



To: Safer and Stronger Renfrewshire Thematic Board

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Report by:

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Renfrewshire Community Safety Partnership Tackling Poverty Initiatives

1. Summary

- 1.1 The Renfrewshire Tackling Poverty Commission 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.
- 1.2 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.
- 1.3 As part of the Tackling Poverty Strategy, a number of priorities were identified across a number of service areas. The priorities being taken forward by Community Resources and Police Scotland and which impact on the Safer and Stronger action plan include:
 - Priority 1: Increase the number of households who can access employment that provides and acceptable standard of living,
 - Priority 4: Close the educational gap between children from low income families and their better off peers, and
 - Priority 5: Create neighbourhoods where people want to live and can afford to live.
- 1.4 There are four workstreams within the Tackling Poverty Action Plan which Community Resources have a key role in delivering, namely;
 - The roll out of an alternative breakfast club model in schools which were highlighted as being in identified poverty areas,



- The expansion of the award winning Street Stuff diversionary programme by providing activities between 4pm- 6pm and the provision of meals to the children attending the activities,
- Development of a joint employability initiative with Police Scotland with the creation of training posts for young people as Special Constables and Special Wardens, who would otherwise may not be afforded these opportunities
- A review of Renfrewshire Council's current arrangements for registration, regulation and enforcement of private landlords

1.5 The four workstreams are managed as part of Community Resources Strategic Change Board, with a Project Board meeting on a 3 weekly basis to review progress and monitor performance against the agreed outcomes.

2. Recommendations

2.1 That the Safer & Stronger Renfrewshire Thematic Board;

- Notes the progress with the four workstreams impacting on the Safer and Stronger action plan within the Tackling Poverty Action Plan,
- Notes that a future report will be submitted to a future Board outlining the performance against the success measures for each of the workstreams.

3. Background

3.1 As part of the £6 million Renfrewshire Council investment within the Tackling Poverty Strategy, over £600,000 has been allocated to the four workstreams within Community Resources with a summary of each workstream provided below.

Alternative Breakfast Club Model (£120,000)

3.2 A Tackling Poverty submission was made to expand the Families First Strategy by introducing a new model of breakfast club provision for the start of the school day.

The objectives of the workstream are:

- Ensuring that through the delivery of the enhanced programme, children and young people provide access to nutritional food and advice as part of a wider curriculum;
- Parents and children have access to information they otherwise would not be able to access
- Demonstrate the links and relationship between school food, culture, health and the environment;



- Help develop a child's relationship with food from both a health benefit perspective but also to provide opportunities they would not be able to ordinarily access.
- 3.3 Studies have shown that having a healthy breakfast can improve levels of concentration and is a key area in the Scottish Government's recent publication 'Better Eating, Better Learning. The roll out of this model will also review those schools with high levels of free meal entitlement but low levels of uptake ensuring that those children entitled are taking their free school meal.
- 3.4 The outcomes from this workstream are:
- Delivery of enhanced breakfast club provision at additional locations within identified poverty areas,
 - Increased engagement with parents and children in areas of identified poverty,
 - Improve knowledge of food to young people and the impact it can have on their health and well being,
 - 4 schools have been identified in conjunction with Children's Services where the 'Good Morning' clubs will be rolled out. They are St David's, Cochrane Castle, Gallowhill and St Catherine's
- 3.5 These four schools were identified for the initial roll out with the intention that near the end of the first term of the roll out, updated costs are considered and if possible the provision rolled out to additional schools. In addition there has been an application for further funding to be made to the Tackling Poverty fund to allow for the model to be expanded to Castlehead High School.

Expanded Street Stuff Programme (£250,000)

- 3.6 Street Stuff is a youth engagement programme which seeks to interact with children and young people in their own communities, through the deployment of mobile resources, including football pitches, youth buses and other facilities with various equipment (games consoles, dance mats, exercise equipment) to areas where low level offending and anti-social behaviour is taking place. Street Stuff is staffed by professional coaches who are employed by St Mirren Football Club.
- 3.7 The objectives of this workstream are:
- Improved social inclusion and access to facilities to those children in poverty areas, who otherwise would not be able to experience the services provided by the programme;
 - Provision of and education around healthy eating and healthy lifestyles; and
 - The deployment of these activities in areas of poverty will increase positive



destinations for young people.

- 3.8 As part of the expanded programme, sessions have been delivered between 3.30pm and 6.00pm across all five Local Area Committee areas. Since the introduction of the expanded programme in October 2015 there have been over 6000 attendances at the additional sessions.
- 3.9 In addition to the introduction of additional sessions, 2 youth buses have been purchased to expand the Street Stuff offer, and have been part of the expanded programme of activities since March 2016, with a further 2 buses being purchased during 2016/17 as part of the tackling poverty funding.

**Joint Employability Initiative – Police Scotland & Renfrewshire Council
(£135,000)**

- 3.10 The introduction of a number of Special Constables and Special Wardens posts for young people from areas of poverty will provide employment and training for a number of people who otherwise would not be afforded the opportunity of work experience within this area.
- 3.11 The objectives of the workstream are:
- Improved social inclusion and access to facilities to those young people, who otherwise would not be able to experience the services provided by the programme;
 - Volunteering and employability opportunities to support community safety in key locations;
 - To better equip young people from areas of poverty and prepare them for future long term employment opportunities which may arise;
 - The successful candidates will receive on the job training and experience in a range of activities, including dealing with members of the public and better understanding the close links between poverty and low level anti social behaviour.
- 3.12 The programme has so far successfully recruited 7 Special Wardens to the programme. Unfortunately, despite a significant amount of time and resource spent with a number of prospective candidates there were no successful candidates who made it through to the final stage of the Special Constables programme. The entrance requirements made it a challenging process as these cannot be amended and some of the candidates were unsuccessful due to vetting, while others were unsuccessful in passing the entrance exam. A lessons learned exercise has been carried out to identify any improvements that could be made to the process for a future intake of Special Constables.



- 3.13 A further intake 'ring fenced' to the recruitment of Special Constables is planned for July 2016 and a review of the previous recruitment has been carried out to ensure a targeted effort can be made to recruit Special Constables.

Private Landlords Registration and Enforcement (£30,000)

- 3.14 The Tackling Poverty Action Plan made two key recommendations in relation to the private rented sector aimed at controlling housing costs for tenants and ensuring a linkage between the regulation of the sector and the provision of high quality, well managed accommodation.
- 3.15 The objectives of the workstream are:
- Call for additional powers to ensure private tenants are charged a fair price
 - Review Renfrewshire Council's registration, regulation and enforcement arrangements of private landlords
- 3.16 A report that outlines future options with the aim of ensuring private tenants are charged a fair rent and that improvements are made to the Council's registration, regulation and enforcement arrangements of private landlords
- 3.17 This review has considered the current powers available to the Council as well as their current use and options to further utilise these powers in order to improve both physical conditions and management standards within the sector. As part of the review a temporary Private Sector Housing Officer has been recruited to work with the existing team to ensure the enforcement of the sector is as robust as possible and rogue landlords are challenged and necessary action taken.
- 3.18 The review has also looked at how effective current arrangements are as well as potential actions which could help to alleviate poverty through improved affordability and quality and management standards within the sector with new legislation and powers likely to come into force in 2016.
- 3.19 The Private Landlords report has been completed which outlines future options in relation to rent charges, registration, regulation and enforcement arrangements. The outcome of the report will now be taken forward by the Project Board for this workstream which includes officers from Renfrewshire Council's Development & Housing Services, Community Resources and Finance and Resources.

4. Resources

- 4.1 The Safer and Stronger Renfrewshire Action Plan identifies the resources requirements for each individual action.



5. Prevention

- 5.1 The Action Plan framework allows the Safer and Stronger Renfrewshire Thematic Board to plan resources and direct investment towards prevention and early intervention.

6. Community Involvement/Engagement

- 6.1 The Action Plan has been developed through the Safer and Stronger Renfrewshire Thematic Board and sub groups whereby the third sector is widely represented.

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