action Plan is funded by the £6 million allocation by the Council in June 2015.
2. **HR & Organisational Development** – There are no HR/OD implications for this report. There are a number of recruitment exercises that are taking place as part of the wider programme, but this report does not propose any decision or changes to work that is currently underway.
3. **Community Planning** – The Tackling Poverty Action Plan is owned by the Community Planning Partnership, As such, progress updates are also delivered to the CPP Board six-monthly. All Thematic Boards have been updated with the progress of the Strategy in September 2015.
4. **Legal** - None
5. **Property/Assets** - None
6. **Information Technology** - None
7. **Equality & Human Rights** - The Tackling Poverty Action Plan is key to social justice and wider equality and human rights considerations. This report does not propose any changes to provision or service that would require specific consideration of equality and human rights issues.
8. **Health & Safety** – None
9. **Procurement** – The Tackling Poverty Action Plan has a number of procurement exercises within its projects, but this paper does not recommend any changes or raise any concerns relating to procurement elements of the plan.
10. **Risk** – The impact of not addressing poverty and inequality in Renfrewshire is flagged as a key risk to the organisation within the Corporate Risk Register. There are no major risks to the delivery of

this programme that require the Leadership Board's consideration at this time.

11. **Privacy Impact** - None

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# Tackling Poverty in Renfrewshire: One Year On

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Progress Report on Renfrewshire's Tackling Poverty Action Plan



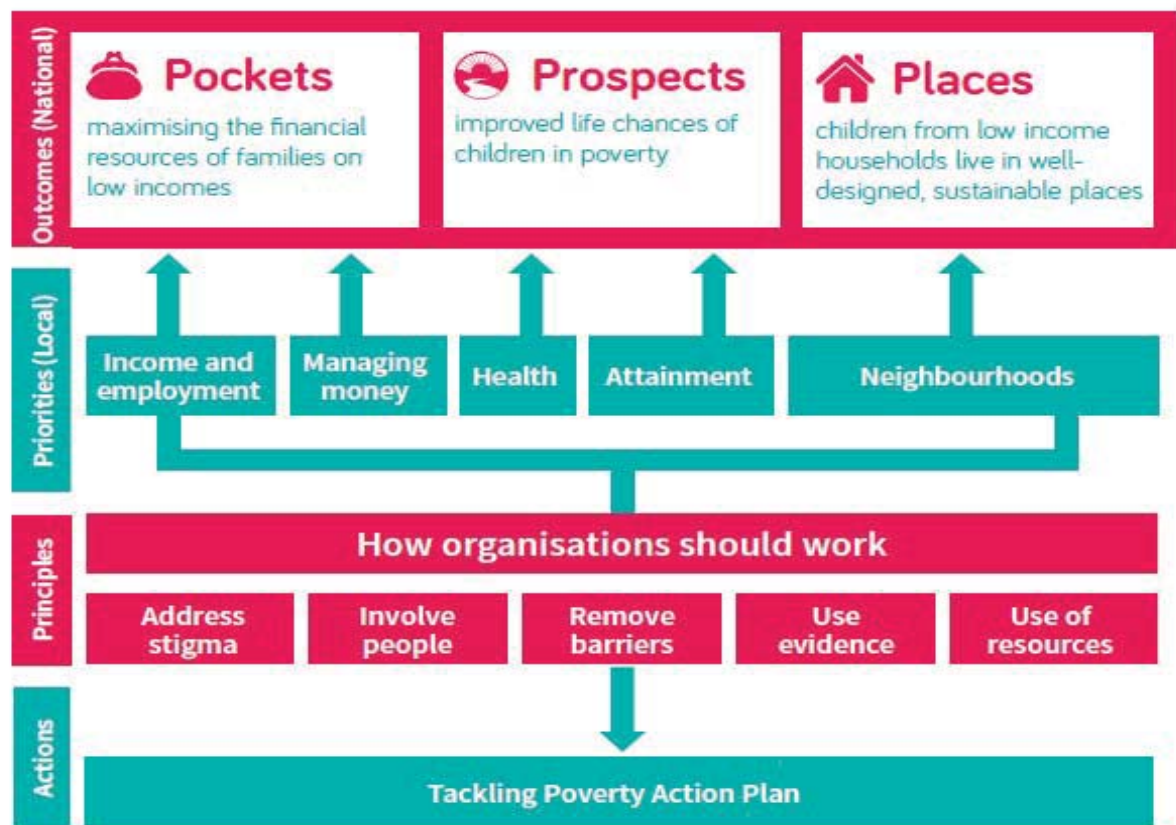


## Background

This report gives an overview of the progress against the Tackling Poverty Action Plan. The report looks at what projects have been delivering on the ground since report of Renfrewshire's Tackling Poverty Commission and the approval of the Tackling Poverty Action Plan, and key milestones for the next year.

Since the Commission's recommendations were published, the Council has made significant progress in the delivery of the Tackling Poverty Action Plan.

- In March 2015, Renfrewshire's Tackling Poverty Commission published its findings and recommendations for a strategic and coordinated response to tackling poverty in Renfrewshire
- In April 2015, Renfrewshire's Community Planning Partnership accepted the recommendations, and the Council made an investment of £6 million to kick start the Commission's recommendations
- In June 2015, Renfrewshire Council and Community Planning Partnership approved the Tackling Poverty Action Plan to deliver to the Commission's recommendations
- In September 2015, Council approved a Tackling Poverty Strategy which put the action plan in the strategic context of the Council and its partners for 2015-2017



Renfrewshire Council has developed a Tackling Poverty Programme to deliver the Tackling Poverty Strategy and Action Plan. The programme is a big, fast and ambitious programme which shows a real commitment to delivering change for people in Renfrewshire. There are approximately 50 projects within the programme, which are varied in size and scope.

- The Tackling Poverty Programme stretches across all the services within Renfrewshire Council, including a wide range of our partners. We structure the programme in line with the three strategic outcomes and 6 local priorities outlined within the Tackling Poverty Strategy.
- Some projects have large budgets, such as our £1million project to expand Families First to three new local areas. Other projects have no budget, as they are met by existing resources or are more focussed on making a change to the way we work.
- Some projects are complex, for example our Joint Employability Programme which is comprised of 14 separate projects. Other projects are simple, for example, providing financial support to the Foodbank.
- Some projects extend services that already existed that we believe are key to tackling poverty, for example our Energy Advice project. Others are testing and trialling innovative new approaches, such as our Literacy Development project.

## **Next Steps**

The report of Renfrewshire's Tackling Poverty Commission states that progress reporting should be 'done in a way which is transparent, accessible and meaningful across the community as a whole.'

Over the summer months, there will be engagement and consultation with citizens focused on the content of the attached progress report. This will focus on capturing voices and perceptions of people living in poverty in Renfrewshire, capturing key successes of projects to date and identifying areas for development over the coming year.

There will also be work to produce information around the programme in formats which are more transparent and accessible to citizens.

## Pockets – Maximising household resources of families on low incomes

### Priority 1: Increase the number of people who can access employment that provides an acceptable standard of living

Renfrewshire Council continues to make progress in addressing youth unemployment and achieving its goals of full youth employment. Following the continued work of Invest in Renfrewshire in providing job creation opportunities and employability support, the youth unemployment rate in Renfrewshire has dropped from 10.5 per cent to 1.9 per cent, and the overall unemployment rate has fallen from 4.9 per cent down to 1.9 per cent.

The Commission highlighted **transport** and **childcare** as two key barriers to finding and sustaining work. We have launched two funds to support people with the costs of childcare and transport in their first month of work, through Invest in Renfrewshire and the Department for Work and Pensions.

We've been building on our existing commitments around **Living Wage** in Renfrewshire. Over 60 local employers attended an event hosted by Invest in Renfrewshire and the Chamber of Commerce to hear about Living Wage Accreditation, and the number of accredited Living Wage organisations in Renfrewshire has now risen to 23.

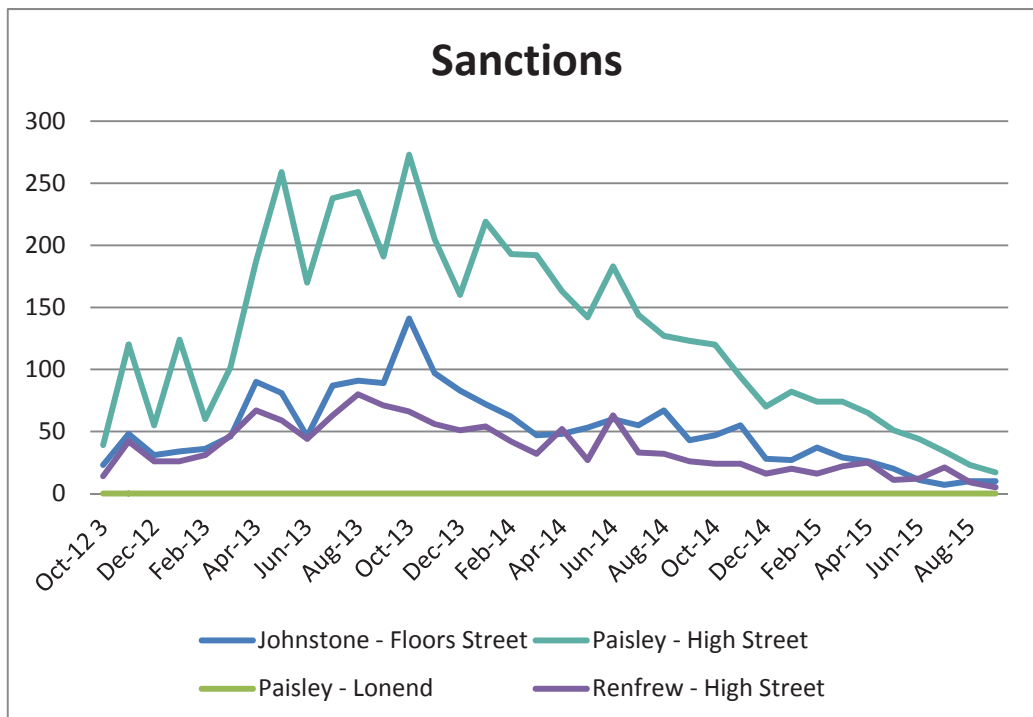
Renfrewshire Council will apply for Living Wage accreditation as part of its commitment to Living Wage in summer 2016. This will form the basis of a campaign to further increase the number of living wage employers across Renfrewshire, as well as the number who are accredited by the Living Wage Foundation. This will build on work we have already done this year to weight **fair working practices** (such as family friendly policies) in our procurement exercises.

We have commissioned a piece of research which will look more closely at the provision of **childcare** in Renfrewshire – and will focus on speaking to low-income families in Renfrewshire to more clearly understand how we can improve the way we provide childcare to meet their needs. We anticipate that the interim results of this study will be ready in September 2016 and the final report in November 2016.

We are also developing our response to the next welfare reforms which will be introduced between 2016 and 2018. We've produced a guide to the first changes for citizens, and we're training our staff so they understand the potential impacts of the changes too.

One of the Tackling Poverty Commission's biggest concerns was the rate of sanctions in Renfrewshire, and it's encouraging to see that sanctions rates have fallen significantly. We will however be placing Claimant Support Officers in each of the JobCentres in Renfrewshire to strengthen the partnership working with the Department for Work and Pensions, and to provide direct support to claimants to meet their claimant commitments and avoid sanctions.

The graph below shows the number of Jobseekers Allowance sanctions across the JobCentres in Renfrewshire:



## Priority 2: Prevent financial crisis and support low income families to make the most of their money

Our **Energy Advice** team has continued to tackle fuel poverty by helping local families to reduce their energy costs, getting them a fairer deal, offering fuel debt support, and making sure they receive any help they're entitled to, like the Warm Home Discount. This project was extended in July 2015, following a successful pilot as part of the Welfare Reform Resilience Fund.

Since July, Energy Advice Renfrewshire has achieved:

711 referrals

£185,904 total savings for households

£81,989 of one-off savings

£103,915 of ongoing savings

Average saving of £253 per household

One of our key priorities is addressing the '**poverty premium**' – where poorer people pay more for the same basic products or services. Affordable credit remains one of the key ways that low income households can manage limited finances and tackle the poverty premium, and we've been building on previous work to strengthen **credit union** membership in Renfrewshire. In 2015, we allocated a further £180,000 from our Credit Union Development Fund to support credit unions in Renfrewshire. Over 600 people have signed up for memberships in Renfrewshire's Credit Unions in the last 6 months, and credit unions have issued 217 'FastCash' loans as an alternative to using payday lenders. Credit Unions are also now offering ethical funeral loans and plans in order to tackle funeral poverty.

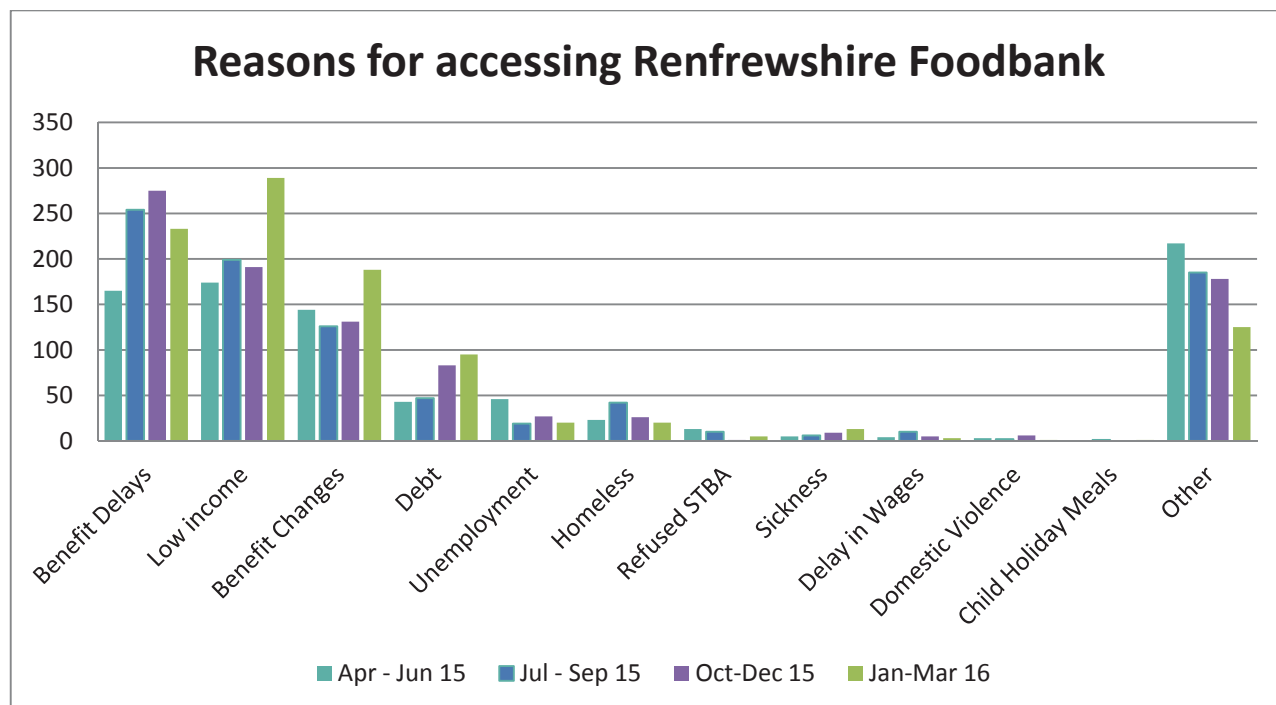
A new **Advice Partnership Renfrewshire** has been formed, which brings together key advice-giving agencies in Renfrewshire in order to maintain a strategic view of advice services. The partnership is

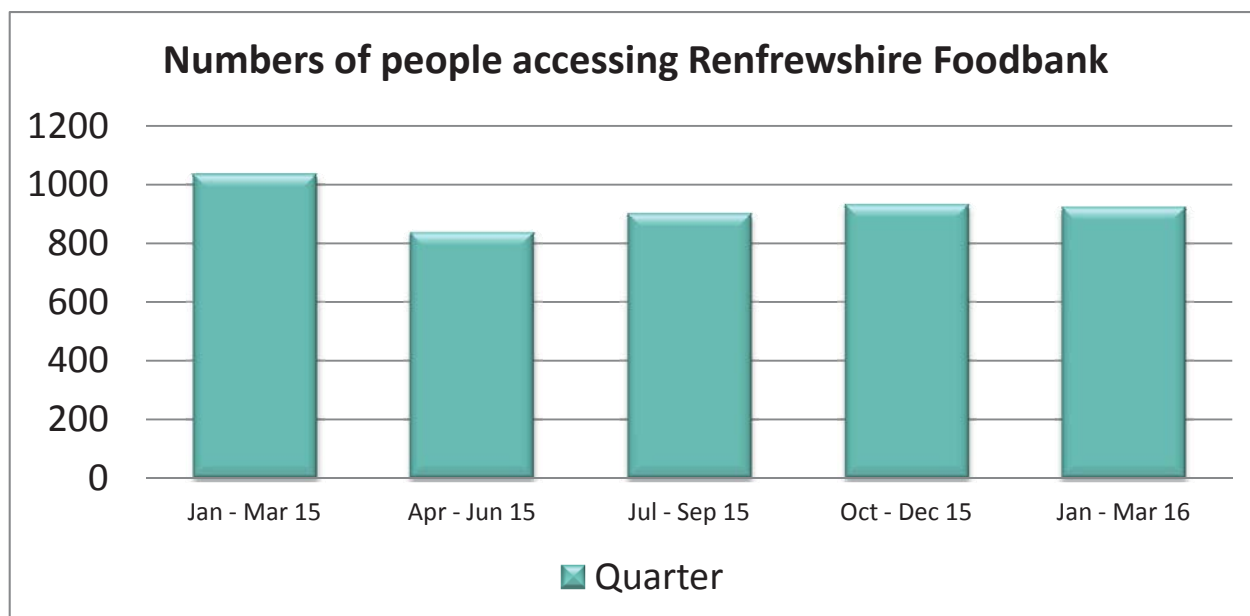
currently developing an 'Advice Renfrewshire' website and phone line which will act as a simple 'one-stop-shop' for accessing all advice services in Renfrewshire, making it as easy as possible for citizens to access the right advice at a suitable time, and in a convenient location. Advice agencies are also piloting an advice referral and tracking system which will mean smoother referrals between advice agencies.

We have made good progress in increasing the uptake of the **Young Scot** card in Renfrewshire, and with the help of our new Modern Apprentice, we now have a new 'Young Renfrewshire' social media channel and new content on Renfrewshire's Young Scot pages. The take-up of Young Scot cards has significantly increased to 11,000 card holders, and approximately 2,000 young people are using the new rewards scheme which offers experiences and activities in exchange for activities such as volunteering. We are currently exploring using the Young Scot card in other ways, so that we can target benefits and rewards at young people living in poverty.

We are piloting a project with partners in the third sector to build the **financial capability** of young adults who are at higher risk of living in poverty, such as young people who have been looked-after or accommodated or young carers. This project will be peer led and co-produced with young people and will run through 2016. It will be part of a national evaluation of peer-led projects run by the Money Advice Service.

We have provided financial support to **Renfrewshire Foodbank** to ensure that we sustain an important safety net for many people in Renfrewshire. The numbers of people using foodbanks in Renfrewshire is at a steady rate, with benefit delays, low income and benefit changes remaining the top 3 reasons why people access the foodbank in Renfrewshire.





## Prospects – Improving life chances of children living in poverty

### Priority 3: Improve levels of physical and mental health of children in low income families

We have set up a **Sports Coach Academy** traineeship programme, where seven young people are being trained as sports coaches with Renfrewshire Leisure, and will have the opportunity for employment with Renfrewshire Leisure at the end of their traineeship. The seven young people started in October and all have looked after or accommodated backgrounds. The trainees have already taken a wide range of courses and qualifications. The trainees also provide support to a range of community based initiatives such as Breakfast Clubs, Families First holiday clubs and schools events. They have participated in intergenerational walking programmes bridging the gap between young people and older adults, and at the same time helping to break down barriers working with clients with mental health issues.

New **Breakfast clubs** were launched in early 2016 in four schools: St Catherine's, Gallowhill Primary, St David's and Cochrane Castle. Since the launch we have provided over 5,661 healthy breakfasts over 135 sessions, and take-up of the clubs across all schools are high. Breakfasts are offered universally with no age or income limit, and include activity and information days where pupils participate in fun activities and learn about topics such as healthy eating. The Breakfast Clubs contribute to a number of our tackling poverty priorities by supporting health and wellbeing through activities and healthy eating, and attainment by supporting children to be ready to learn at the beginning of the school day.

**“The Breakfast Club is already making an amazing difference to our pupils. Several of the teachers have commented on seeing a positive difference in particular children who had previously arrived in school lethargic and disengaged from their learning and who now arrive in class motivated, enthused and engaged with their learning. We have also had a few mums telling us that the provision of a breakfast club will enable them to attend college or university.”** Headteacher

The objective of the **Making Futures** programme is to empower young people at key transition points in their lives, using arts, cultural and participation work. The programme has three strands: Junior Makers (young people up to the age of 8), Makerversity (for young people aged 14-25) and Make.Do! (which offers a range of 'try-out' activities open to all.) Since the Making Future programme launched, it has achieved:

101 sessions in  
programme to  
date

250 hours of  
activity  
delivered

655  
participants  
engaged

The programme launched in late 2015 with the 'Junior Makers' strand of the work, which includes projects such as:

### Creative Cafe

- These are an informal, drop in creative session, especially created for parents and carers with their babies or toddlers. Creative Cafe are a safe space for the babies or toddlers to play and access cultural activity. Each week there is a singer or musician playing child friendly music, or baby friendly art materials to engage with - all centred round themes of health and wellbeing.

### Bedtime Reading

- School based sessions for primary 1's and their parents or guardians, involving storytelling, yoga and calming creative play. Bedtime reading sessions promote family interaction, literacy development and broader health and wellbeing outcomes. Sessions utilise music, simple rhymes, songs and games and storytelling to foster a healthy attitude to reading. These sessions have been delivered in a number of learning communities as part of wider reading programmes supported by Renfrewshire Leisure's Skoobmobile

### Loan to Learn

- Family learning programme designed to pilot the benefit of iPads in support of family learning in the home. This project is intended to help bridge the attainment gap between those from low income backgrounds, and those from higher income ones.

### Coding Clubs

- A series of after school coding clubs delivered through Renfrewshire Leisure's Skoobmobile. Coding clubs give young people the chance to explore the basic building blocks of programming and digital design. The clubs have also made creative use of popular programmes such as Minecraft.

We have also launched two significant projects in partnership with the Health and Social Care Partnership; school counselling and a health peer education project. The projects will directly support positive mental health and wellbeing within secondary schools in Renfrewshire.

**School Counselling** will now be offered in all secondary schools in Renfrewshire, and was launched in Easter 2016. The service aims to improve mental wellbeing and resilience among young people, with a focus on targeting young people with behavioural problems who are at risk of being unable sustaining their place in a mainstream school. Young people formed an important part of the panel selecting the

provider for this service, following presentations given to the Children and Young People's Thematic Board at Gleniffer High School.

Following successful pilots at St Benedict's and Linwood High, Active Communities will be rolling out a **peer education programme** across secondary schools. This will support young people to set up peer education projects to address known health inequalities.

#### **Priority 4: Close the educational attainment gap between children from low income families and their better off peers**

The Commission had a significant focus on addressing the educational attainment gap, and the Tackling Poverty Action Plan reflects this as a key priority. Attainment attracts over half of the £6million investment by the Council.

The **Cost of the School Day** fund was launched in September 2015 and addresses the cost of the school day by giving schools a budget to support the costs of trips, uniform, equipment etc for pupils from low income households. All schools in Renfrewshire have a budget and are spending their budget, with more funding given to primary and Additional Support Needs schools, and schools with the highest number of pupils living in areas with the highest levels of deprivation. The map below shows the five schools with the highest spend, and the five schools with the lowest spend, mapped on the Scottish Indices of Multiple Deprivation.

**“The cost of the school day funding has allowed our school to support pupils to engage with some school activities that may otherwise have been out of reach. From educational trips to art material homework support packs and home economics cooking costs, the pressure has been taken off families in a discreet and sensitive way. Furthermore, this additional funding has encouraged our staff to consider the hidden costs in coming to school, and to be mindful that poverty is a very real issue for some of our pupils and parents.” Headteacher**

The **Families First** programme continues to be successful, and has been extended to another three new localities as part of the Tackling Poverty Programme. Community consultation was carried out in 2015, followed by works to establish new locality bases and recruiting the staff team and third sector partner that will support the new localities. New Families First teams are were launched to the public in Foxbar, Gallowhill and Johnstone in early 2016 and are now receiving referrals.

Our **Literacy Development Programme** is an innovative new programme which will transform the teaching of reading in Renfrewshire schools. We are working in partnership with Strathclyde University to deliver a range of training programmes involving head teachers and class teachers across primary and secondary schools in Renfrewshire to support the teaching of literacy.

The Literacy Development Programme has four main areas of work, which include:

### Primary Literacy Coaching

- Focusing on P1-P3 pupils, our primary head teachers and class teachers are being trained in new approaches that support the teaching of reading.

### Broad Rich Curriculum

- Two class teachers in P4-7 from 6 schools are being trained in developing teaching approaches which focus on the environment and experiences required to support the development of reading.

### Fresh Start into S1

- Focusing on young people who may be at risk during the transition to S1, this project will provide support activities to promote confidence, well being and peer mentoring.

### Disciplinary Literacy

- Focusing on subject specialist teachers in S1 and S2 this training programme provides opportunities to further develop skills in the teaching of literacy across learning and disciplines.

We have established a **Joint Employability Programme** with partners in order to meet the Tackling Poverty Commission’s recommendation to create better links between classroom learning and the work of work. The action plan comprises a range of different projects and will be delivered in partnership with West College Scotland, University of the West of Scotland, Skills Development Scotland, Invest in Renfrewshire, Engage and Kibble.

More details on some of the projects within the Joint Employability Programme can be found in the table below:

**Making sure that looked after children and young people with additional support needs leave school with better prospects of positive destinations**

- **Work Experience and Volunteering Opportunities:** young people aged 16+ with disabilities and additional support needs who will be leaving school in summer and winter 2016 will be provided with tailored volunteering and work experience opportunities with local third sector organisations
- **Work Experience for Looked After Children:** this is a tailored opportunity for young people to take part in an extended work experience with Kibble.

**Providing all pupils leaving school with appropriate career management skills (writing CVs, application forms, preparing for an interview etc.)**

- **Business Ambassador Programme:** young people engage with a business person to understand what employers look for, how to write a successful CV or application form, take part in mock interviews and a workplace visit.
- **Business Partner Work Experience/Training Model Project:** this is a pilot project which will offer 12 senior pupils an opportunity to take part in flexible work experience during one afternoon a week and a chance to apply for a training course with GTG training in Glasgow.

**Giving young people from low income families additional and targeted support which will help them access employment**

- **Pupils Exhibiting Potential:** this project is providing opportunities to pupils from secondary schools who despite being academically capable are not fulfilling their potential and this project will give them a sense of attending University through taking part in taster sessions and motivate them to continue with their study

**Raise awareness of vocational pathways available to senior pupils and volunteering opportunities**

- **Developing a Positive Mindset:** this is an early intervention model which provides support to young people who struggle with confidence, goals setting, self esteem and interview skills

**Achieve a more representative spread of young people moving into further and higher education**

- **Step Up:** a 12 week course of study designed and taught by the UWS which will introduce young people to the variety of learning styles in university setting

**Engaging with our hardest to reach families to interact with schools and support their children's achievement and aspirations**

- **Parents in Partnership:** a project designed specifically to support both parents and children with the transition from primary school to high school through encouraging parents to be more involved in school life and their children's learning.

We've also been working on improving our understanding and **data on poverty and attainment**, and how this data can be used to inform our practice. The testing that we will be doing in June will give us a detailed picture of the attainment gap in primary schools and will allow us to map the impact of our investments to address the attainment gap.

## Places – Children from low income households live in well-designed sustainable places

### Priority 5: Create neighbourhoods where people want to live and can afford to live

The **Street Stuff** activities programme for young people has been expanded, with two new Street Stuff buses now in use and an extended programme of activities in new locations. In particular, Street Stuff has been able to offer an enhanced programme of activities in the holiday periods, including providing hot food for young people participating in the activities.

#### Street Stuff Sessions

- Between April 2015 and March 2016, there have been 2,073 Street Stuff sessions, with a total of 37,269 attendances.
- 2 youth buses have been purchased to compliment the programme, and increase flexibility in areas that can be reached

#### Holiday Clubs

- Tackling Poverty funding extends the Street Stuff programme to deliver football and dance activities in Gallowhill and Glenburn through the School Holidays, with lunch provided.
- Holiday clubs run in 8 localities, with 3,538 young people attending in October, festive and spring camps

#### After School

- After school provision was expanded in Shortroods and Gallowhill in November 2015, with football, dance and box activities and providing hot meals.
- There have been 2,482 attendances at the after school programme

We have recruited an additional enforcement officer to work within the **private rented housing sector** making sure that private landlords are registered, and undertaken a full review of how the council works with the private rented sector. A working group is currently exploring the findings and recommendations of this review and will be working with private rented sector tenants to improve the information and support available to tenants. In particular this will look at new powers granted by the Private Housing (Tenancies) (Scotland) Act.

We have offered a number of employability opportunities within community safety, with seven young people working as Special Wardens and four young people working as Streetstuff Coaches.

Invest in Renfrewshire has refocused one of its teams to look more closely at supporting **community based organisations with funding support**. The team has provided advice to 32 organisations on the social enterprise small grants fund, and 3 with developing new community projects.

We have commissioned research into **affordability of social housing** in Renfrewshire, with a focus on the “whole housing costs” of social housing and reviewing best practice from landlords in supporting tenants to sustain tenancies.

## Principles – How organisations should work

### Priority 6: Narrow inequalities by working in a way which is inclusive, effective and evidence based

Renfrewshire's Tackling Poverty Commission made a series of recommendations around how organisations should work, and these are the five key principles of the Tackling Poverty Strategy and Action Plan. These principles are relevant to all of the projects within the Action Plan, and are woven through the programme. There are also a small number of projects within the programme that support these principles.

For example, we have continued to **engage** with people living in poverty throughout the life of the project, and in particular working with local third sector organisations to facilitate discussions with citizens. The latest discussions asked citizens whether they could see the impacts of some of our projects on the ground, and asked how citizens want us to report progress back to the individuals and communities that are most affected by the programme. Our aim is to create an ongoing conversation with citizens, rather than do traditional consultation exercises with a start and end date.

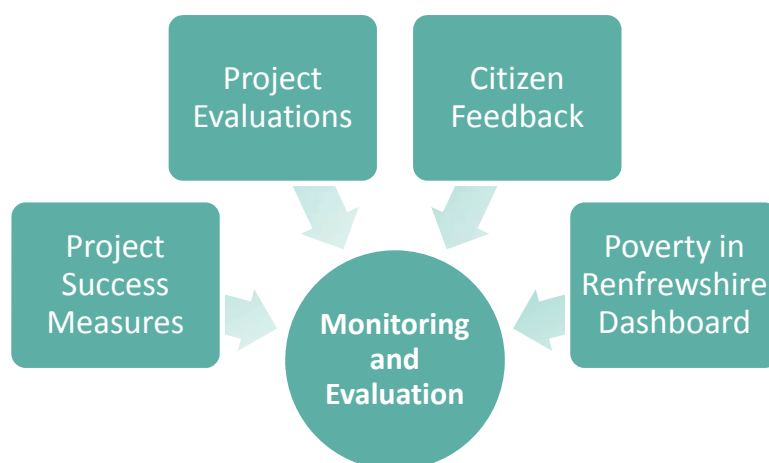
Addressing the **stigma** experienced by people living in poverty was a key finding of the Commission. In February 2015, we signed up to the 'Stick Your Labels' campaign to tackle poverty related stigma, run by the Poverty Alliance. We are currently undertaking a stigma project with the Customer Service Centre, which will look at how we can support staff to provide the best customer service that doesn't stigmatise.

We have developed a **Digital Participation** Plan, which will be the centre of our new Digital Strategy for Renfrewshire. A Digital Participation Officer and Digital Volunteer Co-ordinator are currently working with local third sector organisations (Reaching Older Adults in Renfrewshire and the Disability Resource Centre ) to provide targeted digital support to the most digitally excluded groups. In addition to this, a Digital Skills Trainer is working with libraries staff across Renfrewshire so they can better support citizens looking to develop digital skills in the library.

We will be changing the way we **assess the impact of our decisions** to ensure that we take poverty into account, as well as equalities and human rights. This new process is currently being developed and will be piloted later in 2016.

## Measuring Success

We are continuing to develop a robust Tackling Poverty Measurement Framework, which comprises a number of tools at project and programme level to measure the impact and effectiveness of the Strategy and Action Plan.



All of the projects within the Tackling Poverty Action Plan have identified **project success measures** and performance indicators. These are separated into key outputs and outcomes for each individual project, and the projects are aligned to the strategic outcomes of Pockets, Prospects and Places.

A number of projects within the Action Plan have **project evaluations** arranged in order to establish the effectiveness of the projects, particularly projects that test or trial new ways of working. In addition to this, a number of projects also have existing evaluation arrangements. These evaluations will be shared wherever this is possible, and made available on the Council's website.

**Citizen feedback** was a significant part of Renfrewshire Tackling Poverty Commission's work, and continues to be a key element of evaluating the effectiveness of the Strategy and Action Plan. In line with the Commission's engagement approach, engagement activity will provide a rich source of qualitative data that reflects on the performance of individual projects, and the programme as a whole.

A '**Poverty in Renfrewshire Dashboard**' has been developed in order to give a more responsive picture of poverty in Renfrewshire, by looking at key causes and impacts of poverty as well as poverty levels themselves. The indicators for the dashboard are a mix of both national and local indicators.

The national indicators come from the national Child Poverty Measurement Framework, and are therefore already aligned to the programmes strategic outcomes through the national logic model. In addition they come from national data sets which allow for benchmarking with other Local Authority areas and also national trends.

The local indicators will provide a more localised and responsive picture, by using local datasets to provide more regular feedback on key issues. These are still being developed with Council services, and it is anticipated that the final dashboard will be available in Summer 2016.