

# **Local Child Poverty Action Report**

## **Renfrewshire**

### **2020/2021**



## **Foreword**

The Covid-19 pandemic has had a huge impact in 2020/21 and the consequences to our families in Renfrewshire cannot be overstated. This full year has been dominated by our response to the pandemic, with our priority during this time safeguarding our citizens, ensuring their basic needs were met and those families that found themselves in difficult circumstances were supported.

This, our third Local Child Poverty Action Report sets out activities undertaken in Renfrewshire to reduce child poverty between April 2020 and March 2021, which not only continued, but were intensified during this unprecedented year. More importantly, it sets out our plans for the future as we concentrate on recovery and renewal, with our most affected families and children at its core

The Report has been jointly developed by Renfrewshire Council, NHS Greater Glasgow and Clyde (NHSGGC), and Renfrewshire Health and Social Care Partnership (HSCP). It also includes information about the wealth of partnership work which has taken place to tackle child poverty across Renfrewshire's Community Planning Partnership and beyond.

As the year has gone on, we've examined the impact on our communities and families in a variety of ways to ensure our communities are at the heart of the recovery. This has allowed us to make a plan for social renewal in Renfrewshire for next year and beyond, focus on our families who are living in poverty and deflect, where we can, the full impact of the pandemic. Funding will be targeted over the coming months, supporting our action plan developed collaboratively with our communities on what matters most to them, providing financial support and advice, access to digital services, physical and mental wellbeing and helping children, young people and families.

Our focus, whether through our Economic Recovery Plan, our existing Tackling Poverty Programme, or our Social Renewal Plan will be improving wellbeing and tackling the inequalities that exist across Renfrewshire's communities.

We fully recognise the amount of work we will have to do to in the coming years to get over the effects of the pandemic in all areas of life, but the Council, NHS, Partners and community groups all over Renfrewshire will continue to prioritise our children and work as hard as we can to reduce child poverty.

**Sandra Black**

**Chief Executive, Renfrewshire Council**

## Executive Summary

This is the third Local Child Poverty Action Report produced by Renfrewshire Council. The report captures the range of activity that has taken place in Renfrewshire to reduce child poverty in 2020/21 and looks forward to the actions planned for 21/22 and beyond. With a focus on recovery and renewal, the Report has a greater emphasis on the next 12 months and on longer term work being undertaken to respond and recover from the impacts of the pandemic and to support those disproportionately impacted with issues such as low income, insecure employment, caring responsibilities and disabilities.

The Covid-19 pandemic has had a huge impact on our communities, causing a massive shift in our services, and although much of that impact is still coming to light we also know many effects will be longer term, and we have developed a term Social Renewal Plan in response which, along with our Economic Recovery Plan and refreshed Service Delivery plans, will complement the clear strategic direction set out by our Council Plan and Community Plan in these unprecedented and rapidly changing times.

Our investment in our Tackling Poverty programme continues to mitigate the effects of child poverty specifically. In 2021/22 this will be bolstered by £1.4million to deliver our Social Renewal Action Plan, which puts listening to communities and address inequalities at its core. Our work with Poverty Alliance this year to better capture the voices of people with lived experience of poverty is central to this work moving forward.

In addition we will continue to work with NHSGGC, our Health and Social Care Partnership and many other external and third sector organisations to support children and families in Renfrewshire.

This report focusses on our longer term response to the pandemic, but also highlights our actions and achievements throughout 2020/21. These include:

- **Approval of our Economic Recovery Plan 2020-22** which focuses on job retention and creation, employability, supporting upskilling and innovation, tackling inequalities and delivering a 'green' recovery.
- With £1m per year invested in our **Tackling Poverty Programme** over 5 years, this continues to have a positive impact on low income families in Renfrewshire, supporting projects such as Healthier Wealthier Children advice, Cost of the School Day, and provision of energy advice specifically to families.
- Our work on **Community Food** has supported a wide range of Place Based Responses to food insecurity and issues of food access. This has allowed thousands of families throughout Renfrewshire to access food in a dignified way.
- Renfrewshire was one of the few local authorities in Scotland to carry out **Participatory Budgeting** exercises in 2020/21. Youth Services, the Chief Executive Service and Renfrewshire Youth Voice supported another round of 'Celebrating Renfrewshire', the youth-led participatory budgeting exercise. Over 1,700 young people voted on the 80 project ideas which were submitted, and £124,437 was awarded to youth projects across Renfrewshire.

- Our **employability service, Invest in Renfrewshire**, offers a wide range of tailored supports to help residents on the journey towards and into employment. Amongst the many clients they have supported this year were 78 clients who are part of a household with dependent children with 56 of these lone parent households. Invest continues to use Parental Employability Support Funding to target and support the priority groups identified in the 'Every Child Every Chance' report.
- In October 2020 the Council bid to be a **Kickstart** provider and to be the Gateway organisation for local businesses to get involved. The Kickstart Scheme aims to create 6-month work placements for those aged 16 to 24 who are in receipt of Universal Credit. The aim is for 700 places to be created across Renfrewshire and already 200 employers have signed up to create at least one Kickstart Job Placement with 455 job placements approved so far.
- Even in the challenging circumstances brought about by the pandemic, the number of accredited **living wage** employers in Renfrewshire have increased by 9 this year to 80, and we continue our work to increase this number. In addition NHSGGC became an accredited Living Wage employer in November 2020, positioning them as the largest NHS Board in Scotland to have done so.
- Our **Energy Advocates** have worked with 1049 clients this year to reduce bills and energy debt saving them almost £315,000 including ongoing savings, write offs and Warm Home Discounts. This includes 343 families with young children who saved £112,881.
- Our **Cost of the School Day** funding is flexible and has been used to support new and diverse needs during the pandemic. Food vouchers, energy top-ups, toiletries and warm clothing have been supplied this year as well as more usual items such as stationery and school uniforms. For the year 2020/21, £123,000 was allocated to the fund, of which £75,000 was from the Tackling Poverty Programme and £48,000 was from Attainment Challenge.
- **Sanitary product provision** has diversified this year with many venues and community settings where products had previously been available closed. The social enterprise, Hey Girls were contracted to provide an online ordering and home delivery service, with a supplementary telephone ordering services run by our own Neighbourhood Hubs.
- **Advice** is a vitally important part of our efforts to tackle child poverty, and apart from our own Advice Works service, the Council also provides funding to Renfrewshire Citizens Advice Bureau to provide both a general advice service and a community legal advice service. An additional Welfare Rights service has been funded this year, and RCAB have been awarded a further £100,000 in the 2021/22 budget for an Employment Advice service. The Council also supports the Healthier Wealthier Children and Families First Projects, providing dedicated advice services to families with children. Advice has continued to be provided throughout the pandemic and Council funded services have put millions of pounds into our families pockets.
- The Council has continued to **work with Social Security Scotland** across a number of services, including schools and nurseries, to ensure our citizens know about, and are

claiming the benefits they are entitled to. As a valued member of our Advice Partnership and Our Children network, Social Security Scotland also engage with a wide variety of partners throughout Renfrewshire to increase uptake of Scottish benefits, especially those for families with low incomes.

- There is still a clear commitment and expectation within Renfrewshire to raise **attainment** for all whilst closing the poverty-related attainment gap and plans were revised to ensure responsiveness during the pandemic. We also continue to focus relentlessly on improving the mental and emotional wellbeing of children, young people and families. The mental health challenges experienced by some individuals and families have been a major finding of our Community Impact Assessment into how our communities have been affected by the pandemic.
- In response to the pandemic Renfrewshire Council worked with partners to support **digital participation** and 1590 devices awarded to a wide range of Renfrewshire public sector and community based organisations through the Connecting Scotland programme.
- A new process was introduced to capture as many possible **council tax reduction** applications during telephone applications in cases when the customer had mentioned they had a decrease to their income. This led to an additional 91 council tax reduction claims. We also proactively contacted all those notifying a death, all shielding and all who had paid council tax last year but not this year to establish whether any support was needed. This led to a variety of actions to write off debts, set up payment plans and award new discounts and further council tax reductions, in many cases for families with children.
- Our **partners** also carry out a significant amount of work in Renfrewshire to reduce child poverty, and organisations throughout Renfrewshire have adapted their services to work with families online and provide a different kind of service to meet emerging demand such as dropping off food and activity packs.

While we recognise that much has been achieved this year, we will continue to work with partners, in communities and across all services to ensure our low-income families are supported and child poverty is reduced. We will also work to meet the changing needs of those living in Renfrewshire as we move to recovery.

## Introduction

In Renfrewshire we are committed to addressing Child Poverty, and this, our third report details the work which has been ongoing in 2020/21 and looks forward to our future plans. This year has been like no other, and we have had to work nimbly and respond quickly to the needs of our families.

As the year wore on, we realised that both the pandemic and the impact of Covid on our families and communities would be longer lasting and deeper than originally envisaged. In response we have developed a Social Renewal Plan which, aligned with our Economic Recovery Plan 20-22 and Tackling Poverty programme, will form the basis of our recovery work. To inform the Social Renewal plan a community impact assessment was undertaken to develop a deeper understanding of the pandemic on local people and communities and we have engaged with a range of families, including those with lived experience of poverty. The Plan will have wide-ranging priorities including targeted actions to support those disproportionately impacted with issues such as low income, insecure employment, caring responsibilities and disabilities.

Our Digital Strategy has also been refreshed, and a new Digital Strategy was agreed in September 2020 laying out the Council's digital vision to ensure digital benefits are shared equally across all people, groups and geographies in Renfrewshire.

In addition to these plans which are expected to produce longer term solutions to some of the issues our citizens are facing, other actions we have taken have been smaller scale, and of immediate assistance to families in need, like Cost of the School Day funding being used for food vouchers and energy top-ups for families identified by schools as struggling.

Our 21/22 budget also has a focus on reducing poverty and responding to need, including that exacerbated by the pandemic. As part of this, we are investing £2.7million of combined Council and Scottish Government funding to tackle inequalities and support people in our communities most affected by the pandemic. This funding will be targeted over the coming months, supporting our action plan developed collaboratively with our communities on what matters most to them, providing financial support and advice, access to digital services, physical and mental wellbeing and helping children, young people and families.

Throughout the pandemic, much of the Council 'business as usual' has continued, combined with the work targeted to help low income families. Our advice teams quickly moved channels to telephone and online, our free school meals payments were paid directly into bank accounts and our Stakeholder Liaison Team proactively contacted those who were identified as potentially requiring support to pay their Council Tax.

Over the last year, we were pleased to be working with the Poverty Alliance as part of their 'Get Heard' programme, and will continue to work with them to ensure local people have a mechanism by which they can continue to feed their ideas and opinions into the Council in a systematic way.

We will continue to work with NHSGGC as a member of the NHSGGC's child poverty leads network, and other partners to consider how to get the best outcomes for Renfrewshire families.

Tackling poverty, with a focus on child poverty, is a priority across all services within Renfrewshire Council and our partners such as NHSGGC our Health and Social Care Partnership and many other third sector and statutory organisations. The landscape remains challenging, however, together we are committed to giving children the best start in life.

This report describes the work that has taken place in the year 20/21 to reduce child poverty, as well as our high level plans for future work. The report focusses on actions intended to impact positively the three driver areas as well as describing those intended to prevent today's young people from becoming future parents in poverty. Where appropriate it also provides an update to last year's work, with the appendices capturing all of the many activities carried out by the Council, the Health Board and Health and Social Care Partnership and our partners to reduce child poverty.

The impact of the pandemic on Renfrewshire's communities, residents and businesses has been unprecedented. Our initial response was reported in the last LCPAR: providing payments to families in place of free school meals; relaxing Scottish Welfare Fund rules and quickly ensuring a supply of essential food and other items was in place for our most vulnerable families. This was supplemented by the forming of a Local Assistance Team, Neighbourhood Hubs and a Community Food group to help facilitate a Renfrewshire wide community response to Covid-19 issues.

The pandemic has also had a significant impact on the operation of the Council and on how services are delivered. Whilst there have been periods where national policy required some services to be paused, most Council services have continued throughout the year and have had to adapt to new ways of working. At the same time, the Council has taken on additional tasks directly related to supporting residents through the pandemic, whether as a single agency, or more often as a key partner with other public and third sector organisations.

We are ambitious for our young people and will work across Renfrewshire to negate the effects of the pandemic on them and help them to take a full part in society. Our focus now is on recovery and renewal with a key focus on addressing some of the significant inequalities that have existed historically across Renfrewshire's communities.

### **What is a Local Child Poverty Action Report?**

The Child Poverty (Scotland) Act 2017 requires that each local authority and each relevant Health Board must jointly prepare and publish a local child poverty action report after the end of each reporting year. The local child poverty action report must describe measures taken during the reporting year within the local authority area that reduce child poverty or improve outcomes for children living in poverty. It must also describe planned and proposed future actions.

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## 1. Scottish Government Targets

1.1 The Scottish Government believes that poverty is not inevitable and seeks to significantly reduce child poverty. It has promised children a better start in life and more opportunities as they grow up; has offered parents more and better-paid jobs and greater security in which to bring up their families; and has committed to tackling deep-seated inequalities.

1.2 The Child Poverty (Scotland) Act 2017, is key to the ambition to eradicate child poverty.

The Act:

- Sets out four statutory income targets for 2030;
- Places a duty on Scottish Ministers to publish child poverty delivery plans in 2018, 2022, and 2026, and to report on those plans annually.
- Places a duty on local authorities and health boards to report annually on activity they are taking, and will take, to reduce child poverty.
- Sets out that a statutory Poverty and Inequality Commission will be established from 1 July 2019, with functions related to the child poverty reduction targets.

1.3 The statutory income targets are ambitious and relate to the following measures of poverty:

**Relative poverty:** a child is in relative poverty if they live in a household where equivalised income for the financial year in question is less than 60 per cent of the median equivalised net income for that financial year.

**Absolute poverty:** a child is in absolute poverty if they live in a household with an income below 60 per cent of the median equivalised net income in 2010–11.

**Combined low income and material deprivation:** a child is in combined low income and material deprivation if they live in a household with an income below 70 per cent of the equivalised median net income for that year and are unable to afford a number of basic goods and services (material deprivation).

**Persistent poverty:** a child is in persistent poverty if they have been living in Scotland and in relative poverty for three of the past four years.

The key targets for the Scottish Government by 2030 after housing costs are as follows:

Less than 10% of children live in households that are in **relative poverty** (2017/18 **24%**)

Less than 5% of children live in households that are in **absolute poverty** (2017/18 **22%**)

Less than 5% of children live in households that are in **combined low income and material deprivation** (2017/18 **14%**)

Less Than 5% of children live in households that are in **persistent poverty** (2017/18 **17%**)

(Source for 2017/18 figures: Family Resources Survey, Understanding Society)

1.4 The Child Poverty (Scotland) Act 2017 requires that the Local Child Poverty Action Report must set out any measures taken in the previous reporting year by the local authority and each relevant Health Board which make progress now on contributing to the meeting of these child poverty targets. This is done by linking the action to one of the direct drivers of poverty below.

The Act also requires that local authorities and Health Boards report on preventative actions which will help children and young people avoid becoming parents in poverty by 2030.

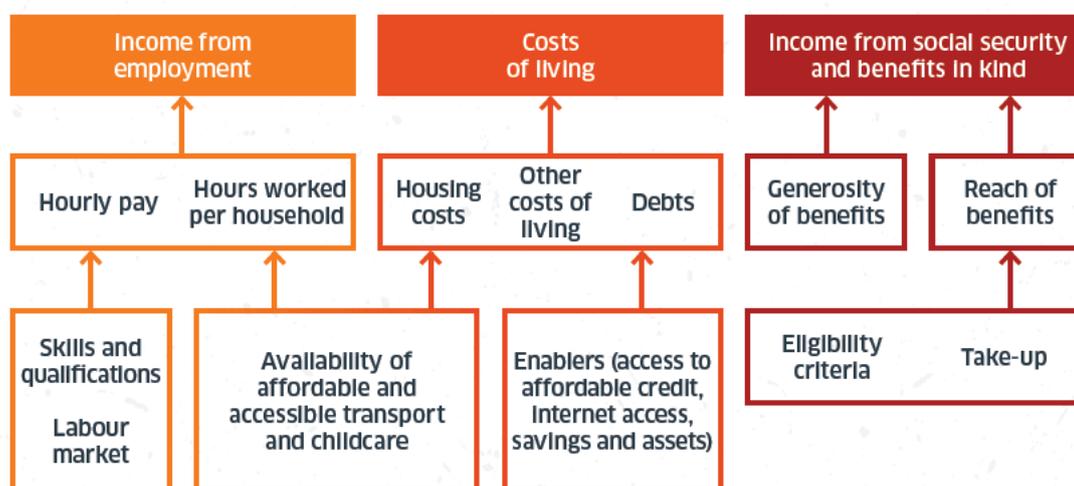
## 2. Drivers of Poverty

2.1 The three key drivers of child poverty are identified by the Scottish Government as:

- Income from employment
- Costs of living
- Income from Social Security and benefits in kind

2.2 For children under 12, direct action will not impact on targets unless it maximises parental income, thus most of the actions reported are around maximising income and reducing outgoings for the parents/family and are not specifically related to children.

The table below shows the drivers and what can affect them.



2.3 In Renfrewshire much work has been done which over time will mitigate the consequences of poverty. For example, our work to close the attainment gap between children from low income families and their better off peers and our employability work such as Youth Guarantee and Kickstart.

## 3. Context

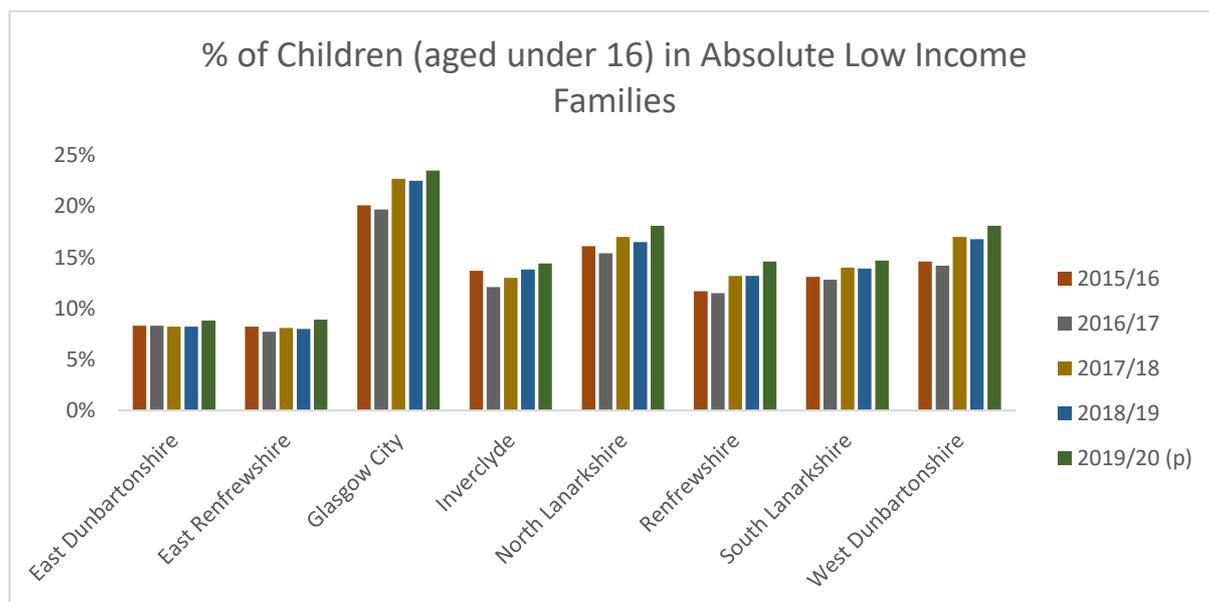
### Child Poverty rates in Renfrewshire

- 3.1 In March 2021, the DWP released a set of local indicators of child poverty which show statistics for children aged under 16 in low income families. These are an update to those which were first published in March 2020 and show child poverty rates at March 2020. While these statistics do not reflect any changes brought about by the pandemic, they are the most recent available.
- 3.2 Last year's figures show that in 2019, in Renfrewshire the percentage of children living in absolute low income families was 13.5% and in relative low income families was 16.9%. In

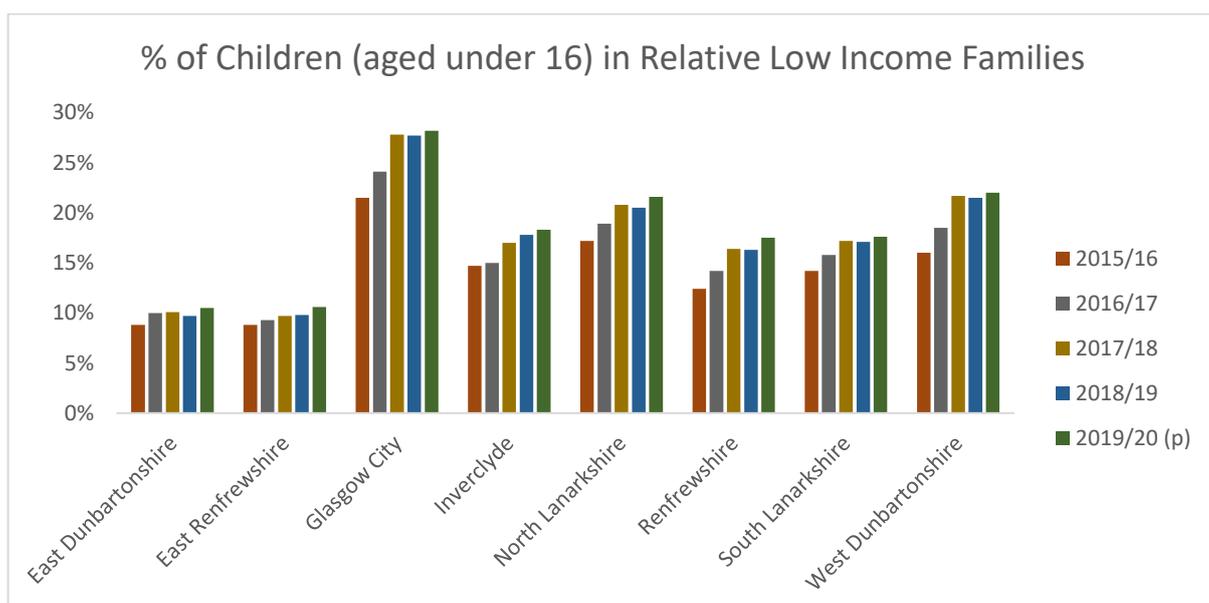
2020 those figures had increased to **15%** in absolute low income families, the equivalent of **4430** children and **18%** of children living in relative low income families, the equivalent of **5299** children. This was compared to a percentage figure of children living in relative low income families for Scotland of **21%** the equivalent of **210,000** children.

### Local Authority Comparison

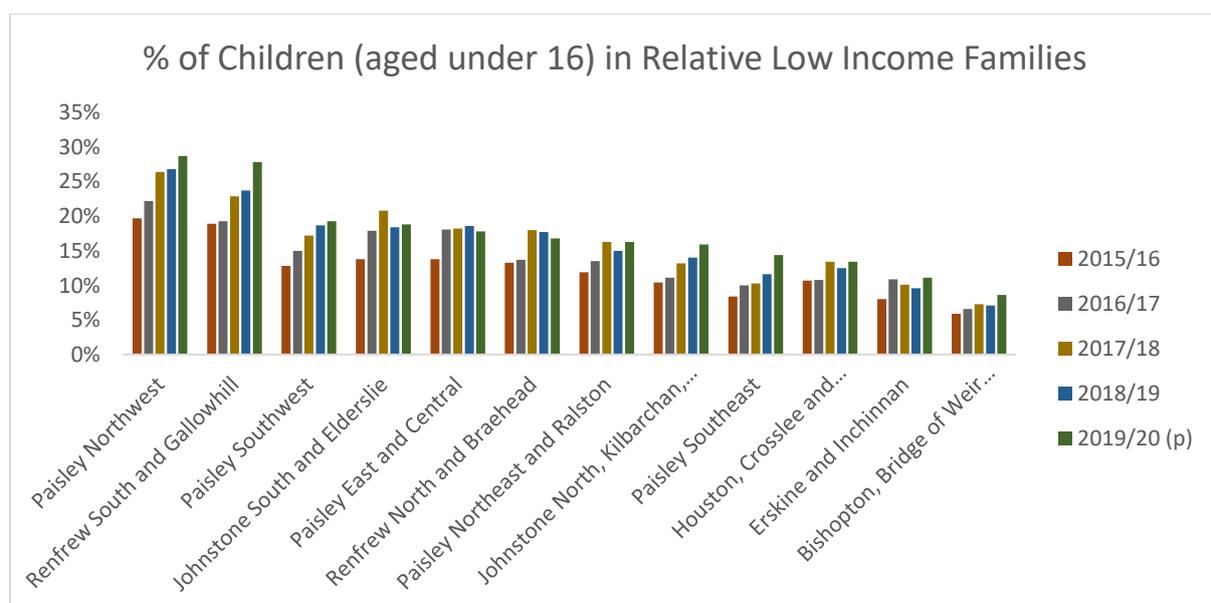
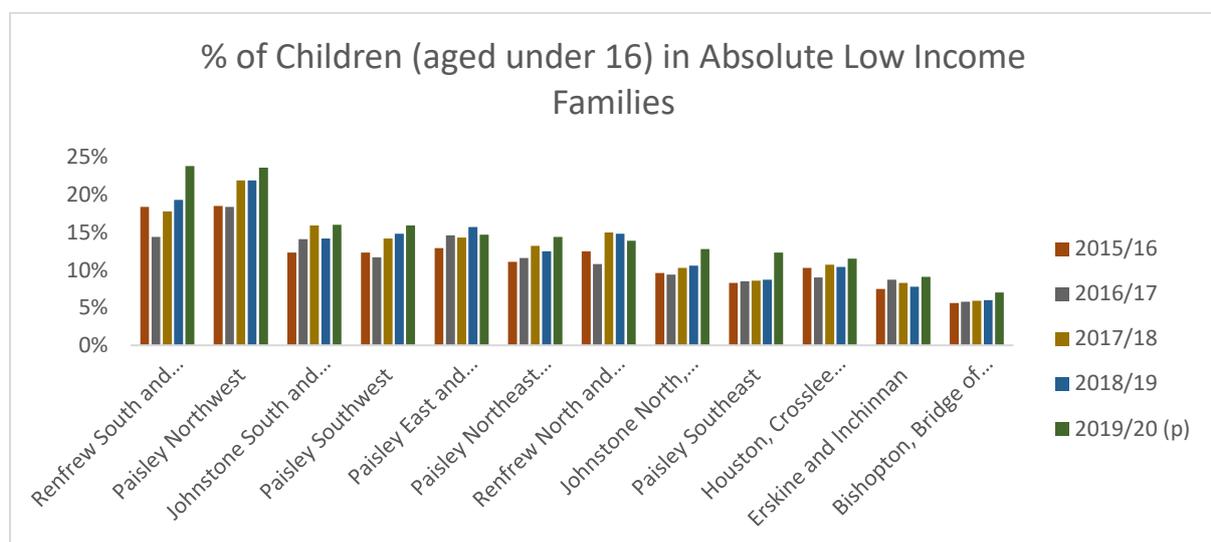
3.3 Below is the comparison with other local authorities. In all cases the percentage of children in Absolute Low Income Families has risen and Renfrewshire’s rates remain below Glasgow, North Lanarkshire and West Dunbartonshire. These most recent figures shown that our rate is equal to South Lanarkshire, where last year it was very slightly less. All local authorities show a similar rise of no more than two percent.



3.4 Again there has been some movement with the percentages of children in Relative Low Income Families. In comparison local authorities, no authority has shown a decrease, and rates have remained the same or increased by a maximum of two percent.

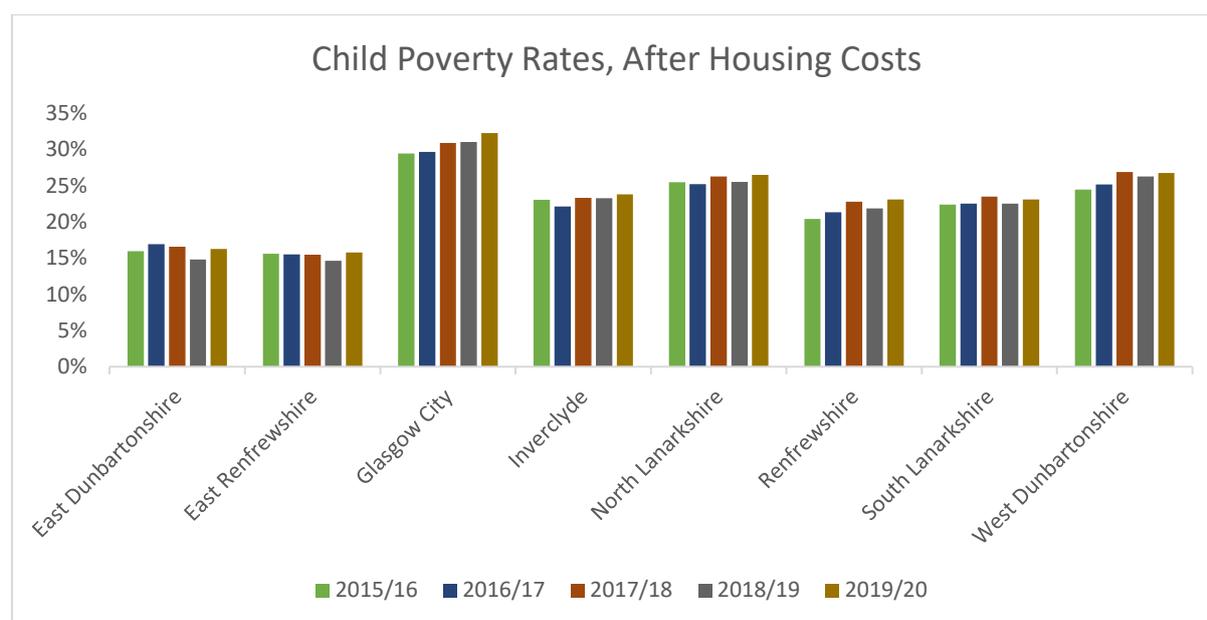


- 3.5 This dataset is based on a **'before housing cost'** estimate of relative poverty. This measure takes no account of the effect on disposable income of some households having to pay a lot more in rent or mortgage payments than others.
- 3.6 The tables below show poverty levels across Renfrewshire wards, and changes since 2015/2016. These indicate that the ward with the highest percentage of children living in both relative and absolute low income families has historically been Paisley Northwest, and this has been consistent throughout this whole reporting period. However, in Renfrew South and Gallowhill which consistently showed the second highest rates, rates have increased for relative poverty by 4% and absolute by 5%, in both cases coming to almost equal Paisley Northwest.
- 3.7 Although figures have increased this year, the Bishopton, Bridge of Weir and Langbank ward has consistently had the lowest levels of child poverty in Renfrewshire and this remains true for the 2019/20 figures.



### End Child Poverty statistics

- 3.8 On 19 May 2021, the End Child Poverty coalition published child poverty estimates for children living in poverty for each year between 2014/15 and 2019/20. These build on the DWP and HMRC dataset reported in 3.1 – 3.7 to estimate the numbers of children living in relative poverty **after housing costs**, by Scottish local authority. Scotland has lower levels of child poverty (24%) than England (30%) or Wales (31%) but the figures show that child poverty has risen in every Scottish local authority over the period reported.
- 3.9 In Renfrewshire, the most recent figure is 23.1%, a rise of 3.8% since 2014/15. Again, these figures do not take into account any of the impact of the Covid-19 pandemic.



- 3.10 Whether before or after housing costs, these figures can only provide poverty levels and do not provide more detailed information about family circumstances. While the poverty risk is much lower for children in working households compared to those in non-working households, not all work pays enough to lift the household above the poverty threshold. It is estimated that in Scotland in 2017-20, **68%** of children in relative poverty after housing costs were living in working households (160,000 children each year).

### Scottish Index of Multiple Deprivation (SIMD)

- 3.11 The most recent Scottish Index of Multiple Deprivation was published on 29 January 2020 and included in last year's LCPAR. SIMD is the official tool for finding the most deprived areas in Scotland. It identifies small concentrations of multiple deprivation across all of Scotland in a consistent way, rating almost 7000 data zones in Scotland. Renfrewshire has 225 data zones.
- 3.12 SIMD data is not published each year, but gives an indication of where Renfrewshire levels of deprivation sit within Scotland. The ten most deprived data zones in Renfrewshire and where they rank against the rest of Scotland are shown along with previous information.

2019/2020		2018/2019	
Data Zone Name	Rank	Data Zone Name	Rank
Paisley Ferguslie - 06	4	Paisley Ferguslie - 06	1
Paisley Ferguslie - 05	9	Paisley Ferguslie - 05	11
Paisley Ferguslie - 03	86	Paisley Ferguslie - 03	22
Paisley Ferguslie – 07	89	Paisley North West - 01	124
Paisley Ferguslie - 02	124	Johnstone South West - 02	139
Johnstone South West - 02	193	Paisley Ferguslie - 07	151
Paisley North East - 02	203	Paisley North East - 02	152
Paisley Foxbar - 01	252	Paisley Ferguslie – 02	181
Paisley Foxbar - 03	264	Paisley Foxbar - 01	250
Paisley North West - 03	271	Paisley East - 06	281

- 3.13 The total number of datazones in Scotland and Renfrewshire are detailed in the table below along with totals in the most deprived 5%, 10% and 20% in both 2020 and 2016. Within Renfrewshire’s population of 176,830, this corresponds to 9,505 people in the most deprived 5% overall, 23,828 in the most deprived 10% overall and 42,856 in the most deprived 20% overall.

	Total Datazones	20% Most Deprived	10% Most Deprived	5% Most Deprived
Scotland	6976	1395	698	349
Renfrewshire 2020	225 (3.2%)	56 (4.0%)	33 (4.7%)	13 (3.7%)
Renfrewshire 2016	225 (3.2%)	61 (4.3%)	36 (5.1%)	13 (3.7%)

- 3.14 The SIMD is one of a wide range of tools that the Council uses to help plan activities, programmes of work and effective partnership working and engagement.

### Claimant Count

- 3.15 Renfrewshire’s Claimant Count in March 2021 was **7,285** representing an **81.4%** increase since March 2020 and accounts for 6.3% of the working age population. This rate is higher than the Scottish average of 6.1%.
- 3.16 Renfrewshire’s claimant count rose sharply in the months of April and May 2020 when the first lockdown began. However, since then it has remained fairly level and it will be hoped that once nonessential shops open up again at the end of April 2021, then this may lead to more jobs becoming available to the local workforce.
- 3.17 Conversely, some businesses may not be able to retain staff once support from the Government begins to scale back the furlough scheme later in the year. There have already been several high-profile job losses announced in Renfrewshire including the loss of 700 jobs at Rolls Royce in Inchinnan. Therefore, it may be sometime before the claimant count returns to pre-pandemic levels.
- 3.18 As of February 2021, 12,500 Renfrewshire residents were on furlough, a 5% reduction from the previous month’s figures. With the economy beginning to re-open at the end of April 21, it will be expected that furlough number will continue to reduce. Cumulatively, 32,800 Renfrewshire resident employments have been furloughed since the scheme’s inception.

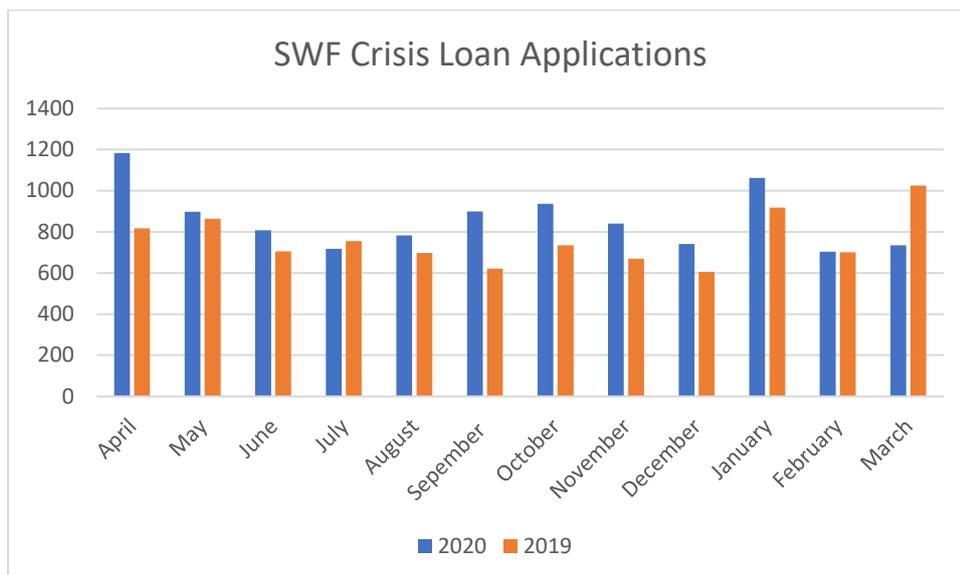
- 3.19 In regard to the Self Employment Income Support Scheme (SEISS), the take-up rate for Renfrewshire has been higher than the Scottish and UK rates for each of the grants (1,2 and 3). Latest figures show as of January 2021, total number of claims made for SEISS 3 in Renfrewshire was 3,800 for a value of £10.5m. In total £32.5m has been claimed by Renfrewshire self-employed residents.
- 3.20 The full impact of the pandemic on the Renfrewshire economy is yet to be determined. Government support schemes such as the Coronavirus Job Retention Scheme (“furlough” scheme) have enabled businesses to remain solvent and retain jobs, thus temporarily mitigating potential impacts. However, it is likely that once this support tapers off, more business closures and redundancies will follow.

#### **Household Costs**

- 3.21 Based on participatory research and online surveys Resolution Foundation research shows that for low income families with 2 children, household costs have risen over the past year due to: having children at home requiring more spend on food, energy and entertainment; the costs of home schooling; the increased costs of food, as cheaper items are harder to access and promotions have been curtailed; vital family and community support is curtailed and essential services unavailable at times, e.g. libraries. Over a third of low income families in this study increased their spending during 2020. By contrast, among high-income families without children, only 13% had increased their spending.
- 3.22 Home Energy Scotland have estimated the impact of Covid-19 as an increase of 37% on fuel bills as people stay at home. This translates to an extra £32.31 per month on fuel bills - £387 over the year. For those paying their bills by direct debit, increases may come as a huge shock. No specific national provision has been made for clients paying bills rather than prepaying and support for fuel vouchers is limited and patchy, with organisations having to claim grants to provide these where available and schemes such as More Electricity and Gas Assistance (MEGA) opening and closing at short notice.

#### **Scottish Welfare Fund**

- 3.23 Scottish Welfare Fund data shows there has been a 13% increase in the number of applicants, and a 28% increase in the average loan amount for **SWF Crisis Grants** in 20/21 compared to last year. In Renfrewshire, **10305** Crisis Grant applications have been made this year, an increase of **1191** on last year. Grants, on average, were **£22** more each than the previous year.
- 3.24 The chart below shows the numbers of **Crisis Grants applications** received from April 2020, compared to the numbers for the equivalent period in 2019. Numbers of applications have increased every month between February 2019 and 2020, apart from July, with April and September showing the biggest rises. It may be that the numbers were less in July, as this was the first time payments for Free School Meals were provided during the summer period to all those eligible for Clothing Grants. From February 21, there has been a slow down in applications, with only 2 more applications received this February than last and March 2021 numbers lower than those in March 2020, which was the start of the pandemic.
- 3.25 The amount per award has remained higher each month when compared to last year. The changes are, in part due to a relaxing of rules on SWF because of need during the pandemic.



#### 4. Impact of poverty on children's health

- 4.1 Evidence suggests that children born into or living in poverty experience many disadvantages which can have negative health and social consequences throughout their life. This can lead to children who experience poverty having poorer health, developmental and educational outcomes than their more affluent peers, creating inequalities.
- 4.2 According to NHS Scotland:
- The negative impacts of poverty on children start before birth and accumulate across the life course.
  - Poverty has negative impacts on children's health, social, emotional and cognitive development, behaviour and educational outcomes.
  - Poverty puts an additional strain on families, which can lead to parental mental health and relationship problems, financial problems and substance misuse. This can have a negative impact on parenting behaviours, which in turn impact on children's outcomes.
  - Disadvantaged adults may have an increased risk of their own children experiencing poverty.
- 4.3 The pandemic and associated unemployment and lower incomes has been one of the biggest health challenges faced by the country and both the virus itself and the control measures implemented to reduce the spread have impacted on health and wellbeing of young people. The Chief Medical Officer's report, Recover, Restore, Renew recognises the damaging impacts on our way of life and wellbeing, and states, *'There has been significant disruption to the delivery of education and to the social lives of our children and young people. Intensive efforts will continue to be required to mitigate against longer-run negative impacts for children and young people, whilst keeping the spread of the COVID-19 virus to a minimum.'*
- 4.4 Public Health Scotland is Scotland's lead national agency for improving and protecting the health and wellbeing of all of Scotland's people. Established by the Scottish Government and the Convention of Scottish Local Authorities (COSLA), this new national public health body, was launched on 1 April 2020. Work on tackling child poverty continues to be a key theme

for Public Health Scotland and activity will continue across each local authority, Health Board and HSCP.

## 5. Tackling Poverty Programme

- 5.1 In Renfrewshire, we recognise that although poverty is, first and foremost, about household income, the experience of poverty is often much wider and more complex than just having a low income, with some people experiencing a range of disadvantages that extend beyond just not having enough money.
- 5.2 Renfrewshire has had a Tackling Poverty Programme since 2015 which was informed by the findings of Renfrewshire's Tackling Poverty Commission.
- 5.3 On completion of the original Programme, in March 2018, Council agreed funding of £5 million over five years to deliver a tackling poverty programme based on the learning and evaluation of the projects carried out to date and building on the initiatives that have made the most difference to people's lives. At this time a further programme of activity was developed which sustained key projects, supporting people on low incomes, with a focus on low-income families with children.
- 5.4 The Tackling Poverty Programme investment continues to form a significant part of Renfrewshire's local response to tackling child poverty. Work is currently underway to develop the Social Renewal Action Plan for Renfrewshire, and this and the work of the Tackling Poverty Programme are aligned and complementary to the Local Child Poverty Action Report.
- 5.5 During 2021/22, the Tackling Poverty Programme will continue to provide investment to specific initiatives that support the Council's aspiration to tackle poverty. The initiatives support two key priorities:
  - Targeting support to families to that need it most (**£0.7 million allocated**); and
  - Removing barriers to participation for children and young people (**£0.4 million allocated**).

**Targeting support to families that need it most** initiatives are:

- **Families First** which will continue to offer early years and family support services, including targeted financial advice and parenting support.
- The **Healthier, Wealthier Children** service will continue to provide targeted advice and support to new and expectant parents on managing changes to finances and supporting them to claim benefits they are entitled to.
- **Energy Advice** will also continue to be offered to families who need support to reduce their energy bills, manage fuel debt and improve the energy efficiency in their homes.

**Removing barriers to participation for children and young people** initiatives are:

- **Breakfast clubs** will continue, providing a healthy breakfast to all pupils universally. This project relieves financial pressure on low income families, but most importantly, makes sure that children start the school day ready to learn.

- The **Cost of the School Day** fund will continue to operate across all primary and secondary schools in Renfrewshire, directly supporting families in a variety of ways including uniforms, food, transport, extra-curricular activities and curricular expenses.
- The programme will continue to provide **Street Stuff** activities during the holidays and at weekends, along with the provision of free healthy meals.
- The **Peer Health project** will continue in partnership with Active Communities, working with young people in secondary schools across Renfrewshire to identify key health priorities in their school and developing young people to lead their own activities to improve health and wellbeing, with a focus on mental health.
- **Skoobmobile** will continue to provide a mobile public library service directly to children and families in communities.

## 6. Listening to those with lived experience of poverty – Get Heard

- 6.1 Local people have been at the heart of our tackling poverty work and have a central role in defining the success of this. Our aim is to create an ongoing conversation with citizens, rather than traditional consultations with a start and end date.
- 6.2 In February 2020 Renfrewshire Council agreed to work with the Poverty Alliance on their **Get Heard Scotland** (GHS) programme in 2020/21 and this work has carried on throughout the year.
- 6.3 GHS is a programme coordinated by the Poverty Alliance and funded by the Scottish Government as part of Every Child Every Chance, the Scottish Government’s Tackling Child Poverty Delivery Plan. GHS is designed to help people on low incomes get their voices heard on the policies and decisions that most impact their lives and their communities. Through discussions with people affected by poverty across Scotland and with the organisations that support them, it aims to find out what is working in their community, what is not working, and what needs to change to better support people living on low incomes and loosen the grip of poverty on their lives.
- 6.4 Between August and October 2020, the Poverty Alliance carried out interviews with 11 organisations that work with people living on low incomes in Renfrewshire including Kairos Women’s Group, Pachedu and STAR Project. This was followed by individual interviews with 39 people with lived experiences of poverty to understand what works, what does not work, and what should be changed in relation to a number of broad themes including mental health, employment and Social Security.
- 6.5 The Get Heard report is being finalised for publication in early summer, however Poverty Alliance have identified key areas and priorities for future work, and the finalised report recommendations will feed into the Council’s Social Renewal Plan and tackling poverty work.
- 6.6 Renfrewshire Council is aware that understanding the lived experience of those in poverty is crucially important, both in terms of giving a voice to marginalised and ‘unheard’ populations, and also identifying the types of interventions, provisions and services that have worked and where we could do more to work more effectively. To that aim we will continue to work with Poverty Alliance throughout 2021/22 to introduce a new, more systematic way of gathering input from those with lived experience of poverty. We will make sure that the stories and voices of people living in poverty remain at the centre of our decision-making.

## 7. Social Renewal Plan

- 7.1 In September 2020, Council agreed that a community impact assessment should be undertaken to develop a deeper understanding of the impact of the pandemic on local people, and that this would inform the development of a Social Renewal Plan for Renfrewshire setting out how the Council will work with partners to tackle both the impact of COVID-19 and existing inequalities across Renfrewshire's communities.
- 7.2 Although it was recognised that the impact on communities would have to be assessed over an extended period of time of at least one year, as changes to, for example, employment, income, relationships and mental health and wellbeing may develop over time, the initial findings from the [community impact assessment](#) were reported to Council in December 2020. Further engagement took place over the winter period to conclude the initial phase of the community impact assessment, including targeted engagement with groups that may have been more disproportionately impacted by the pandemic.
- 7.3 The extensive work that has taken place to complete this first phase of the community impact assessment, included a COVID-19 impact survey issued to 1500 local people, engagement with the Local Partnerships and targeted engagement with a range of different equality groups. The initial findings from Poverty Alliance's Get Heard project also informed the community impact assessment.
- 7.4 All of the information gathered was analysed and key findings identified. It is clear from these findings, that local residents have been, and continue to be, significantly impacted by the pandemic. A number of key areas of concern have been highlighted including those related to inequality and poverty, including child poverty such as an increasing number of low-income households that are struggling to manage financially and need support with food and fuel costs and barriers to digital access.
- 7.5 There is strong evidence that the pandemic has impacted some people and communities more profoundly than others and targeted work needs to continue to identify people that need help, and to break down barriers to allow them to access this support in the most appropriate way.
- 7.6 The role that community groups and organisations have played locally in terms of responding to the pandemic has been fundamental, and the close partnership working that has developed with the Council is widely recognised as a key strength.
- 7.7 The research findings have been used to develop an initial Social Renewal Plan which sets out a range of priority actions which the Council and partners should take forward. At the heart of this plan, there is a focus on improving wellbeing and tackling the inequalities that exist across Renfrewshire's communities. This is the first step in the process of social renewal, with more detailed work to commence during 2021. Further to this, approximately **£1.4million** of funding was allocated by Council to support the delivery of the Social Renewal Plan.

## 8. Renfrewshire Council's Budget

- 8.1 Our Budget for 2021/22 provides for work associated with the Social Renewal Plan, tackling inequalities and helping people most affected by the pandemic

- 8.2 Adding to targeted investment tackling poverty and changing the lives of people impacted by alcohol and drugs, we are investing **£2.7million** of combined Council and Scottish Government funding to tackle inequalities and support people in our communities most affected by the pandemic.
- 8.3 This funding will be targeted over the coming months, supporting our Social Renewal plan developed collaboratively with our communities on what matters most to them, providing financial support and advice, access to digital services, physical and mental wellbeing and helping children, young people and families.
- 8.4 Initial priorities include:
- **£250,000** additional funding for children and young people's mental health, with a focus on addressing trauma
  - **£200,000** to extend the hugely successful Imagination Library book gifting pilot to all 2 to 5-year-old children in Renfrewshire
  - **£180,000** for Who Cares? Scotland to support care experienced young people over the next three years
  - **£200,000** in a specialist team to support and advocate for vulnerable private sector tenants, as temporary legal protections from eviction end
  - **£100,000** to Renfrewshire Citizens Advice Bureau to provide independent employment and redundancy rights advice when the furlough scheme closes
  - **£100,000** further funding for the Discretionary Housing Payment fund to help people with housing costs
  - **£30,000** to provide additional support to young carers, including respite care during the Covid-19 pandemic.

## 9. Economic Recovery Plan

- 9.1 The Covid-19 pandemic has had a significant impact on the UK, Scottish and Renfrewshire economies. This has affected most economic sectors and has placed a large proportion of Renfrewshire residents and businesses in a more precarious economic position than the one they faced in 2019.
- 9.2 The Fraser of Allander Institute's bespoke analysis of the Renfrewshire economy (Aug 2020) predicted that the Renfrewshire economy will not return to pre-Covid levels of activity until November 2024.
- 9.3 Between March 2020 and March 2021 the number of universal credit claimants looking for work in Renfrewshire increased by 81.4% to 7285. This accounts for 6.3% of the working age population.
- 9.4 As of February 2021, 12,500 Renfrewshire residents were on the Job Retention Scheme (furlough) and grant support for businesses affected by the Covid-19 restrictions since March 2020 has resulted in approximately £28.5m being paid out to individual business with premises in Renfrewshire. The various schemes have benefited more than 2,500 business premises.
- 9.5 The Self Employed Income Support Scheme (SEISS) take-up rate for Renfrewshire has been higher than the Scottish and UK rates for each of the grants and latest figures show that in total £32.5m has been claimed by Renfrewshire self-employed residents.

- 9.6 It is against this background that the Economic Recovery Plan 2020-2022 sets out the priority actions for the Renfrewshire economy over the next 2 years. These include a refreshed employability programme for Renfrewshire; promoting enterprise and entrepreneurship in all Renfrewshire High Schools through curriculum development; supporting and growing supply chain management and knowledge exchange among manufacturing; developing a programme to support work-place wellbeing; raising awareness of contract opportunities from the public sector; targeting interventions for recruitment, upskilling and re-skilling across Renfrewshire's key sectors; large scale investment in refurbishment and regeneration of Council housing stock; and promoting a Renfrewshire Apprentice Framework.
- 9.7 All the content of the Economic Recovery Plan will require a partnership approach between two or more of Renfrewshire's key economic stakeholders. These include Department for Work and Pensions (DWP); Developing the Young Workforce (DYW); Renfrewshire HSCP; Skills Development Scotland (SDS) as well as further and higher education providers. Through a combination of budgets and joint initiatives with partner agencies, collectively we can achieve more for the people and businesses in Renfrewshire. The private sector also has a key role.
- 9.8 We estimate the economic impact from the Recovery Plan (2020- 2022) could include:
- 700+ young people finding work;
  - 400+ businesses benefiting from additional resources;
  - 1,500 additional opportunities of employment, education or training to young people;
  - 150 new apprenticeships being created;
  - Level of economic investment in Renfrewshire (circa £500m)

## 10. Digital Strategy

- 10.1 Digital can be both a tool and a barrier to reducing poverty and inequality and we recognise that despite all the new opportunities digital offers, it can also be a source of worry or even exclusion for some of our citizens.
- 10.2 A new Digital Strategy was agreed in September 2020 outlining our approach to embedding digital across all that we do in a way that closely aligns with our ambitions for Renfrewshire and ensures that we work collaboratively to maximise the opportunities from emerging digital technologies and new ways of working and doing business. The Strategy also reflects the learning and experience of the COVID-19 pandemic, showing the increasing importance of digital in how we work, provide services, engage with our communities and educate our children.
- 10.3 Renfrewshire's Digital Strategy will be delivered through 8 themes. Most pertinent to our work to reduce child poverty is the **Digital Citizen Workstream**, through which we intend to tackle digital inequality, empower our citizens and increase digital skills, confidence and participation.
- 10.4 Officers within the Council have worked collectively with wider community planning partners to develop a nationally recognised approach to digital participation. A partnership network called DigiRen is the key driver of this programme of work, with many examples of

activities being undertaken including coding classes, Digiteers in libraries, digital participation in housing and specialist projects in services such as the Disability Resource Centre

- 10.5 Our first stage for the Digital Citizen Workstream is to build and improve on existing information to better understand levels of Digital Exclusion in Renfrewshire and the particular areas and demographics to target with support. The experiences of local people as collected in our community impact assessment, through DigiRen partners and through Poverty Alliance's Get Heard Programme will feed into this baselining exercise.

## **11. Relevant Council and NHS Plans**

- 11.1 Throughout the Council, tackling poverty and inequality and improving life chances are high on the agenda. The Council Plan 'Thriving People, Connected Communities', clearly articulates this, asserting one of our five strategic outcomes as 'Tackling inequality, ensuring opportunities for all'. Furthermore, our Community Plan, which acts as Renfrewshire's Local Outcome Improvement Plan, focuses on four priorities which were agreed following a wide consultation and discussion. These include:

- Our Renfrewshire is thriving: maximising economic growth that is inclusive and sustainable, and
- Our Renfrewshire is fair: addressing the inequalities that limit life chances.

These closely aligned plans set out an ambitious programme of work to make life better and fairer for our citizens.

- 11.2 In addition Renfrewshire HSCP's Strategic Plan 2019 – 2022 highlights Poverty as priority over the next 3 years and details actions we report against quarterly and then annually in relation to child poverty.
- 11.3 Although COVID-19 response and recovery will be the major focus over the next twelve months, the Council still has huge ambition for Renfrewshire, and many activities to support our high-level priority areas will continue to be channelled through our recovery approach.
- 11.4 Council services have produced Service Delivery Plans for 2021/22 which outline the actions they will take to assist in recovery over the next 12 months and report key activities and achievements. These Service Delivery Plans sits beneath the Council Plan, Community Plan, and alongside relevant strategies for the services to form a suite of documents which provide the strategic direction for the service.
- 11.5 Communities and Housing Services aim to create, develop, support, protect and empower Renfrewshire' communities. Including Adult and Community Learning and Development as well as managing and investing in our housing stock of approximately 12,200 properties and providing services to our council tenants, and housing advice and support, we ensure people have safe and healthy places to live. During 2021 some of the actions taken to support vulnerable families are as follows:
- Proactively contacting tenants where there has been missed rent payments or changes to rent payment patterns to offer advice on accessing benefits and other support services as appropriate. Our approach continues to be one of offering support, assistance and prevention measures to tenants with escalation to legal action the last resort.

- Delivery of the EESSH improvement programme will help remove poor energy efficiency as a driver for fuel poverty and contribute to achieving the Scottish Government’s ambitious climate change emissions reductions targets. In addition a Fuel Poverty Strategy is in development.
- Adult and family learning programmes continue using a variety of different methods without meeting face to face. This includes Pizza Family Learning; Literacies; ESOL; PSD and support to work club learners through online platforms phonecalls and deliveries of learning materials.
- The Youth Services team have been delivering activity packs to young people across Renfrewshire. Youth Services Staff also set up online chat rooms, quiz nights, movie nights and a range of other activities to ensure that young people did not feel isolated during this challenging time. Staff also worked with Renfrewshire Youth Voice to set up the ‘Unheard Voices Campaign’ – to find out how lockdown and the COVID-19 virus has affected young people and those who support young people.
- Youth Services, the Chief Executive Service and Renfrewshire Youth Voice supported another round of ‘Celebrating Renfrewshire’, the youth-led participatory budgeting exercise, which was successfully completed in December 2020.
- A joint project was launched in partnership with SAY Women which includes a focus on providing time limited tenancy sustainment advice and assistance for young women aged 16-25 years who are identified as survivors of child sexual abuse and/or survivors of other forms of sexual violence.

11.6 **Children’s Services** has an approach which is strongly focused on prevention, early intervention and providing additional support for the most vulnerable. Whilst children’s health services sit within the Health and Social Care Partnership (HSCP), a key priority of both organisations is the continuation of effective integrated working.

11.7 During 2020/21 some of the actions they have taken to support vulnerable families is as follows:

- A ‘Coping During Covid’ helpline was set up for children and families facing wellbeing issues during the lockdown, and this was complemented by targeted support from a range of children’s professionals from the public and third sectors.
- Renfrewshire Council is on target to deliver 1140 hours of early years provision for all eligible children by the new Scottish Government deadline of August 2021. As at 31 December 2020, 86% of children attending nursery were already receiving 1140 hours per year and good progress continues to be made.
- The roll-out of digital learning and teaching was a necessity during lockdown periods. 1,800 Chromebooks were distributed to pupils who needed them and new resources were introduced or developed. Home learning packs with printed materials were also available in addition to digital resources, and the Family Learning team provided community-based support and practical advice.
- Our schools have a strong focus on employability skills and supporting young people into positive destinations post-school. Vocational courses delivered by college staff are already offered in some schools and the newly-launched Career Ready programme being piloted in two schools will provide some S5 and S6 pupil with a workplace mentor, networking opportunities and a paid, 4 week internship.

- The My Future Pathways programmes in construction and hospitality also continue to provide routes into employment. Engagement with the Community Benefits Forum and other groups ensures continued good links with local employers.
- Children’s Services will work closely with the HSCP regarding the mental health and wellbeing of young people, tackling drug and alcohol use, promoting physical activity, supporting women and children impacted by gender-based violence and improving the transition between children’s and adult services.

## **NHSGGC**

- 11.8 The NHSGGC Public Health Strategy ‘Turning the Tide through Prevention’ aims to tackle the fundamental causes of poor health and of health inequalities and mitigate their effects. The strategy sets the direction for public health in Greater Glasgow and Clyde, and sets out how the Health Board will work with partners, communities and individuals to improve the health and wellbeing of the population. The overarching aim is that by 2028, NHSGGC healthy life expectancy should be equal to the rest of Scotland with a narrowing of the inequality in Life Expectancy within the NHSGGC area.
- 11.9 The programme includes actions to tackling child and family poverty through working in partnership with others to mitigate and prevent health inequalities which have been caused by poverty. It also includes actions to provide advocacy, health intelligence and facilitation to Social Security Scotland to maximise people’s access to benefits and ensure recurring funding for proven successful co-location models such as in Royal Hospital for Children support service, Special Needs in Pregnancy Service and Healthier Wealthier Children.
- 11.10 The strategy was developed before the pandemic and actions have been used to develop planned activities to ensure NHSGGC can deliver on the expectations of the Public Health Scotland to tackle child poverty, poverty and health inequalities. More recently, the Chief Medical Officer’s report, ‘Recover, Restore, Renew’ recognises that the restrictions needed to contain Covid-19 have resulted in unprecedented levels of financial distress and hardship particularly for those experiencing socio-economic disadvantage and that the rise in unemployment is likely to have a negative impact on our population’s health in the long term.
- 11.11 NHSGGC’s Pandemic Remobilisation plan, ‘Remobilise, Recover, Redesign’ covers action to reduce and mitigate increased inequalities, poverty, child poverty, stress, social isolation and digital exclusion. There is alignment between NHSGGC Remobilisation plan, the Local Child Poverty Report and Social Renewal planning in Renfrewshire as well as the implementation of UNCRC. The impending review of the Public Sector Equality Duty in Scotland will also inform synergy between NHSGGC child poverty action and wider equalities and human rights action.
- 11.12 ‘Remobilise, Recover, Redesign’ also sets out local responsibilities including food and fuel support and Renfrewshire HSCP will support and promote service delivery in relation to food and fuel provision. As part of this plan there will be a review of child poverty work during 2021/22.

- 11.13 In response to a review of year one and two child poverty action reports by the national Poverty and Inequality Commission, enhanced partnership working has been put in place between NHSGGC and Local Authorities. Renfrewshire Council officers are part of the NHSGGC Child Poverty Network which meets regularly and shares good practice and innovation and provides a means to engage with service providers and other such as Scottish Government joined-up way. Renfrewshire Council officers also meet with NHSGGC on a regular basis to discuss local issues, and approaches around reducing child poverty.
- 11.14 The NHSGGC strategic financial inclusion group review quarterly child poverty and Healthier Wealthier Children progress reports. In addition, from 21/22, onwards the NHSGGC Community Obstetric Group and NHSGGC Health Visitors Group will refresh child poverty workplans and monitor these on a quarterly basis, reporting to NHSGGC Acute Health Inequalities Group and NHSGGC Children’s Care Governance Group (and NHSGGC Heads of Children’s Services Group) respectively, then to NHSGGC Child and Maternal Health Strategy Group and NHSGGC Corporate Management Team.

## **12. Partnership and Communities**

- 12.1 During the pandemic, partnership work has been vital to ensure our families received the support they needed. What we achieve as a Council could not be done without partnership working, both through formal structures such as the Community Planning Partnership, with community bodies and more informally. “Our Renfrewshire” – Renfrewshire’s Community Plan for 2017-2027 sets out a vision for Renfrewshire of “working together to make Renfrewshire a fairer, more inclusive place where all our people, communities and businesses thrive”. Partnership working is key to the delivery of the community plan, and to achieving the outcomes which all partners have agreed to target in Renfrewshire.
- 12.2 This section of the report gives examples of partnership work under statutory duties, but also that which is based on Council and community priorities and has been introduced either with Council support, or the Council plays a part.

### **Community Empowerment**

- 12.3 The Community Empowerment (Scotland) Act 2015 aims to empower community bodies through the ownership or control of land and buildings, and by strengthening their voices in decisions about public services. Renfrewshire Council continues to support communities in Renfrewshire through the Community Empowerment Fund, Green Spaces Fund and Villages Investment Fund and awards have continued from the fund during the pandemic.
- 12.4 The key objectives of the Community Empowerment Fund are to support and develop community organisations with a specific focus on assisting those organisations that wish to acquire and develop community assets. Projects funded must demonstrate positive impact for local communities and involve the communities in the design and delivery of the project.
- 12.5 During this year £1,141,019 has been approved from the Green Spaces Fund and Villages Investment Fund to improve parks and play equipment for communities.

### **Local Partnerships**

- 12.6 Our Local Partnerships provide the community with the opportunity to have their say on local issues and these have continued during lockdown, although there has been a

disruption to the schedule due to changing priorities and meetings have been online. The Partnerships aim to:

- Make connections and networks between community groups and the wider community
- Identify, set and share local community priorities
- Listen to, consult and representing local communities
- Distribute grants to support local priorities

12.7 The funding and support the Council offers is designed to help communities, putting the people who know them best at the centre of projects that will make a difference.

### **Participatory Budgeting**

12.8 The Scottish Government is supportive of Participatory Budgeting (PB) as a tool for community engagement that fits with the objectives of the Community Empowerment (Scotland) Act 2015 and considers it an important resource to build on the wider development of participatory democracy in Scotland.

12.9 Renfrewshire was one of the few local authorities in Scotland to carry out Participatory Budgeting exercises in 2020/21. Building on the success of the 2019/20 youth specific PB programme, Youth Services, the Chief Executive Service and Renfrewshire Youth Voice supported another round of 'Celebrating Renfrewshire', the youth-led participatory budgeting exercise.

12.10 Renfrewshire's was a Grant Making PB, that is the distribution of small grants to community and voluntary organisations via community voting events. Over 1,700 young people voted on the 80 project ideas which were submitted, and £124,437 was awarded to youth projects across Renfrewshire.

12.11 Voting took place over part of October and November 2020. This was during the global COVID-19 pandemic, which meant that all promotion of the vote was online rather than face to face and awards made included for the following projects.

- **Pachedu** to instil a sense of identity, pride and self esteem in young people of African origin residing in Renfrewshire by giving them an opportunity to showcase their culture and build confidence, communication and social skills during this lockdown period. The funding was to provide instruments and tutorial costs.
- **Renfrewshire Carer's Centre** to provide a "boys group" to male and non binary Young Carers between 8-18 years in Renfrewshire. This group will offer a safe and nurturing place where only male young carers can get a break from caring, be a child first, reduce isolation, reduce the stigma of caring & recognise particular needs of male carers through fun, engaging group activities.
- **YMCA** To train young people in Renfrew to become mental health ambassadors to reduce the stigma and discrimination associated with mental health.
- **Renfrewshire Youth Voice Relief Fund** to help young people who due to COVID 19 are experiencing negative changes in their personal circumstances such as an impact on household income and work with pastoral teachers to identify young people who could benefit from a £50 voucher for food or clothing. Those identified, who remain anonymous,

can select which vouchers they would benefit from receiving using a referral process designed by members of Renfrewshire Youth Voice.

### **Alcohol and Drugs Commission**

- 12.12 In late 2018, Renfrewshire Community Planning Partnership Executive Group agreed to establish an independent Commission to consider the true impact of alcohol and drug use across Renfrewshire's communities.
- 12.13 The Commission was supported by officers within Renfrewshire Council, who worked to establish the Commission and to recruit a number of local and national experts and professionals. The Commission was chaired by Councillor Jacqueline Cameron and comprised key figures from across health and social care, housing, justice, third sector and higher education.
- 12.14 After delays due to Covid, in December 2020, the Renfrewshire Alcohol and Drugs Commission published its final report. The report sets out the Commission's main findings and provides 27 recommendations and a collective response by Council, Renfrewshire Integration Joint Board and Renfrewshire Community Planning Partnership Executive Group has been agreed.
- 12.15 The findings outlined within the report are hard hitting, with significant issues identified in terms of high levels of harm being experienced by local people and families at a local level, and with gaps in the support that is available to support adults and young people who are struggling to manage both their alcohol and drug use, and impact of trauma and mental health issues in their lives.
- 12.16 Opportunities were identified to support and strengthen the role of voluntary and community sector groups in supporting individuals and families with alcohol and drug use and mental health issues, and to develop and embed peer support models within local service provision.
- 12.17 Key recommendations in relation to children, young people and families include:
- Review local level data on, and approaches to, addressing Foetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorder (FASD) in Renfrewshire to consider how best to reduce the number of children impacted by alcohol prior to birth. The work that young people in Renfrewshire are leading to improve Personal and Social education in schools on issues such as drugs and alcohol and mental health, needs to be implemented as a priority by Renfrewshire Council.
  - Young people should not be anxious about transferring from their existing service into an adult focused alcohol and drug service. Targeted consultation should be undertaken on this issue and should focus on the beneficial relationships that young people need to address their needs, rather than what age they are.
  - Recognising the at times distressing evidence that the Commission heard on the impact of alcohol and drug use for families, partners should undertake a review of existing family support provision. Particular focus must be on the support that is available to children and young people who are impacted by parental drug or alcohol use. In addition, as Renfrewshire considers its response to the Independent Care Review it should explore how the family support model developed reflects fully the principles of **The Promise**.
  - Children and young people need to be able to access the right type of support for any mental health issues including lower levels anxiety and stress. Partners should review current mental health provision for young people and ensure that this meets all levels of need.

- 12.18 An Alcohol and Drugs Programme Board has been established to drive the implementation of the partnership response to the Commission's recommendations and all actions and activities identified against the Commission's recommendations have been drawn together to form an Alcohol and Drugs Change Programme.
- 12.19 A key priority within the Alcohol and Drugs Change Programme, will be to ensure that there is meaningful engagement with local service users, families and front-line staff around any proposed service developments.

#### **The 'Our Children' network**

- 12.20 Renfrewshire has a Voluntary Sector Forum (Children & Young People) called 'Our Children'. The network comprises of local and national charities, plus statutory services and is chaired by Kibble's senior manager. The organisations involved work collaboratively for the benefit of Renfrewshire's young people, sharing best practice, ideas and experience.
- 12.21 During the pandemic the network, which comprises over 30 organisations such as Who Cares Scotland, Children 1<sup>st</sup>, Barnardo's and Woman's Aid along with Council Children's Services, has continued to meet regularly online. This has allowed members not only to share information, for example about training opportunities but also for organisations such as Social Security Scotland to provide information about current and upcoming benefits which families may be entitled to. This has allowed us to have a real push on Best Start Grant and Scottish Child Payment applications which will make a real difference to low income families.
- 12.22 The Poverty Alliance also used and reported back to Our Children for the 'Get Heard' project and the expanded free sanitary product provision was also promoted at the network.

### **13. Key Work of Renfrewshire HSCP Health Improvement Team**

- 13.1 During the year, Renfrewshire HSCP Health Improvement Team have also undertaken key pieces of work designed to tackle child poverty and promote healthier families:
- Support the Poverty Alliance in generating awareness and interest in their Renfrewshire Get Heard work, and contributing and using the results to shape future work
  - Support Engage Renfrewshire in the development of language interpreter volunteer to assist with information provision
  - Work in partnership with education colleagues to write a Mental Health in Schools/Nurseries policy and support the implementation of the policy
  - Support Children and Young People accessing positive education destinations
  - Promotion of Cost of the School Day and Free School Meals
  - Deliver Healthy Minds sessions to raise awareness of key mental health messages
  - Conduct children and young people scoping exercise to identify existing provision and opportunities for development
  - Identify funding for Togetherall as online mental health support in Renfrewshire,

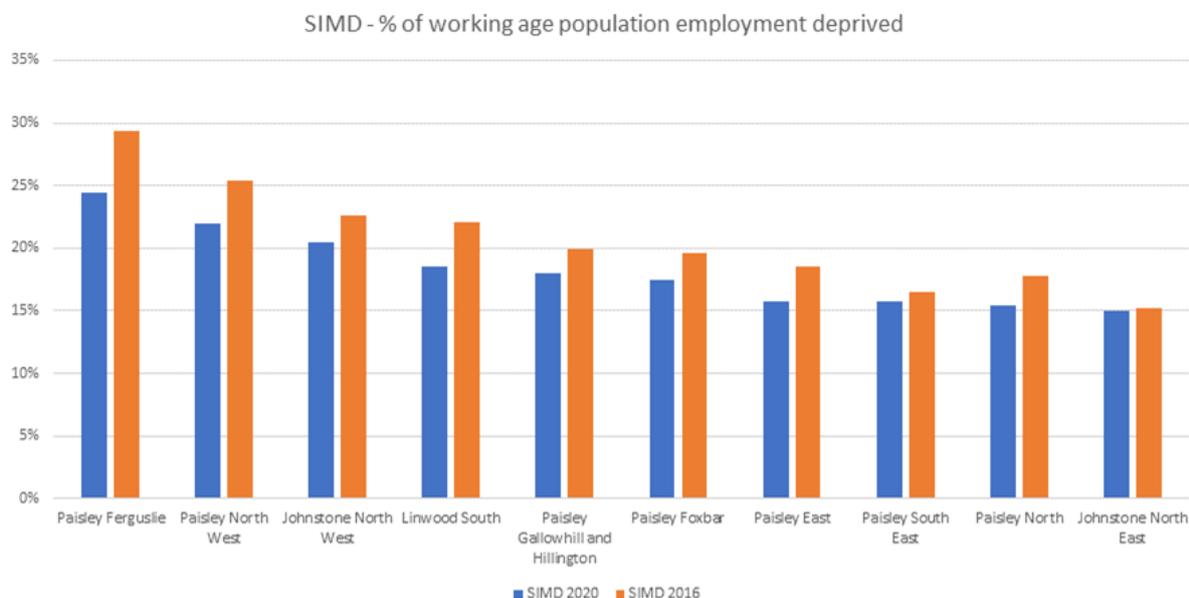
- Participate in the Greater Glasgow and Clyde Youth & Young Adult Suicide Prevention Subgroup Promote and encourage SAMH Training for all Renfrewshire staff
- Ensure Renfrewshire families receive care in line with UNICEF Baby Friendly Standards. Promote, encourage and support healthy family relationships through feeding practices and the Perinatal Mental Health work
- Work with Drug, Alcohol and Tobacco services and support the Alcohol and Drug Partnership to provide comprehensive services to those families in need creating a recovery culture and promoting healthier families
- Identify where intervention is most needed to positively affect those who may experience Child Poverty, for example through dental health programme (Childsmile).

## Drivers of Poverty

### 14. Driver - Income from Employment

- 14.1 The Covid-19 pandemic has had a significant impact on the UK, Scottish and Renfrewshire economies. This has affected most economic sectors and has placed a large proportion of Renfrewshire residents and businesses in a more precarious economic position than the one they faced in 2019.
- 14.2 The overall employment rate in Renfrewshire was 76% in March 2020, compared to just 74.5% in Scotland. However, Renfrewshire has a slightly lower share of employment in high-skilled and high paid professional occupations relative to the Scottish average. Between March 2020 and October 2020 the number of universal credit claimants looking for work in Renfrewshire increased by 80%. This has affected all ages, except for 16-17 year olds. There has been a lower rise in male claimant than females and this may be due to their employment in some of the most affected business sectors.
- 14.3 Many businesses which have been forced to temporarily close during the lockdown or have seen a fall in revenue have placed workers on furlough. These jobs are at risk in the future once the furlough scheme starts to phase out.
- 14.4 In addition some large employers in Renfrewshire have announced job cuts. Rolls-Royce is a large employer in Renfrewshire and is dependent on the civil aviation industry. In June 2020 it has announced that it will cut around 700 jobs at its Inchinnan factory. The knock-on effect of Coronavirus on tourism-facing sectors threatens jobs like these.
- 14.5 It is against this background that Renfrewshire Council is working to maximise the number of jobs that can be created or retained locally as well as upskilling of the existing workforce, and Improving the employability of those currently unemployed, especially those in the priority groups identified by 'Every Child Every Chance', the Scottish Government delivery plan on Tackling Child Poverty.
- 14.6 In Renfrewshire we have a family approach to employment, to help lift the whole family out of poverty. We recognise that tackling child poverty about more than getting an individual work.
- 14.7 The table below shows the ten most employment deprived intermediate zones for those of working age in Renfrewshire as identified by last year's Scottish Index of Multiple

Deprivation. The areas which are most employment deprived are reported as Paisley Ferguslie, Paisley North West, Johnstone North West, Linwood South, Paisley Gallowhill and Hillington and Paisley Foxbar, however all the areas within the table exceed the Scottish average.



14.8 Our employability service continues to work across all of Renfrewshire and has continued over the period of the pandemic, with a number of strands to target specific priority groups.

**Invest in Renfrewshire**

14.9 Invest in Renfrewshire is Renfrewshire Council’s Employability service which aims to:

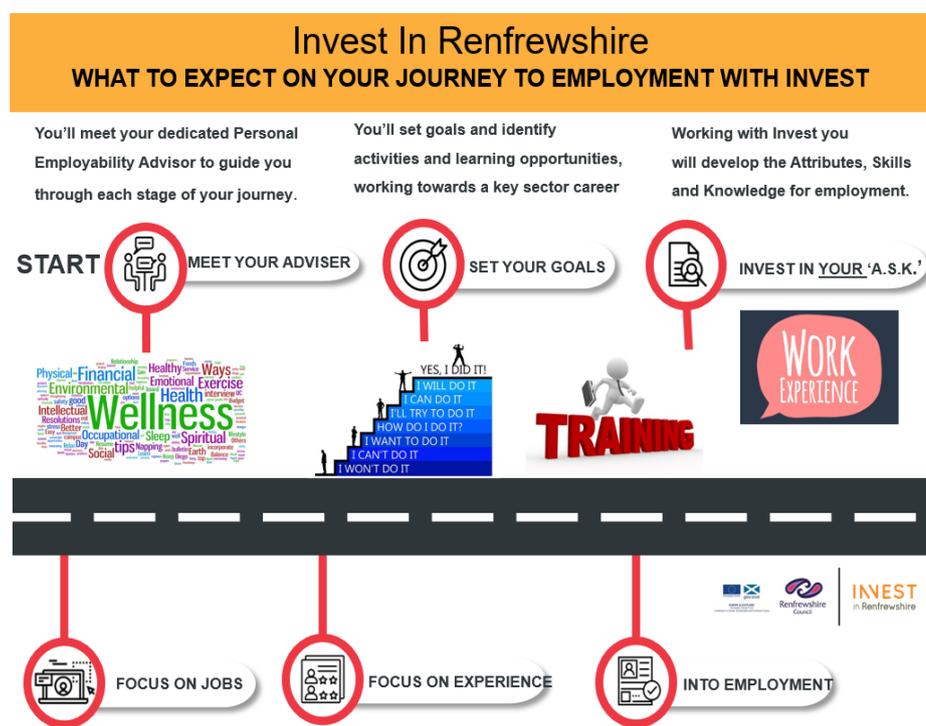
- support local unemployed and inactive residents to progress to sustainable employment
- support business within Renfrewshire to grow.

14.10 Invest in Renfrewshire’s Employability Service is co-located with Skills Development Scotland with whom the service works in partnership to deliver services across Renfrewshire. The Employability Service also have a presence in the local jobcentres across Renfrewshire; Paisley, Johnstone and Renfrew and deliver outreach within communities within 0-5% SIMD areas.

14.11 Invest in Renfrewshire deliver a holistic service across an Employability Pipeline framework to address barriers, build resilience and support individuals to progress to a sustained positive destination, with a wide range of interventions, at each stage of the pipeline:



- 14.12 Participants are supported to develop their attributes, skills, and knowledge as part of their customer journey:

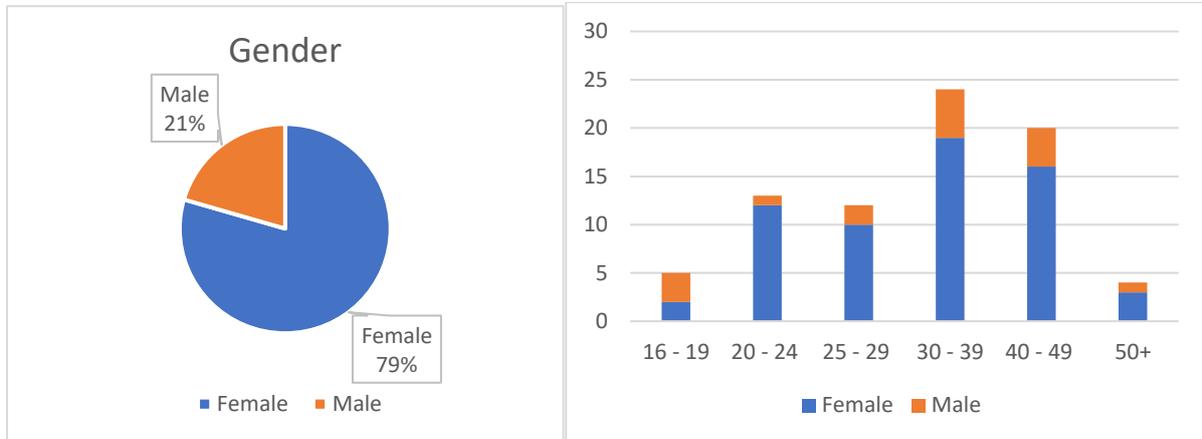


- 14.13 During the period 1st April 2020 and 26th March 2021, Invest registered **78** clients who are part of a household with dependent children with **56** of these being lone parent households. Clients are referred from a number of different sources, however Covid-19 has had a significant effect on Invest’s usual recruitment activities such as Job Fairs and Community events, as well as advertising on social media. Referrals this year are shown below.

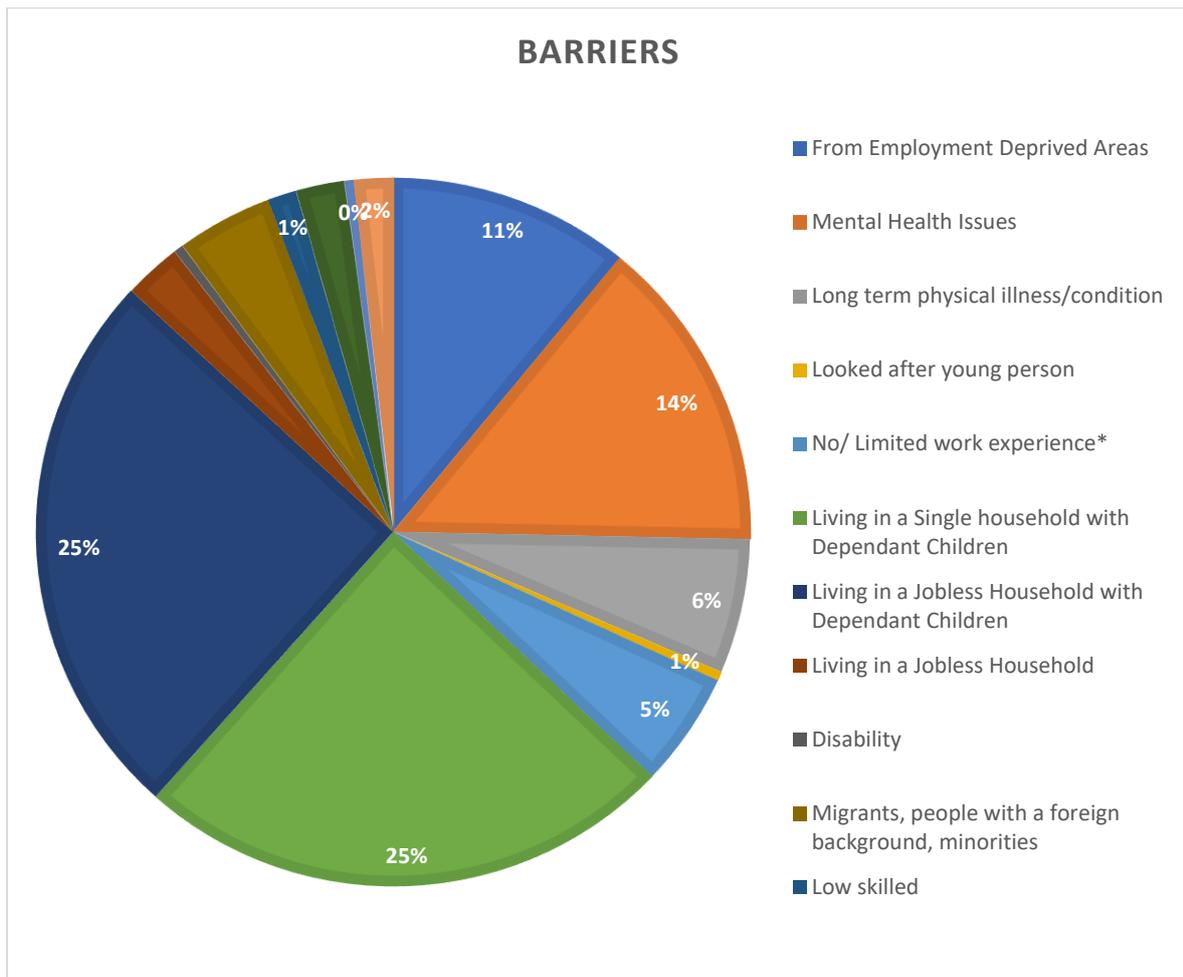
<b>DWP – Jobcentres</b>	<b>Total: 44</b>	<b>56%</b>
Johnstone	13	
Paisley	19	
Renfrew	12	
<b>Local Authority - Internal</b>	<b>Total: 4</b>	<b>5%</b>
Families First	2	
Social Work	2	
Health Partnership – MSK Project	1	1%
SDS	1	1%
<b>Self-Referrals</b>	<b>29</b>	<b>27%</b>
Other	1	
Leaflet	1	
Word of mouth	2	
Current previous participant	1	
Website/Social Media	23	

**Client Profile**

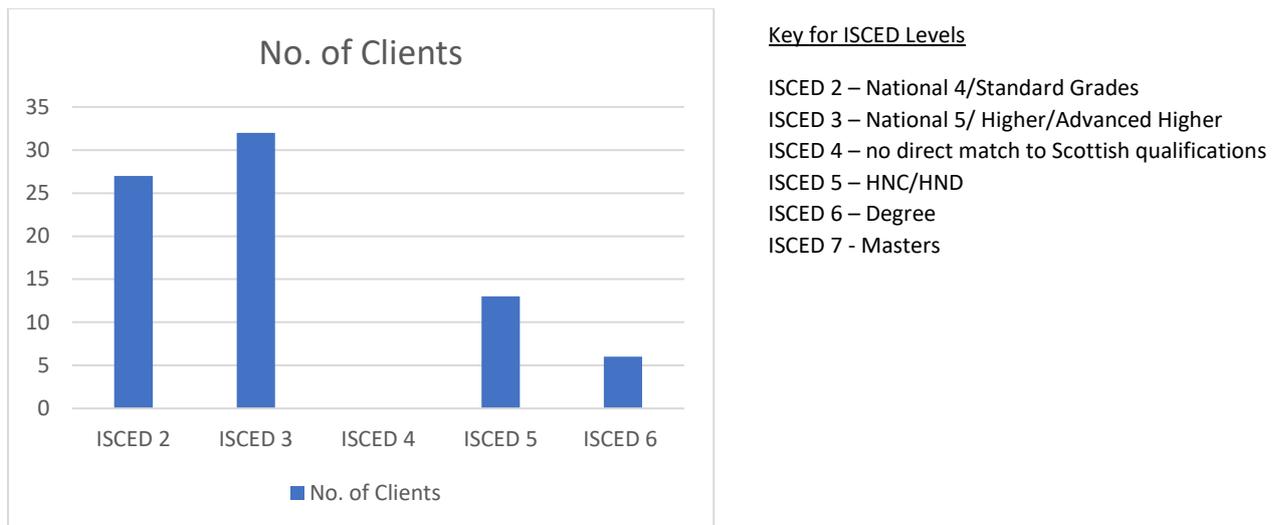
14.13 The majority of clients, with families, are predominantly female and within the 30 – 39 age bracket.



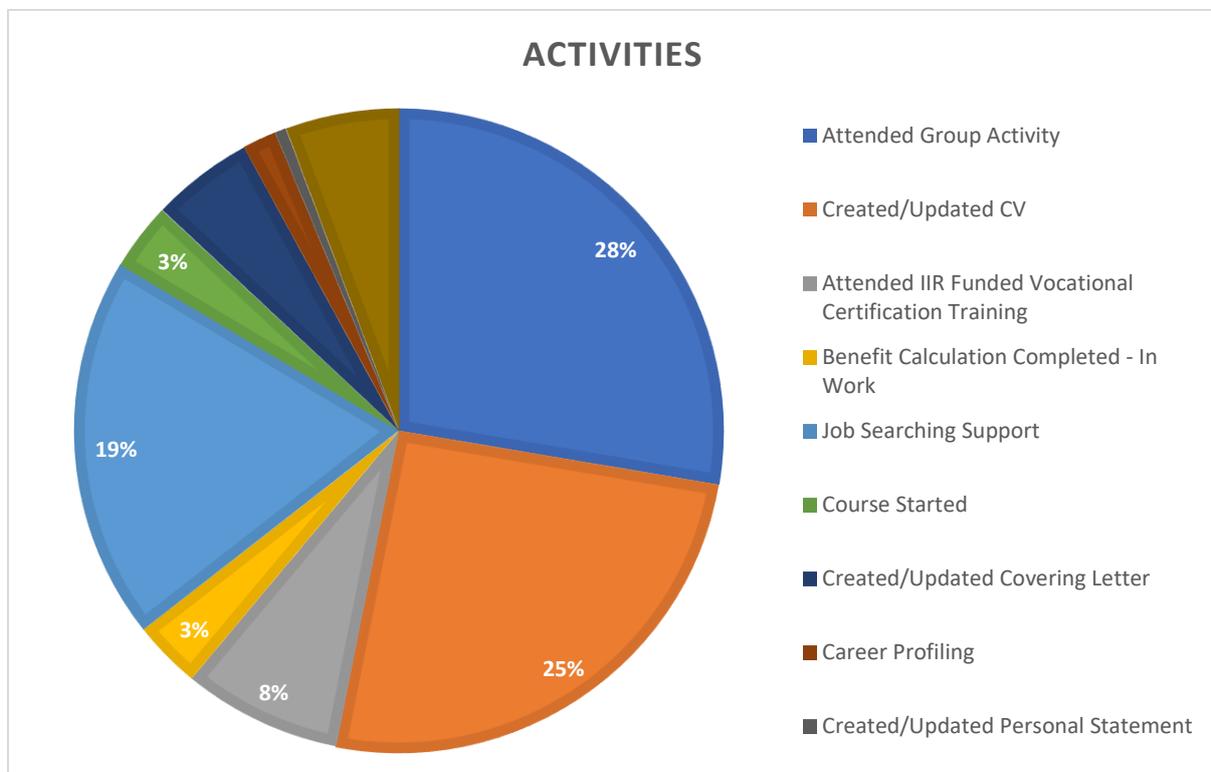
14.14 When registering with the service clients identify with several different barriers that they feel hold them back when trying to enter employment.



14.15 As can be seen from the graph below over half of the clients registered with the service also identify as having no advanced qualifications.

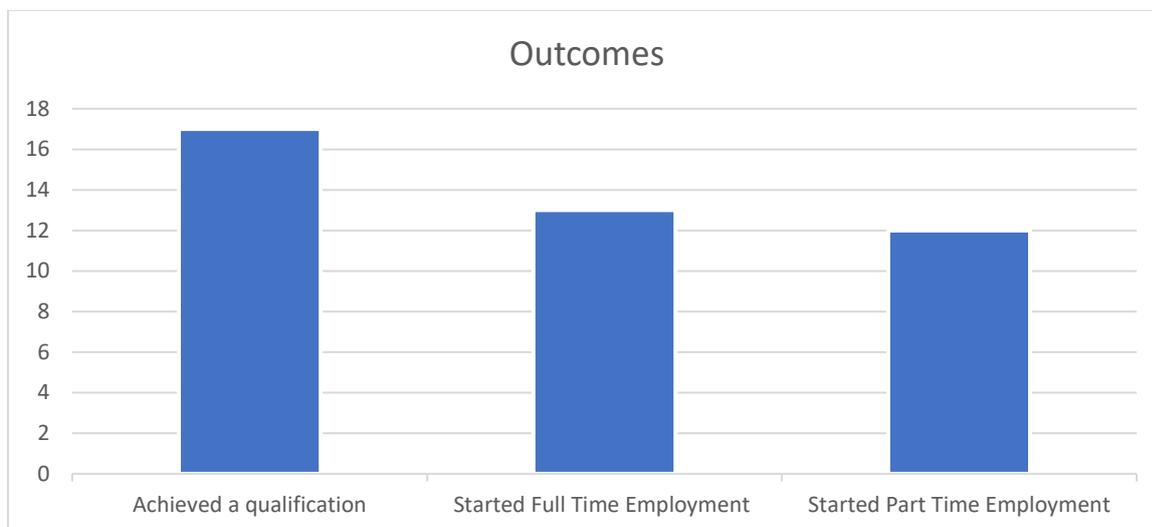


14.16 Invest in Renfrewshire offer a range of barrier removal, prevocational and vocational training opportunities and participants take part in a range of activities. Group activities cover a wide range of topics including interview skills, team working etc. as well as formal accredited training which enhance and develop the attributes, skill and knowledge required to support progression into sustainable employment:



14.17 Outcomes are not always achieved within a year - it depends on when the client registered if their outcome would be captured within the same year and for some the journey is longer

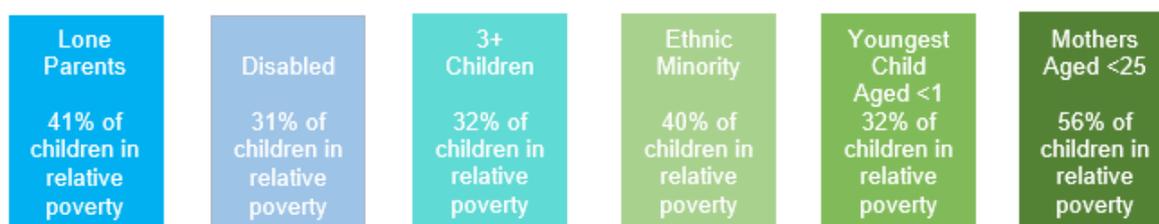
than 1 year. However, within this period 16% of new participants progressed into full-time employment, 15% into part-time employment with a further 52% still actively working with the service.



### Parental Employment Support Fund

14.18 In November 2019, the Scottish Government launched a Parental Employment Support Fund (PESF) to target employed and unemployed families to secure employment and improve their annual income. PESF provides person-centred help for parents to address their barriers to work, which might include a lack of skills or work experience, health support, money advice, or motivational support.

14.19 PESF targets the key family groupings identified in 'Every Child, Every Chance'.



14.20 PESF is offered by Invest in Renfrewshire. It provides the flexible and user-based model of delivery that supports parents into work as well as helping those already in work to increase their household income.

14.21 The programme provides:

- Person-centred help for parents to address their barriers to work, which might include a lack of skills or work experience, health support, money advice, confidence building or motivational support.
- Targeted support to tackle the increased challenge of in-work poverty by helping parents already in work through the provision of training and employability support to remain active in the workplace and gain progression through a rewarding career.

- Confidential income and money advice which includes:
    - Benefit checks and help with any claim processes
    - Better off in work calculations
    - Help with debts as these can be a barrier to work
    - Creation of a bespoke budget for the family
    - Budgeting skills support to ensure long lasting effect
- 14.22 Invest in Renfrewshire can support parents gain new skills, qualifications and assist with job applications and compiling a CV and frequency of support is based on individual need. Due to Covid-19, contact is currently carried out remotely by telephone and on-line.
- 14.23 Invest engage regularly with staff from DWP to remind of the eligibility criteria for PESF. Recently the referral form was updated to ensure that PESF eligible clients would be identified at the very early stages. This has led to an increase in the number of suitable participants being referred.
- 14.24 To help raise awareness, Invest in Renfrewshire staff share PES information on local Facebook pages, and have also sent out PESF leaflets with all 80,000 Council Tax bills this year.
- 14.25 Invest also attract eligible parents through campaigns on their website and social media platforms. This has included a campaign to target parents, who meet the criteria, and are currently on furlough to offer an early intervention opportunity and utilise their free time now to develop skills, gain qualifications which will enable them to improve their future employment prospects.
- 14.26 The two Keyworkers split their time between unemployed and employed participants dependent on need. Keyworkers create bespoke action plans for each participant providing coaching/guidance and support over the duration of their time on PESF.
- 14.27 The participants are be able to access any services available as part of the employability pipeline and younger clients (24 and under), can also access our Kickstart and Young Person's Guarantee.
- 14.28 Part of the support offered is **Traineeships and Paid Work Experience Offers, which** are part-time opportunities paid at the living wage rate offering between 6 and 26 hrs per week for a period up to 6 months to give participants additional work hours (if employed) and the chance to build their knowledge, experience and skills needed to improve future employment. A Traineeship Co-ordinator employed by the local authority creates these paid opportunities and provide ongoing support to participants.
- 14.29 **There have been challenges for PESF this year as** Covid-19 and further lockdown measures have had an impact on the delivery and volumes accessing supporting. Home schooling has had a significant impact on parents and the target groups for PESF are amongst the hardest hit i.e. lone parents and parents with 3+ children where home schooling has in many cases ruled our development opportunities for parents. Going forward, however, due to the partnerships and continued communication between the co-ordinator, business/organisation and the participants that have been developed, it is anticipated that once the work from home restrictions are lifted numbers supported will rise and there are 3 traineeships placements ready to start.

## Youth Initiatives

14.30 The youth unemployment rate in March 2020 in Renfrewshire was 5.2% (745 individuals) and this has soared to 9.5% (1340 individuals) in March 2021. There are several initiatives to deliver opportunities for young people in Renfrewshire.

### YP Guarantee

- 14.31 Young Persons Guarantee (YPG) is a new initiative from Scottish Government and offers a guarantee, for all young people aged 16 – 24 years old, to receive an offer of employment, training, education, or volunteering. In Renfrewshire we have created a dedicated, partnership website which collates all of the information from all key deliver partners and stakeholders.
- 14.32 The funding to deliver the YPG will support a range of staff posts, contracted provision and a YPG Employer Recruitment Incentive. Staff will target young people furthest from the labour market and will include the following priority groups: 0-5% SIMD residents, care experienced clients, ex-offenders, those from BAME communities, 16-19 year olds with no qualifications and young people with disabilities or health conditions. This will also deliver an enhanced volunteering programme in partnership with Engage Renfrewshire. The contracted provision will provide specialist support from a range of Third Sector organisation with a concentration on personal and social development, mental health, and health.

**Young Person's Guarantee**

- Offer:
  - Employment
  - Education
  - Training
  - Volunteer
- For EVERY young person 16-24 in Renfrewshire
- Partnership

#YPGuarantee  
#Renfrewshire

The Open University provides high quality university education to all!  
#YPGuarantee  
#RenfrewshireEducation  
@OpenUniversity  
ypguaranteerenfrewshire.com

Renfrewshire Council aims to create 700 Kickstart jobs for eligible young people all starting during 2021!  
#YPGuarantee  
#RenfrewshireJobs  
#kickstart @JCPinWestScot  
ypguaranteerenfrewshire.com

University of the West of Scotland offers lots of opportunities, check them out!  
#YPGuarantee  
#RenfrewshireEducation  
@UniWestScotland  
ypguaranteerenfrewshire.com

Aged 16-24 and living in Renfrewshire? There are LOTS of training opportunities for a range of providers check out the website!  
#YPGuarantee  
#RenfrewshireTraining  
ypguaranteerenfrewshire.com

Volunteering reduces isolation, develops skills and will increase your employment prospects find out more about volunteering  
#YPGuarantee  
#RenfrewshireVolunteering  
@engageNews1  
ypguaranteerenfrewshire.com

### Kickstart

14.33 Kickstart is a UK government scheme managed by DWP. Renfrewshire Council is an approved Gateway Organisation and in partnership with Engage Renfrewshire and Renfrewshire Chamber of Commerce has secured 455 approved job placements from a target of 700 to create new and additional jobs for young people, aged 16-24 years old and

in receipt of Universal Credit. Over 200 employers have signed up to create a Kickstart Job placement and Renfrewshire Council will be host to 120 job placements with the remainder hosted by external employers.

- 14.34 Kickstart funds job placements for 25 hours per week paid at the National Minimum Wage rate for 26 weeks as well as a recruitment/training grant of £1500.
- 14.35 Some employers have already agreed to extend employment beyond the initial 26 weeks, and we have also agreed 40 extensions for 6 months, supported by YPG, for young people already started on the Kickstart Scheme. This significant investment, when 700 jobs are secured, will bring an additional £4.9m to the Renfrewshire economy, crucial to accelerate economic recovery.

#### **No One Left Behind Initiatives**

- 14.36 No one left behind (NOLB) provides funding to Renfrewshire Council to deliver support to key priority groups, identified by the Local Employability Partnership (LEP). NOLB is more than just a funding model, it is a vision for long-term culture change – moving away from pockets of discreet funding for national initiatives towards a local service model which delivers integration and alignment of services. NOLB supports people further away from the labour market, creates advantage for those who are disadvantaged and delivers inclusive growth. The key target groups for Renfrewshire are 16-24-year olds, care experienced, 0-5% SIMD, ex-offenders, disabilities, BAME communities.
- 14.37 Those NOLB advisors who are part of the **youth team** are dedicated to supporting young people, those who are care experienced and those living in 0-5% SIMD areas, offering a youth hub and a vast range of employability interventions to support progression.
- 14.38 **The Just Learning: Skills for Employment** initiative supports participants of any age who have a criminal conviction. Referrals come from a variety of sources including social work, community pay back, Scottish Prison Service and DWP. In most cases, in addition to a conviction, there are a range of additional barriers including housing issues, substance abuse and literacy. We work with individuals to address barrier, prepare, and progress to employment. This successfully engages individuals in positive and meaningful activities, contributes to reducing community payback hours and reducing re-offending in Renfrewshire.

#### **PACE**

- 14.39 Partnership Action for Continuing Employment (PACE), set up by the Scottish Government, is our national strategic partnership framework for responding to redundancy situations. It ensures that local public sector agencies respond to potential and proposed redundancies as quickly and effectively as possible. PACE is led by Skills Development Scotland and includes Renfrewshire Council, DWP, Citizens Advice, colleges and training providers.
- 14.40 For employers PACE offers support for businesses of any size, no matter how many employees are involved. It's free and helps take away some of the strain of dealing with redundancy. For employees it means free, impartial advice on dealing with the practical and emotional sides of redundancy.
- 14.41 As furlough ends, we anticipate up to 25% of the current 12,400 Renfrewshire residents will face redundancy. As a key partner in the PACE Partnership, Renfrewshire Council, will play a

key role in delivery employability support to assist redundant workers to progress, as quickly as possible, to re-enter the labour market. We have appointed a dedicated PACE Advisor to deliver this support as part of the Invest in Renfrewshire team.

14.42 Individuals are supported through a variety of employability services, including practical support to apply for jobs, CV creation and interview preparation as well as job matching. In addition PACE offer a joined up service, signposting to the following council services:

- Adult Learning & Literacy Services - delivering learning opportunities to families and adults aged 16 years and over throughout Renfrewshire.
- Enterprise and Business Start Up - Business Gateway Renfrewshire works with individuals and businesses across Renfrewshire to support them to achieve their ambitions and goals.
- Advice Works - offering a free and confidential service where trained advisers provide money and debt advice as well as advice on claiming all benefits due, including Council Tax Reduction and Housing Benefit
- Housing Options to access advice and guidance on all aspects of Council housing

### **Community Benefits**

14.43 To maximise the opportunities created through the current investment programmes the Employability Team work closely with our Procurement Team to ensure contractors deliver their community benefit obligations. Renfrewshire Council recognises that the public sector spends a significant amount of money each year and understandably, there is growing expectation that this expenditure can be used to deliver wider social and economic benefits.

14.44 Renfrewshire Council's employability service Invest in Renfrewshire support local contractors to deliver their community benefits by:

- Providing an unemployed person, a work experience placement
- Providing job opportunities (New and additional)
- Providing Vacancy Management
- Inviting and coordinate employer talks, for example Industry Awareness
- Organising Recruitment Events
- Upskilling – Provide funding towards eligible candidates industry related certification such as CSCS and Reach Forklift,
- Organising volunteering - using staff's expertise to input to local programmes
- Facilitating opportunities for staff to input to employability programmes, for example delivery of mock interviews

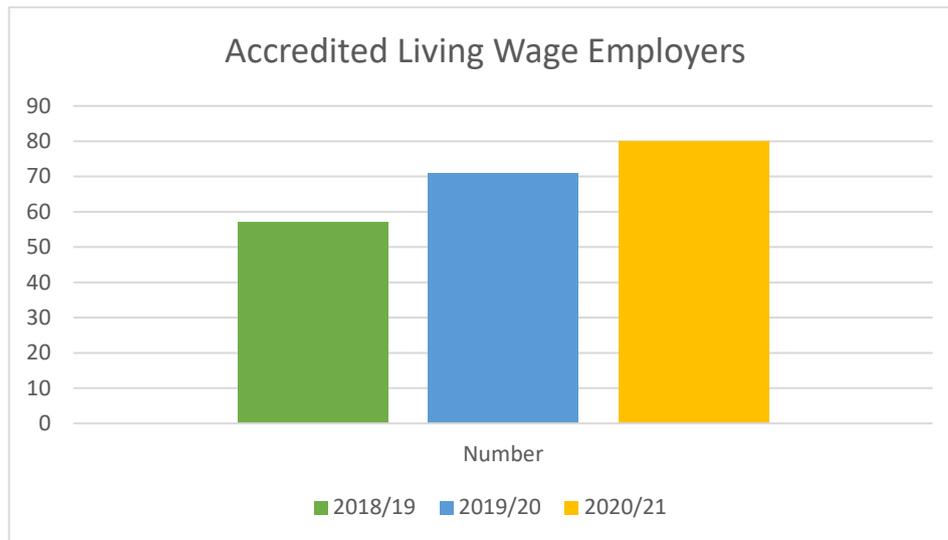
### **Living Wage**

14.45 The number of Accredited Living Wage Employers in Renfrewshire has continued to rise, even during the pandemic, although the pace has slowed. The number now stands at **80**, which is a rise of **23** over the last two years.

14.46 Renfrewshire Council remains committed to the Living Wage and recognises the difference payment of the Living Wage can make to the lives of those receiving it. Renfrewshire's Living Wage Accreditation Action Plan contains a number of different actions which promote the payment of the living wage in Renfrewshire, particularly across the Council's supply base. The action plan is monitored and reported on by the Living Wage Working Group which

makes sure the Council takes part in regular reviews with the Scottish Living Wage Foundation.

- 14.47 Within the Council’s Procurement process, Living Wage is considered to be a key indicator of fair practice. Contractors which supply employees must pay them the Living Wage. Following negotiation, all of our contracted Care at Home providers and Supported Living providers have confirmed that care staff are paid the Living Wage, including Out of Area providers.
- 14.48 Businesses which are signing up to Invest in Renfrewshire are given advice regarding the accreditation process and we continue to work with local businesses, the Living Wage Foundation and Community Planning Partners to increase the number.



- 14.49 In addition, NHSGGC has become an accredited Living Wage employer in November 2020, the largest NHS Board in Scotland to have done so. NHSGGC’s Living Wage commitment will see everyone working for the Health Board receive the minimum hourly wage, which will rise each year to match future rates.
- 14.50 Currently, most but not all contracted staff receive living wage and clear timescales have been created for the rest to enable this increase for all contracted staff. This will make a clear difference for NHSGGC staff living and working in Renfrewshire.

### **Start-Up Street**

- 14.51 The Start-Up Street proposal was developed to support the local need for low cost business space and to encourage greater levels of business creation, especially amongst young people.
- 14.52 The plan was to develop a subsidised managed workspace of small bespoke units which would be offered for a maximum of 2 years to new or early stage businesses, with a planned move to alternative commercial space in the Renfrewshire area at the end of this period.
- 14.53 Suitable Council premises for Start-Up Street were identified in George St in Paisley, part of which had been vacant for over 5 years and a formal partnership agreement was developed and signed with Launch-It. Launch-It and Renfrewshire Council promote the facility and

support the businesses within. Launch-It have a focus on young people and are delivering enterprise programmes and support to stimulate more young people setting up in business.

- 14.54 Start-Up Street (Paisley) opened for business on 2nd November 2020. Despite the difficult conditions due to COVID, seven new diverse businesses have already leased space with a number of others interested. More than 50% of the floorspace has already been taken.
- 14.55 In addition to the current tenants another 20 young people are currently working with Launch-It on business plans and proposals and an additional 30 have expressed an interest in the initiative.
- 14.56 Due to the success of the initiative in Paisley, the Economic Development Team have identified suitable premises for these developments within Renfrew and Johnstone. Work is ongoing at present to look at a particular focus for each proposal. Start-Up St Paisley has a focus on young people, others for consideration include Women into Business, Social Enterprise Development and Health and Wellbeing business creation. The plan is to create a network of innovative and supportive start-up spaces and services that add value, benefit, and offer sustainability to new and early stage businesses. It is aimed that both new Start-Up Street facilities will be up and running by the end of 2021

#### **Employability Driver - Future plans**

- 14.57 Our schools have a strong focus on employability skills and supporting young people into positive destinations post-school. Vocational courses delivered by college staff are already offered in some schools and the newly-launched Career Ready programme being piloted in two schools will provide some S5 and S6 pupil with a workplace mentor, networking opportunities and a paid, 4 week internship. The My Future Pathways programmes in construction and hospitality also provide routes into employment.
- 14.58 Engagement with the Community Benefits Forum and other groups ensures continued good links with local employers. However, there is always scope for more collaborative working and the service has identified this as a priority not just for recovery but for the future wellbeing and success of our young people and our communities.

#### **15. Driver - Cost of Living**

- 15.1 In Renfrewshire, we support families to make the most of their money. Poverty is not just about how much money is coming into a household, it's about how much is going out. We know vulnerable families face a poverty premium for goods and services, and are less likely to be active consumers, shopping around for the best deals. We also recognise that high levels of debt can lead to families having less in their pockets. Activities for young people, even through schools, can be expensive and heating homes and paying for utilities can burden less well-off families.
- 15.2 Our ongoing commitment to advice provision and promoting affordable credit and our initiatives, such as our 'cost of the school day' fund and 'Street Stuff' project can help families reduce their cost of living. Through our Housing Strategy, we intend that our own housing stock will become more energy efficient, as so bills will reduce. We want to make families' money go further and help them avoid financial crises through preventative actions which really make a difference to their pockets. Throughout Renfrewshire, across Council services, and with a variety of partners, our actions help families reduce their cost of living.

## Housing

- 15.3 Our current Local Housing Strategy runs from 2016 – 2021. While aiming to deliver seven strategic outcomes, the three most relevant to helping families in poverty are:
- homes are energy efficient and fuel poverty is minimised,
  - homelessness is prevented and vulnerable people get the advice and support they need, and,
  - affordable housing is accessible to those who need it.
- 15.4 Renfrewshire’s Housing Capital Investment Plan 2021/22 to 2023/24 will focus on new-build housing, regeneration and renewal, and maintenance of existing council homes. The multi-million pound plan will invest £20.40million in 2021/22, £42.83million in 2022/23 and £49.75million in 2023/24 in a range of programmes which will improve Council housing, create new-build developments, and ensure all Council homes in Renfrewshire meet both the Scottish Housing Quality Standard and the Energy Efficiency Standard for Social Housing (ESSH).
- 15.5 Delivery of the ESSH improvement programme will help remove poor energy efficiency as a driver for fuel poverty and contribute to achieving the Scottish Government’s ambitious climate change emissions reductions targets. It will support the Energy Efficient Scotland vision for homes and buildings that are warmer, greener and more efficient. 78% of our housing stock currently meet the first milestone target for ESSH.
- 15.6 During the pandemic and in the post COVID-19 recovery, we will continue to ensure tenants have access to all financial and other support available through a range of council services and partner organisations across Renfrewshire.
- 15.7 With regard to advice and support, before a tenancy is offered income, expenditure and benefit entitlement are assessed. The most appropriate, affordable housing can then be offered, and Discretionary Housing Payments (DHPs) put in place where appropriate. Throughout a tenancy our housing services team, including Tenancy Sustainment officers identify potentially vulnerable and at-risk tenants. They then work very closely with partners across the Council and beyond, signposting these tenants to teams to assist with income maximisation through employability services financial advice and fuel poverty advice, including DHP claims.
- 15.8 Amongst Council tenants the number of Universal Credit claimants has risen from **2769** in May 2020 to **3290** in March 2021. Following lockdown the usual rent arrears escalation process was ceased with housing officers adopting proactive wellbeing calls where tenants have missed rent payments. Although the Scottish Government announced a ban on enforcement of evictions from rented properties until 31 March 2021 in areas subject to level 3 and 4 restrictions (with exceptions) this has had little impact on our management of rent arrears. Our approach continue to be one of offering support, assistance and prevention measures to tenants with escalation to legal action the last resort.

## Free School Meals

- 15.9 With school closures, instead of free school meals, Renfrewshire Council opted to make a cash payment per child per week of £11.25, and these payments continued throughout the summer. These payments were based on family entitlement to a clothing grant rather than just free school meals as a way of reaching a larger number of children in need. Payments

were also provided to eligible families with children of nursery age. More than 6,700 children were supported in this way from 23 March 2020.

### **Affordable Credit**

- 15.10 As reported last year, Renfrewshire Council has come together with our TSI, Engage Renfrewshire, and a variety of other groups and organisations to establish the Renfrewshire Affordable Credit Alliance (RACA). RACA works collectively to support the financial well-being of Renfrewshire's people by improving and promoting affordable credit provision. In practice this is about maximising affordable credit provision in Renfrewshire, improving public awareness of the benefits of accessing affordable credit and raising credit scores through promotion, awareness and effective partnership working.
- 15.11 In order to help with the promotion of RACA's work and increase public awareness, a social media volunteer was recruited to ensure regular and consistent messaging around affordable credit. The volunteer has also taken part in other promotional activities and assisted in organising events. This has led to greater engagement from the public.
- 15.12 RACA has also worked with Trading Standards Scotland to focus on discouraging use of illegal lending and 'loan sharks' in Renfrewshire. A number of animations have been produced to inform the public, and these have been shared with and promoted by partners such as Renfrewshire HSCP Health Improvement Team.
- 15.13 The Council has also invested in Credit Unions over the last few years, working with them to aid their development and sustainability. Credit Unions have been promoted as an alternative to high cost lenders and the Council, although no longer providing funding, still meets regularly with the local Credit Unions to offer support. In addition, one of the key pieces of work being planned by NMSGC Financial Inclusion and Renfrewshire HSCP Health Improvement Team for 2021/22 is to encourage all staff to use a credit union.

### **Energy**

- 15.14 Fuel poverty impacts on the lives of some of the most disadvantaged children and young people. The impacts are varied and can mean parents cut back on essentials to keep their homes warm, and force families and young people into debt when they cannot afford to pay their energy bills. For a child, living in fuel poverty can mean growing up in a home that is cold and damp; this will have a long lasting effect on their physical and mental health, learning and enjoyment of life.
- 15.15 This year, the pandemic has exacerbated fuel poverty, with increased fuel costs for many families due to their staying at home. At the same time, income has fallen for many families due to unemployment and furlough. In recognition of the problem, many organisations have become involved in providing fuel vouchers for those in need of top-ups for their pre-payment meters.
- 15.16 STAR Project, Linstone Housing Association, Renfrewshire Foodbank and others have been providing vouchers, and organisations have been able at certain points in the year to register with Home Energy Scotland to provide this service. Schools have also played their part, with some using Cost of the School day funding to pay for top ups for families in need who have children at the school.

- 15.17 Renfrewshire Council has an **Energy Advocacy** service which receives funding from our Tackling Poverty Programme. One of the three advocates works exclusively with families with children and pregnant women. The main source of referral is through our Families First teams. However, the Advocate also receives referrals from Health Visitors, Social Workers and Housing officers as well as from Macmillan Cancer Support, other health charities and self-referrals. The Advocates service provides energy advice and obtains grants and Warm Home Discounts for those who are eligible. They can also advocate with landlords for installation of cheaper, more efficient energy systems.
- 15.18 This year, Our Energy Advocates have worked with 1049 clients to reduce bills and energy debt saving them almost £315,000 including ongoing savings, write offs and Warm Home Discounts. This includes 343 families with young children who saved £112,881.
- 15.19 During 20/21 Renfrewshire HSCP Planning and Public Health team co-ordinated with NHSGGC and Home Energy Scotland to deliver 4 sessions online which aimed to inform staff about available financial supports for energy use, and to increase knowledge on energy saving methods they could adopt in their own homes. In 2021/22 they intend to create an energy advocate post for their clients.
- 15.20 As part of a partnership with Renfrewshire Foodbank, RCAB offered advice to those who approached the Foodbank for a fuel voucher and also referred suitable clients to the Foodbank for fuel vouchers

### **Community Food**

- 15.21 A Community Food Network has been in place in Renfrewshire since April 2020, at first distributing food funded by the Scottish Government, and since the end of September, food funded by the Council via the charity FareShare. Apart from providing the funding the network is supported by Council Officials who have organised the distribution and coordinated volunteers and the transportation of the food by Kibble and RAMH. In December a handover of the coordination to the organisations receiving food was completed, with the Tannahill centre receiving funding for a Community Development post to take the bulk of this on, however Council Officials continue to offer support as necessary.
- 15.22 The Fareshare food is supplemented locally through links made with food providers, for example in Lochwinnoch the local Community Garden provides fresh fruit and vegetables and in Ferguslie a link has been made with Greggs. The organisations involved in distributing the food have been:
- STAR Project (current)
  - Darkwood Crew/Tannahill (current)
  - EBI Unites (Erskine, Bishopton and Inchinnan (current)
  - Kairos (current)
  - Lochwinnoch Community Food Group (current)
  - Home-Start Renfrewshire (ceased end of summer)
  - Stronger Communities Glenburn (ceased end of summer)
- 15.23 The organisations provide food in different ways to meet the needs of their own community in a dignified way in line with local need and preference. This had ranged from delivery services, shopping services, free community markets, food parcels and pre-cooked meals

being provided. One particular project based in Erskine, EBI Unites, has developed Zero Heroes, with a simple pick up table in their hall encouraging zero food waste.

- 15.24 The organisations have been linked to the advice network and Council Officials are also working to link community food organisations to other support, such as affordable credit providers, energy advice and mental health support as well as free sanitary product provision.
- 15.25 Organisations providing food are also able to provide the Council with intelligence on the reasons for clients seeking food along with demographic information and are able to identify prevalent issues in communities, such as chronic low incomes, those on furlough who are missing part of their wage and those newly unemployed waiting for benefit decisions.

#### **Average numbers of Food parcels/families provided for**

- 15.26 Although the organisations involved in food provision provide food in different ways and count the food provided in different ways. We are aware that in many case food goes to families. Although numbers fluctuate as individual need changes, we know that EBI for example over one 8 week period supported **347** households with **113** children. **Kairos** supported on average **40 households**, with **104 individuals**. **30** of those are **children under 11**. **STAR Project in the first nine months of the year** supported **8206** adults and children with food. STAR have a strict procedure in place for our referrals to lessen dependency and have identified an issue where repeat users of community food may be developing a learned helplessness towards food insecurity. It is hoped (as noted above) to engage more community food users with advice and other support to tackle this.
- 15.27 STAR Project has also been working with NHSGGC at local hospital the Royal Alexandra, to ensure anyone leaving hospital in need of a food parcel has one, thus helping the discharge process. One Occupational Therapist at RAH said, *'We frequently call STAR Project if one of our patients is being discharged and don't have shopping in. They are very quick to deal with any referrals we make and it's good to know the service is there. We have been hesitant to discharge patients if we cannot include food provision within their package of care.'*
- 15.28 Renfrewshire Council has also continued to support Renfrewshire Foodbank by providing grant funding of £10,000 in 20/21. The main reason Foodbank attendee require food has changed from changes or delays to their benefits and is now low income. Renfrewshire Foodbank fulfilled 5253 vouchers this year, feeding 6697 adults and 2590 children.
- 15.29 This number shows a decrease from last year, where 2975 children were fed, however there is more free food provision in communities this year and we assume that this is because of the prevalence of other sources of community food as well as other initiatives such as payments made in place of school meals over the holidays.
- 15.30 Going forward, dignity in food provision will be a priority, and the Council's Social Renewal Plan makes provision for funding pantries as a focus.

#### **Cost of the School Day**

- 15.31 The Cost of the School Day fund continues to help families by giving schools a budget to support costs for pupils from low income households and relieve financial pressure on those families. The Cost of the School Day involves children, parents, and school staff in identifying cost barriers and in taking action to remove them, helping to create

environments where every child can access school activities and participate fully in school. Some examples of how our Renfrewshire schools are use Cost of the School Day funding to support our families are through supplying uniform, clothing, including warm winter clothing, and removing dinner debt.

- 15.32 Spend has also been adapted because of COVID 19 for example, one school purchased and filled a pencil case for every pupil to avoid children sharing. This approach creates a sense of equity as everyone has the same and 400 pupils benefitted. In other schools, breakfasts have been provided and support give to families to access financial entitlements such as electricity top-ups.
- 15.33 One High School provided shopping vouchers for families. £1200 worth of vouchers went to the Home Link worker to administer (in consultation with PT pastoral, DHT pupil support and the head teacher). This was because of the extreme need identified amongst many of the school's families during the pandemic.
- 15.34 This particular school also used the COSD fund to stocks a toiletry cupboard and also have full stationary packs and a tie ready for all of the new S1 (current p7) including a scientific calculator, so this is a cost parents don't have to worry about over the summer.
- 15.35 The head teacher notes, *'Maintaining dignity and personal agency is very important to us. That's why we prefer handing a family in need a voucher rather than a food parcel. Similarly, the toiletry cupboard which is freely available to those who need it, they access it privately and fill up a wee drawstring bag with all the items they need. No-one checks what they take.'*
- 15.36 The funding has meant the pressure has been taken off families in a discreet and sensitive way. For the year 2020/21, £123,000 was allocated to the fund, of which £75,000 was from the Tackling Poverty Programme and £48,000 was from Attainment Challenge.

### **Digital**

- 15.37 Work around digital exclusion has continued in 2020/21, albeit this has changed due to the challenges of the pandemic. Our free wifi provision in town centres and all Renfrewshire's libraries, community centres, leisure facilities and residential homes have free internet access, although access to this has been curtailed during much of the year.
- 15.38 The Council, with the support of a wider network of local organisations, has participated in the national Connecting Scotland programme. To date, there have been three application phases of this programme which delivers Wi-Fi enabled devices and Mi-Fi's providing internet connectivity to end users who are digitally excluded. Renfrewshire Council successfully applied to all three phases and in total, have received and distributed 756 devices.
- 15.39 Successful applications were submitted by Renfrewshire Council Children's Services, Communities and Housing Services and on behalf of the COVID-19 Neighbourhood Hubs. A further 834 devices were awarded to a wide range of Renfrewshire public sector and community based organisation across the three phases giving a total of 1590 for the Renfrewshire area.
- 15.40 Phase 2 in particular was aimed at families and young care leavers, with 1134 devices awarded during this phase. This included to organisations working with ethnic minority

families, such as Pachedu and School of African Culture as well as the Carers Centre for young carers and Who Cares Scotland for care experienced young people and care leavers.

- 15.41 In addition to being allocated a device and, where needed, internet connectivity, end users are also provided with telephone support to help them set up and use the device. Support is provided by the applicant organisation's staff with online Digital Training made available to them by SCVO. Renfrewshire Leisure library staff and Community learning and Development staff were amongst those who undertook Digital Champion training so they could provide support.

### **Sanitary Products**

- 15.42 Due to the pandemic, the free community sanitary provision in Renfrewshire had to adapt. Previously free sanitary products were available in all Renfrewshire libraries, Town Halls and sports facilities, however for large parts of the year these venues were closed and another way of providing free sanitary products was necessary.
- 15.43 To ensure the widest availability of products, the Council has contracted social enterprise Hey Girls to provide an online ordering service where products are delivered directly to the homes of those ordering. This has been supplemented, again when venues are open, by a supply being freely available within community organisations, such as RAMH Restore and Remode in the centre of Paisley, the YMCA in Paisley and Renfrew, STAR Project and many others.
- 15.44 These organisations can order in bulk from Hey Girls and all products are environmentally friendly, and in many cases, reusables. Those who need products and many not have digital access can also telephone our Assistance Line and our Neighbourhood Hubs can deliver the products ordered. Finally, our Renfrewshire Leisure premises are still supplied with free products, making our provision available in 4 different ways and in a variety of community venues across Renfrewshire.
- 15.45 Next year we intend to increase the number of venues and groups we supply, and, for example, have approached Women's Aid to ensure they have a supply for service users.
- 15.46 Marketing has been developed to promote the free products and this has been shared with community organisations. Renfrewshire HSCP Health Improvement Team has also supported free sanitary provision through promotion of the service both through HSCP staff channels and HSCP Social Media as well as within HSCP networks including those relevant to education, mental health supports and BAME communities.

### **Cost of Living Driver – Future Plans**

- 15.47 Renfrewshire's Social Recovery Plan includes high level intentions around reducing costs of living, with dignified food provision and fuel costs included as well as supports for financial inclusion, income maximisation and affordable credit. Details of actions to support these plans will be developed early in 21/22.
- 15.48 Central to these will be developing participatory approaches for people with lived experience of poverty.

### **NHSGGC**

- 15.49 NHSGGC participated in national research on the cost of the pregnancy pathway. Affordable childcare, costs of attending services and costs of items for a new baby were significant issues which are being explored with all Local Authority partners over the next year.
- 15.50 As part of the NHSGGC Financial Inclusion and Renfrewshire HSCP Health Improvement Team future plans, travel and transport costs in particular will be examined in the coming year, including those around travel to antenatal care and access to emergency supports, especially to those from rural areas.

## **16. Driver - Income from Social Security and Benefits in Kind**

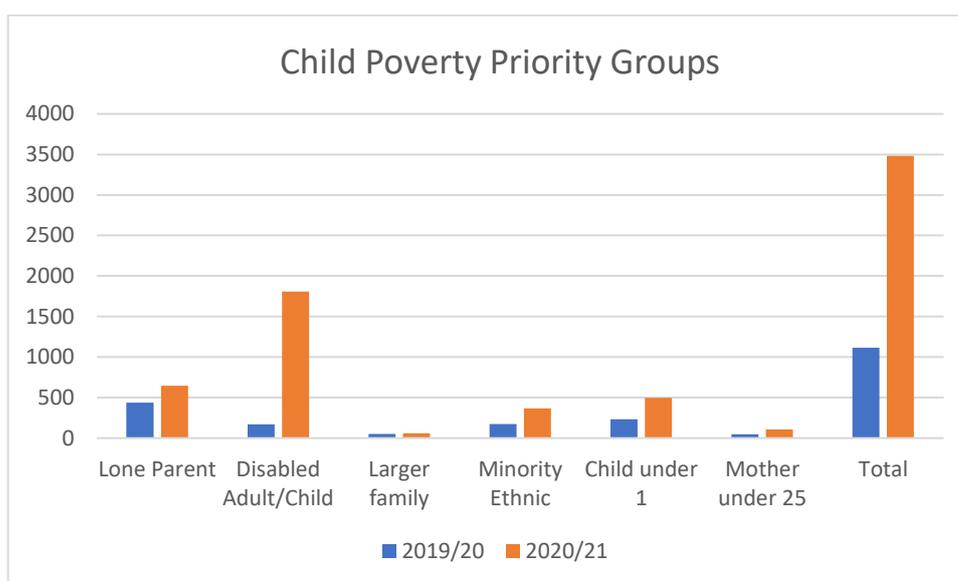
- 16.1 Maximising income from benefits is vital in helping families. Ensuring people know what they can claim and how to go about it is an area of continued investment for the Council and its partners. In Renfrewshire we have carried out sustained and innovative work to ensure those relying on social security and other benefits get all they are entitled to. Through a wide variety of partnership work, outreach work and automation of processes we provide direct, practical support to families.
- 16.2 This year, especially, with the increased numbers claiming Universal Credit due to the pandemic, many for the first time, and introduction of Scottish Child Payment which is vital to lift families out of poverty, organisations are working together to ensure clients get all the benefits they are entitled to.
- 16.3 NHS colleagues have continued partnership working both with DWP and Social Security Scotland. NHSGGC is piloting with the DWP at Queen Elizabeth University Hospital, which will, when safe to do so, be co-located in the Support and Information Services and with patients directly. This will initially support benefit issues, for example access to Universal Credit accounts while in hospital.

### **Advice**

- 16.4 Advice provision in Renfrewshire contributes to all drivers of child poverty. Renfrewshire Council has its own Advice Works service, providing better off calculations, welfare benefits and money advice. The Council also provides funding to Renfrewshire Citizens Advice Bureau (RCAB) for both a general advice service and a free legal advice service. Through provision of good quality advice our services help our families to reduce their costs of living, increase their income and through appropriate legal advice help those in work, keep it. It can help with costs of living, reducing bills and managing debt repayments and it can increase income from benefits by ensuring clients are getting what they are entitled to.
- 16.5 During the pandemic the advice services have continued to operate, mainly by telephone, but also for some limited face to face contact as allowed as well as by email and online. Services adapted quickly to ensure clients could access services, but also to provide the advice that clients were seeking, such as that concerning furlough, employment and in many cases jobseekers allowance.
- 16.6 The services also quickly adapted to work with partners to ensure Renfrewshire citizens got all the assistance available. Examples of this are Advice Works working with British Red Cross Hardship fund to make referrals for those in need, including those with no recourse to public funds and RCAB working with Renfrewshire Foodbank to provide energy advice and fuel vouchers.

## Advice Works

- 16.7 The Council's Advice Works provides a free welfare rights and money advice service throughout Renfrewshire. The team supports a variety of services, including Healthier, Wealthier Children and Families First which have a family focus and target priority groups as well as our employability service, Invest in Renfrewshire, and Improving the Cancer Journey.
- 16.8 Advice Works has been able to provide statistics on the number of clients who fit into the Child Poverty groups for the last two years. Nearly 3,500 such clients received advice this year, and increase of over 2,000.



- 16.9 In 2020/21 this service helped **1,242** people claim benefits to which they were entitled, and the gain from welfare benefit claims for those clients was **£9,333,347.84**. Debt was managed for **258** clients through money advice amounted to a further **£1,655,126.35**. These figures are down on last year. Due to Covid, the Department for Work and Pensions continued clients DLA and PIP awards for a year, and those clients are only being reviewed now. This will mean an expected increase in 2021/22. In many cases creditors also ceased pursuing those who owed them for debts, instead payment holidays were given automatically and action to pursue outstanding amounts ceased.

## Renfrewshire CAB

- 16.10 Renfrewshire Council also funds Renfrewshire Citizens Advice Bureau (RCAB) to provide a wide variety of advice. The bureau received £242,000 last year to provide a general advice service on issues including money, benefits, debt, housing and employment and a further £95,000 to provide free legal advice. In addition, funding has also been awarded to RCAB to assist with the expected rise in demand for advice, with £84,000 over two years awarded for RCAB to provide a welfare rights service due to commence in May 2021 and a further £100,000 agreed to fund employment advice. This project is expected to start during this financial year.
- 16.11 The number of clients RCAB has supported this year has increased, with many more clients looking for advice around employment and furlough. The numbers of those requiring assistance with Universal Credit has also gone up, and closure of libraries and other sources of free ICT help has exacerbated problems with claiming this online benefit. RCAB receive funding from the Scottish Government to provide the Help to Claim service and as a provider of consumer and other advice have also dealt with an increase in issues regarding, for

example, holiday flights and scams.

- 16.12 RCAB does not collect information on Priority Groups as their case management system does not allow this, however in 20/21 This year 813 clients with children have received advice from RCAB. This includes 382 single parents. £1,264,386 has been gained for clients in respect of welfare benefits and £725,300 in respect of money advice.
- 16.13 As the year went on, and services became less reactive to the pandemic, more organised and more focussed on recovery, RCAB has engaged with services such as the local hospital (Royal Alexandra Hospital) to speak to patients and their families about support that may be open to them upon leaving hospital. This is organised for patients with long term health conditions and physical disabilities as well as those leaving intensive care. They have also delivered two half day training sessions to Kairos Women's Space aimed at building a better understanding of the benefits issues faced by low income and disability affected households.
- 16.14 These, our main Council advice providers, have joined with other advice providers, such as Social Security Scotland and University of the West of Scotland Student Services in an Advice Partnership as described in last year's report.

### **Families First**

- 16.15 The Families First service continues in Renfrewshire. This free service, which was described in last year's report supports families with children aged 0-8 years old. It provides help, support and advice in a family focussed way using a 'walking together with families' approach, covering everything from promoting wellbeing and positive relationships, through to energy and employment advice and establishing good family routines. This year the service had to adapt to online working. Closed schools also had an affect on the service which has been based in within primary schools.
- 16.16 The service supports families to maximise their income and manage their debts through embedded income advisers. As mentioned at earlier Families First has a dedicated Energy Advocate and a designated Employability Officer who helps with all aspects of employability including CVs, job searches and preparation for interviews.
- 16.17 Families First takes a holistic approach to supporting families by providing a single point of contact for parents, grandparents and carers. The service generated £285,006 over the year, dealing with 333 cases and assisting with issues, such as Best Start Grant claims and benefit checks. This service will be expanded to work across all Renfrewshire schools and with families with children of all ages.

### **Healthier Wealthier Children**

- 16.18 It is recognised that pregnancy and the birth of a child can cause increased costs and reduced income due to changed working patterns. The Healthier Wealthier Children (HWC) project was established within Renfrewshire in November 2010 to develop new approaches to providing money and welfare advice to pregnant women and families at risk of, or experiencing, child poverty.
- 16.19 The project, which is funded through the Tackling Poverty Programme, contributes to reducing child poverty by helping families with money worries. Midwives and other antenatal service staff, health visitors, oral health and breastfeeding advisers, parenting support workers, and early education staff refer pregnant women and families with infants who need extra support around money to an advice worker based in the Council's Advice Works service. By working with families and pregnant women, the advice worker can maximise income for the family.

16.20 Renfrewshire HSCP Health Improvement team continues to ensure maximum reach for HWC by analysing referral data and working in collaboration with HSCP Children's Services to increase the referrals into HWC. This year, however, changing services due to Covid caused a reduction in numbers. From 1<sup>st</sup> April 2020 – 31<sup>st</sup> March 2021 HWC received 249 referrals and generated additional income of £299,195 for families across Renfrewshire. As services reopen, a renewed focus on referrals will be encouraged by the HSCP Health Improvement Team.

#### **NHSGGC**

16.21 NHSGGC advice services operate across the whole Health Board area, not just in Renfrewshire. This year it is estimated that **19,300** NHSGGC patients were referred to various money advice services across NHSGGC with a financial gain of **£56million**. Of these 62% were parents, 38% from BAME communities and 62% with a disability. Figures include:

- Around £6.4 million was gained for clients in community NHS children and families services (3,954 referrals)
- £1.6 million was gained for children's hospital clients (329 referrals)
- £3.6 million was gained for those with long term conditions, a large proportion of whom are parents
- £2.3 million from the primary care embedded money advice service (496 referrals 25% parents with 12% being lone parents).
- 76 referrals were made into the Special Needs In Pregnancy Service, with £275,968 gain
- 535 applications were made for the neonatal support fund (£294485) gain
- 305 emergency food packages were given out on discharge from hospital

#### **Improving the Cancer Journey**

16.22 The Macmillan Improving the Cancer Journey (MICJ) has continued throughout the year, and although the service, which is usually carried out face to face, has had to be altered due to Covid – 19, it continues to run ensuring everyone diagnosed with cancer in Renfrewshire can easily access all the support they need from diagnosis, as soon as they need it, to enable them to live as well and as independently as possible.

16.23 The initiative, which is funded and supported by Macmillan Cancer Support (Scotland) for a minimum of three years sets out to:

- Invite all with a cancer diagnosis in Renfrewshire to complete a Holistic Needs Assessment (HNA) and develop an individual care plan that includes carers and family members;
- Provide the dedicated support of a named 'link Worker' to everyone in Renfrewshire with a cancer diagnosis, and to his or her carer or family; and
- Facilitate the delivery of effective Health and Social Care support solutions, based on their needs.

16.24 The service helped 388 people in the period to March 2021 with a variety of services and financial gains, such as benefit claims and Macmillan grants and generating £354,697 in benefits for these Renfrewshire residents affected by cancer. This works out at approximately £2,000 per ICJ service user who received benefits advice. Further support such as energy advice was also provided to families to lower the cost of living.

### **Council Tax Reduction**

- 16.25 After a decrease in Council Tax Reduction (CTR) claims over the last two years, caseloads significantly increased during 2020/21. An increase in Universal Credit applications as a result of Covid-19 resulted in more people applying for CTR and we also highlighted this benefit through leaflets enclosed in Council Tax Bills as well as other proactive actions. There was a 5% increase in CTR caseload between April 2020 and April 2021.
- 16.26 It was agreed at the beginning of the pandemic no recovery notices would be issued for Council Tax, however a decision was taken towards the end of August we would look to switch on the recovery again. Before we started to issue recovery notices, which would include reminder notices if there had been failure to pay, we wanted to ensure those most affected by the pandemic were contacted so we could discuss their accounts to provide as much support as possible to those most in need and ensure their accounts were correct before further notices were sent
- 16.27 The three main areas we focused on were accounts where there had been a death in the household, customers who were shielding and accounts that had been able to pay last year but not the current year. We would also take Council Tax Reduction application from those who had advised they had reduced income as a result of the pandemic.
- 16.28 With regard to cases where a death had been reported, **48** customers were contacted. **26** of these cases had balances written off. Apart from assisting families financially, this ensured no further recovery notices were issued to the families as they coped with bereavement, when likely balances would be written off eventually.
- 16.29 In Shielding cases, 165 customers were contacted. **47** payment plans were set up to prevent recovery notices being issues. This includes **18** new direct debits being set up. As a result of these calls we were also able to award **2** single persons discount and **5** Council Tax reduction claims that may have been missed had we not made contact.
- 16.30 We also contacted 584 customers who had paid last year but not this year. A further **93** payment plans were created as a result of the contact. **2** single persons discounts and **1** Council Tax Reduction claim was also grant off the back off the phone calls.
- 16.31 We had also carried out earlier campaign earlier in the year to capture as many possible council tax reduction applications during phone calls to the council tax team when the customer had mentioned they had a decrease to their income. We set up a process where we would call the customer back to take the application over the phone and then process the claim and confirm the outcome.
- 16.32 From this short campaign, we took an additional 91 council tax reduction claims and we were able to make an award in 64 cases (70%). This again ensured we were capturing the information when contact was being made and making awards where possible to reduce the amount of council tax due to be paid.
- 16.33 Telephone CTR applications commenced in April 2020 as a direct reaction to Covid-19 and face-to-face engagement being curtailed.

### **Income from Social Security and benefits in Kind - Future Plans**

- 16.34 Knowledge of benefits is an area highlighted by 'Get Heard' with one participant stating, '*I think there needs to be some way that everybody is able to know what's available... really*

*there needs to—I don't know what format this would take but there needs to be some way that everybody can immediately know what's available and what criteria you need to apply for it'*

- 16.35 Increased awareness and advice are key to ensure everybody knows what benefits they are entitled to and encouraged to claim these. We recognise that not everyone will come forward to advice agencies, but that we need to engage people who may benefit from the service where they already go in ways they already use.

#### **Advice in GP surgeries**

- 16.36 Prior to the pandemic **Renfrewshire HSCP** and **Advice Works** worked together to deliver a pilot embedding advice in two GP's surgeries. The pilot started in November 2019, and ran until the Covid-19 outbreak stopped external agencies from visiting surgeries. In the roughly three months of the pilot almost £23,000 was gained for clients and feedback was positive. The main referrals were for benefit checks for clients and completion of PIP and ESA forms.
- 16.37 In the coming year, this advice provision will be extended to 4 more GP surgeries in Renfrewshire, with staff from the surgeries able to refer patients directly to Advice Works. It is expected that this service, with referral from a trusted source, will reach those who have never previously sought advice and it hoped to include all surgeries in future.

#### **Work with Social Security Scotland**

- 16.38 We have worked closely with Social Security Scotland throughout 2020/21. They are already part of our Advice Partnership, and we have been working to consolidate the links already made and work in collaboration with advice agencies across Renfrewshire to get the new Social Security benefits to as many of those that are entitled to them as possible.
- 16.39 From the published statistics to 31 March we know that 3460 applications have been made for Scottish Child Payment with a 92% success rate, which is comparable to the rest of Scotland. Using various existing data sets, we have calculated that there are approximately 10,798 children in Renfrewshire under 6 and therefore potentially 6,587 children could be entitled to Scottish Child Payment, living in 5,489 households. This calculation gives us an approximate number of applications that we should be striving for.
- 16.40 Over the coming year, we will working with the agency to increase applications for Scottish Child Payment and for Best Start Grant across schools and nurseries by using text and other messaging direct from educational establishments.
- 16.41 We also intent to make claiming the benefits you are entitled to the focus of our usual 'Talk Money Week' campaign in November and link with partners so a Renfrewshire wide message goes out.

#### **NHSGGC Financial Inclusion and Renfrewshire HSCP Health Improvement Team**

- 16.42 One of the key pieces of work which will be taken forward by NHSGGC Financial Inclusion and Renfrewshire HSCP Health Improvement Team next year will be a focus on increasing the uptake of all benefits, grants, means of monies and other entitlements along with promotion of free school meals, school clothing grant and Education Maintenance Allowance to families. This will include income maximisation available to all frontline staff.

- 16.43 NHSGGC will build on their success this year with an estimated 70% uptake of Scottish Child payment and further partnership working with Social Security Scotland in maternity services to support Best Start Foods and Best Start Grant access initially, then to support child DLA as it moves from DWP to Social Security Scotland.

## **17. Work which will help prevent children becoming Parents in Poverty by 2030**

- 17.1 There is much ongoing work in Renfrewshire as well as new initiatives identified this year, which, although not directly linked to the three identified drivers of poverty, is intended to help prevent children from becoming parents in poverty themselves. Some of these, including our work on attainment was included in last year's report, however, remain such a vital part of this work that an update has been provided. Others are new areas of work such as Community Wealth Building.

### **Attainment**

- 17.2 Although not immediately linked to the drivers of poverty, work to close the poverty-related attainment gap between those living in Scotland's least and most deprived areas is vital to children and young peoples' ongoing wellbeing and ability to reach their full potential.
- 17.3 This session has undoubtedly been one of the most challenging ever experienced. The impact of the Coronavirus pandemic has been profound and presented unparalleled challenges. The school and early learning and childcare closures in March resulted in significant changes in working practices and routines.
- 17.4 In response to the pandemic and as part of our local recovery planning, the governance board reviewed the Scottish Attainment Challenge plan to assess the feasibility of all projects. While some priorities shifted as a result of Covid-19, there is still a clear commitment and expectation within Renfrewshire to raise attainment for all whilst closing the poverty-related attainment gap.
- 17.5 As a result, project leads reviewed their own plans and explored different ways in which projects could still be delivered and adapted to respond to the pandemic. Many of our projects have successfully adapted and have continued to provide critical support. However, other projects, mainly face-to-face professional learning, were postponed or cancelled due to other pressing priorities and planning.
- 17.6 As described in the year one report, Renfrewshire Council has a very successful evidence-based, universal approach to improving outcomes for pupils which works across all 62 primary, secondary and Additional Support Needs schools in Renfrewshire. The authority was the first to be recognised by Education Scotland in making "excellent progress" in relation to closing the poverty-related attainment gap.
- 17.7 The five Attainment Challenge Workstreams (Learning and Teaching, Families and Communities, Leadership, Data Analysis and Care Experienced Children and Young People) deliver a range of high quality evidence based approaches in order to improve learning and teaching, health and wellbeing and to raise attainment for all while closing the poverty related attainment gap. A summary of highlights from 2020-21 are detailed below.
- Well-structured programme management ensuring clearly defined approaches.
  - Partnership working to enhance impact including co-ordinated approaches in the sharing of data.
  - A sector leading approach to professional learning including a highly effective leadership programme and a programme for classroom assistants.

- Evidence-based approaches to the teaching of literacy and numeracy have led to delivery of a high-quality literacy curriculum.
- Very good moderation activities provided across the authority.
- Staff are skilled at recognising and addressing the impact of poverty on families.
- Attainment in literacy and numeracy in the broad general education has improved over time and the authority continues to perform above national averages with decreasing poverty-related attainment gaps across stages.
- Schools have been supported to deliver a Senior Phase which ensures appropriate pathways for young people and provides them with the opportunity to achieve a range of qualifications.
- There has been an increase in positive destinations for leavers from areas of highest deprivation.
- The views and voices of children and young people are shaping improvements across the authority.
- The roles of inclusion support assistants and transition teachers have supported improved attendance, reduction in exclusions and transitions among targeted groups.
- Almost all establishments in all sectors are fully engaged in Renfrewshire's Nurturing Relationships Approach and there is a wide range of high-quality services and resources available to support the health and wellbeing of all children, young people and families.
- The work of the Support to Promote Attendance/Attainment for the Care Experienced (SPACE) team is effectively improving attendance and health and wellbeing for care experienced children and young people.
- The development of a parental engagement strategy has been a key focus to support establishments with their planning around parental engagement.
- The authority's approach to the use of data to inform all aspects of its work has led to the development of a positive data culture.
- Increased opportunities to work in partnership within, across and outwith the workstreams including with a range of academic partners have been impactful.
- A local equity audit was conducted to understand the poverty-related attainment gap and health and wellbeing needs of children and young people as a result of the pandemic.

17.8 The pandemic has led to a shift, not a cessation in support. Some examples of this are described below.

17.9 The logistical problems of hosting supported study sessions in school have led to these being offered online and response has been positive. Literacy and numeracy approaches continue to be embedded to improve learner outcomes. Covid restrictions on the Language Bank necessitated a shift from face to face interpreting support to telephone translation. Interpreters continued to provide vital welfare check in telephone calls to families and feedback support needs to the relevant agencies including Home-link and schools. Our successful Pizza Learning programme used to increase the capacity of parents to support their child's learning at home and gives confidence to parents to engage with schools has been re-designed to move online using devices and dongles secured from Connecting Scotland Digital Inclusion Initiative.

17.10 Health and wellbeing continues to be a priority. Effective collaboration between the HWB Development Officer, Attainment Advisor and Renfrewshire Youth Voice, led to an extensive consultation exercise being carried out with over 350 children and young people across primary and secondary schools in relation to Personal and Social Education (PSE). Findings have been collated and are being used to inform the development of a 'Framework for Personal and Social Education in Renfrewshire' in collaboration with other local authorities

across the West Partnership. Renfrewshire Nurturing Relationships Approach (RNRA) was adapted to support children and young people throughout the pandemic.

- 17.11 Place2Be continue to provide school-based counselling service, providing drop-in sessions and intensive counselling for pupils along with support sessions for parents and consultation sessions for staff.  
*“Talking to Place2Be during lockdown helped me feel less worried and more calm.” (Primary Pupil)*
- 17.12 Our highly effective leadership programme for staff continues to build resilience and supports succession planning and formal evaluation of all leadership activity will take place from March 2021.
- 17.13 Our projects for The Care Experienced Children and Young People have continued during the current pandemic This includes our work with Aberlour, where the Aberlour Mentoring Services continues to support young people.
- 17.14 The Dolly Parton Imagination Library has grown significantly with 255 children currently benefitting. After the success of the pilot, £200,000 has been allocated in the Council Budget to extend the project to all 2 to 5-year-old children in Renfrewshire.
- 17.15 Despite the challenges with ongoing restrictions, we continue to be focused and committed to closing the poverty related attainment gap while raising attainment for all. The programme has successfully adapted to ensure the needs of all learners, practitioners, families and communities are supported.

### **Community Wealth Building**

- 17.16 Community Wealth Building is a new people-centred approach to local economic development, which redirects wealth back into the local economy, and places control and benefits into the hands of local people.
- 17.17 There are five core principles to Community Wealth Building:
- progressive procurement – developing local supply chains of businesses likely to support local employment and keep wealth within communities
  - fair employment and just labour markets – Using anchor institutions to improve prospects of local people
  - shared ownership of the local economy – supporting and growing business models that are more financially generative for the local economy
  - socially just use of land and property – developing the function and ownership of local assets held by anchor organisations, so local communities benefit from financial and social gain
  - making financial power work for local places – increase flows of investment within local economies by harnessing and recirculating the wealth that exists
- 17.18 Renfrewshire Council is one of the 4 Community Wealth Building Projects that Scotland Excel, funded by Scottish Government, will be working with on their Community Wealth Building Project. The programme is designed to launch or reinvigorate elements of the Scottish Model of Procurement and will include a number of specific tasks that support greater community wealth building within the council.

- 17.19 Throughout the programme Scotland Excel will work closely with procurement and economic development colleagues to promote and support the existing good work and practices to both internal and external stakeholders. Ideally the organisation will allocate suitable individuals to “champion” the initiatives after the programme is complete.
- 17.20 Through the Community Wealth Building project it is hoped to support local jobs and better outcomes for Renfrewshire families.

### **Family Firm**

- 17.21 Family Firm has continued to work with Social Work and Education staff and partners including Invest and Skills Development Scotland to try to ensure Care Experienced young people are receiving appropriate opportunities and support with employability/training and/or Further/Higher Education.
- 17.22 We have offered a variety of additional supports including a Sports Programme for a group of young people at risk of not achieving a positive destination. 10 young people were identified to attend the programme while still at school as an addition to their timetable – all were Care Experienced or considered vulnerable by their school or were struggling to attend mainstream school. 8 of the original group completed the course and most decided to remain at school instead of leaving in December.
- 17.23 We have also linked closely with colleagues from Invest and Skills Development Scotland, Through Care and Social Work to track Care Experienced young people aged 16 -19 who are not known to be in a positive destination and to make contact with them. This enabled us to link the young person into available support with job or college applications and interviews. One young person has been supported to attend a specialist virtual work experience paid placement which has provided the experience required for her chosen career in graphic design.
- 17.24 We have also linked with partners SDS, West College, Invest, Social Work, Who Cares Scotland to introduce a course provided by West College for Care Experienced young people who are not confident or ready for college but would like to attend. We supported young people to apply for this course and to attend the sessions. 8 young people attended this course – and the 5 who completed found it worthwhile and moved into a positive destination.

## **18. Work carried out predominantly by partners**

- 18.1 Across Renfrewshire we recognise and value the work being carried out by partners to tackle child poverty. This report gives us a chance to reflect the work, in some but not all cases supported by the Council, that our partners undertake.

### **Engage Renfrewshire – New Buddies Officer**

- 18.2 Engage Renfrewshire is Renfrewshire’s Third Sector Interface. Funded by Renfrewshire Council, Engage Renfrewshire is involved reducing child poverty in a number of ways, including chairing the Renfrewshire Affordable Credit Alliance and being part of many initiatives, such as the Community Benefits Forum and Our Children as well as facilitating a wide variety of anti-poverty work.

- 18.3 This year, the New Buddies Network Officer based at Engage Renfrewshire started a series of ‘Engage in Conversation’ Events for the BAME community. The format of the events was a conversation about the participants’ experiences, particularly during the Covid pandemic based around specific questions. To date the topics covered have been **Health** and **Employment**, with further sessions planned.
- 18.4 These sessions have fed into the Council’s Community Impact Assessment, with suggestions being made as to how the Council and NHSGGC/HSCP can better serve the needs of different black and minority ethnic communities.
- 18.5 In general, it was felt that the Council and statutory partners could do more to recognise the unique challenges of BAME communities when planning is carried out and policies are being made. It was considered that consultation should involve BAME communities and BAME voices should be heard, whether individuals or through ambassadors. It was suggested that Renfrewshire Council publications should have better representation of minority ethnic residents and literature should better reflect the diversity within the community.

#### **Tannahill Centre and Community Transport**

- 18.6 The New Tannahill Centre is situated in the heart of Ferguslie Park, and is a valuable community asset. The Tannahill Centre hosts a community café and leases commercial premises within the building for various purposes, including: a doctors surgery, housing association offices, the local library, an NHS clinic, nursery, pharmacy and post office.
- 18.7 In addition to this they run a number of Community Development programmes aimed at supporting local people design, develop and deliver solutions to the inequality and discrimination they face and others may face within their community. This includes:
- Supporting people establish Self Reliant Groups to address gaps in business and commercial provision within the community.
  - Funding local people’s good ideas for their community through Participatory Budgeting – where local people vote on the projects they want funded in their community.
  - Providing paid training opportunities via their community café to local young people who face additional barriers to employment
  - Involving young people in the design and delivery of services they access, such as youth clubs and youth-focused events.
- 18.8 The team at the Centre were aware that the need for community transport in Ferguslie Park, Linwood and the surrounding areas was acute. Ferguslie Park is well known for its high levels of poverty and deprivation, and as a result a higher proportion of people in Ferguslie Park use the bus, minicab or coach (14.91%), walk to work (11.46%) or be a passenger in a car or van (7.31%) compared to Renfrewshire and Scotland as a whole.
- 18.9 Despite this there is only one bus route that services a small section of Ferguslie Park and ends in the early evening. This limited service doesn’t enable people from Ferguslie to travel within and around the housing scheme, an issue that impacts older people and people with a disability. Anecdotally – the lack of affordable transport around Ferguslie Park also prevents older people and people with a disability accessing services that would support their health and wellbeing.

- 18.10 The Tannahill Centre has been working in partnership with a number of third sector organisations from and around the Ferguslie Park area, including Linstone Housing Association, KLAS Childcare, Paisley Housing Association, Darkwood Crew and Fordbank Scouts to explore the development of a Community Transport Project.
- 18.11 Following discussions with these and other local community organisations it was agreed that there was a requirement to develop community transport in the area. Initially this would support the voluntary and community groups to transport their members to events and activities, then expand to provide other transport solutions such as enabling the older population and those with mobility issues to access healthcare services. This led to the formation of a working group to develop the processes and procedures with support from Community Transport Glasgow (CTG) to commence a Community Transport pilot service, with the initial focus on group transport.
- 18.12 However, in the early stages of scoping out the pilot COVID19 hit. There was an immediate requirement for transport to assist with providing food delivery support to the local residents of Ferguslie Park. CTG provided the Tannahill Centre with access to a minibus, free of charge due to the emergency situation.
- 18.13 The minibus has remained in Ferguslie and, despite COVID19, there are already 2 organisations who have become members of the CT scheme, with one of the members using the minibus regularly for their childcare activities. Another 6 community organisations have indicated their interest in membership and making use of the transport post COVID.
- 18.14 The Community Transport Initiative has recently received funding of £15,000 and intends to grow the scheme this year to at least 10 community and voluntary organisations using the vehicle.

## **19. Tackling Child Poverty – Activities**

- 19.1 This year the activities associated with the drivers of child poverty have necessarily altered. For example job fairs have no longer taken place, and with working from home becoming the norm in many cases and hospitality businesses either shutting or significantly changing their services many training opportunities have ceased to exist.
- 19.2 Many services have altered the way they work, and in some cases there has been a sharp increase in activity, such as community food provision. As Covid-19 reduces and the country heads back to normal, the full impact of the pandemic will become known and activities will return and refresh as we move towards recovery.
- 19.3 We will continue work with our communities to find out their changing needs and work with partners, in communities and across all services to ensure our future activities to reduce child poverty meet those needs.

## Appendix A

### Driver – Income from Employment

Description of Activity	Who is involved	Assessment	Groups the action is intended to reduce poverty amongst
Invest in Renfrewshire uses PESF funding to support the priority groups identified in 'Every Child Every Chance' by providing person-centred help for parents to address their barriers to work, and to gain better skills leading to better, higher paid employment.	RC Invest in Renfrewshire/SG	Numbers/Demographic	6 priority groups identified in 'Every Child, Every Chance'.
An advice worker is based within the Invest in Renfrewshire's employability team to assist people with financial advice including better off in work calculations and ensures income maximisation on a household basis when participants progress to employment.	RC Invest in Renfrewshire/Advice Works	Numbers/Demographics/Client Financial Gain/Debt managed	All unemployed, but especially PESF clients and families to give best advice to improve household income.
A Client Support Fund is available as a practical intervention to remove a barrier to an individual moving into work. Interview Clothes, travel cost for the first month of employment, birth certificate costs are all examples of what has been covered. This fund can also support accredited training required to secure employment including Health & Safety CSCS along with childcare costs, interpretation services and other support measures to ensure clients can access and participate in the range of employability interventions offered.	RC Invest in Renfrewshire	Numbers/Demographic	All
Invest source work placements, work tasters, vacancies and volunteer opportunities. Some of these are sourced through Council Procurement Community Benefits.	RC Invest in Renfrewshire/RC Procurement	Numbers sourced/Numbers attending/demographic/ numbers of job vacancies/number vacancies filled	All

Job Clubs are available regularly to help individuals look for work. Self-employment is also an option for some individuals and support is available for this.	RC Invest in Renfrewshire	Numbers sourced/numbers attending/demographic/ /number vacancies filled	All
Individual accredited training is sourced to assist clients move into work quicker. This can include CSCS, Food Hygiene and Manual Handling and many more vocational courses. Additionally, there are also a limited number of Traineeships (paid work placements), and Graduate Internships available to individuals to help improve individual's chances of moving into sustainable employment.	RC Invest in Renfrewshire	Numbers sourced/numbers attending/demographic/ /number vacancies filled	All
In work support is provided to clients who have found work through Invest. These individuals are tracked at weeks 1, 13 and 26 to help them sustain work. They can be offered support at this stage to help improve their chances of progression in the workplace.	RC Invest in Renfrewshire	Numbers accessing support	All
Renfrewshire Council is both a Kickstart provider and the Gateway Organisation for the Kickstarter scheme in Renfrewshire.	RC/Invest in Renfrewshire	Target of 700 job placements over Renfrewshire (455 approved so far)	16 – 24 year olds IRO Universal Credit.
Family Firm has continued to work with Social Work staff and Education staff and partners including Invest and Skills Development Scotland to support Care Experienced young people to positive destinations.	RC/Invest/SDS/West College Scotland	Numbers in positive destinations post school.	Care experienced young people at school and up to age 19.
Access to IT for job searches/CVs etc in all 12 Renfrewshire Libraries and other Council locations including the Home Exchange Shop. (when allowed by Covid)	RC Customer and Business Services/ Housing and Renfrewshire Libraries (Renfrewshire Leisure) (RL)	User numbers	All
'Digiters' provide free coaching sessions on a one-to-one basis as well as for groups for those who need help with basic IT skills. This includes helping access benefit systems and online group sessions around CVs and jobsearches.	RL Renfrewshire Libraries who have recruited volunteers to provide this service/RC.	Number of learners, hours of learning, user satisfaction, case studies.	All those requiring support with digital skills

The Living Wage Action plan continues. Increase of 9 accredited living wage employers this year.	RC/Poverty Alliance/Contractors/Invest in Renfrewshire	Numbers of Living Wage accredited employers.	All employees
NHSGGC has become a Living Wage Employer and have a work plan to move towards all those employed by contractors but working for NHSGGC onto Living Wage.	NHSGGC	Contractors paying Living Wage	All employees/contracted employees
Renfrewshire Council is committed to maximising Community Benefits through its procurement activities by including specific Community Benefit Clauses and targets within procurement contracts. These cover payment of the Living Wage as well as targeted employment and training opportunities. Fair work practices in areas such as zero hour contracts and worker representation are also scored.	RC Procurement	Community Benefits are evaluated as part of the tendering process and monitored on a quarterly basis.	Targeted to priority groups
Employment is explored as a route by Housing/Tenancy sustainment officers when Council tenants are in difficulty with arrears.	RC Housing	Numbers/outcomes	All tenants having difficulty with rent arrears
Public Wifi is available all day, every day in Renfrewshire town centres and Council and Renfrewshire Leisure premise, allowing individuals to carry out job searches/submit CVs etc.	RC	Annual Billing Information	All
Council funded Legal Service at Renfrewshire Citizens Advice Bureau (RCAB). This service represents clients at employment tribunals and assists with other employment related legal matters. (3 year contract to Sep 2021)	RC/RCAB	Numbers attending service/demographics and Client Financial Gain	Available to all Renfrewshire residents, however particularly targeted at clients with multiple issues and the following priority groups; Low Income Households, Households affected by Welfare Reform, Parents of children in poverty, People who are currently unemployed, Individuals living

			with long term health conditions, People experiencing poor mental health, People living with a physical disability, Care Experienced
Council funded advice service at Renfrewshire Citizens Advice Bureau provides employment related advice. (3 year contract to Sep 2021)	RC/RCAB	Numbers attending service/demographics and Client Financial Gain	Available to all Renfrewshire residents, however particularly targeted at clients with multiple issues and the following priority groups; Low Income Households, Households affected by Welfare Reform, Parents of children in poverty, People who are currently unemployed, Individuals living with long term health conditions, People experiencing poor mental health, People living with a physical disability, Care Experienced
Increasing employability through volunteering, including promoting Volunteer Friendly and Saltire Awards	Engage Renfrewshire (3 <sup>rd</sup> Sector Interface)	Numbers of volunteers/outcomes	All
Linstone Housing offer a Car Club with vehicles to hire in Linwood and Johnstone in 3 locations. The club costs £5 to join	Linstone Housing Association-additional car funded by	Numbers of members/usage	All

and £3 per hour, and can be used to get to interviews. (Cheaper for Linstone Tenants)	Transport Scotland <i>'Plugged-In Households Grant Fund'</i>		
West College Scotland offer free employment related courses for those on benefit, eg. Health and Social Care, IT Admin Skills, and Childcare. Their Ferguslie Campus has a focus on assisting residents to gain skills, qualifications and experience so that they can move into work.	West College Scotland	Numbers attending/completing courses	All
YMCA iEnterprise supports young people to set up businesses through/connected to digital. This includes sourcing available funding.	RC/Paisley YMCA	Numbers of businesses, numbers receiving funding case studies.	Young people to age 26
YMCA run coding clubs online to support young people in developing digital skills which can increase their chances of finding skilled, better paid employment. Provides experience for volunteers running the clubs to enhance their job prospects. STEM for girls also takes place.	Paisley YMCA/RL	Numbers attending	Young people aged 8-17
RC Youth Services works with young people, particularly those in secondary school with a priority to work with those with additional support needs and/or at risk of a negative destination to improve outcomes, including employment outcomes through programmes such as Duke of Edinburgh and Saltire Awards.	RC Youth Services/ NHSGGC/ Clyde Muirshiel Regional park.	Numbers and results/outcomes	Young people with social, emotional and behavioural needs, looked after and accommodated young people, young people with additional support needs, young people at risk of negative destination and young people disadvantaged by poverty.
Renfrewshire HSCP developed an employability resource to support professionals across Renfrewshire to raise the issue of employability with participants. The resource is broken down to cover all stages of the Employability pipeline. The resource details services in Renfrewshire which are available to support participants at each stage of the Employability Pipeline.	Renfrewshire HSCP Planning and Public Health Team. Renfrewshire HSCP Community Mental Health Team. Renfrewshire Drug Service. Integrated Alcohol Service.	Training interventions delivered to increase skills and knowledge of the resource with HSCP service staff including Mental Health, Addictions, Allied Health Professionals, Family Nurse	Participants / Patients who are in services such as Mental Health and Addictions Services, those being supported by Family Nurse Partnership and those patients being support by

<p>This resource is being updated in 2021.</p>	<p>Invest in Renfrewshire. DWP.</p>	<p>Partnership and Community Connectors staff. The resource was also distributed with employability specialist's partners including Invest in Renfrewshire practitioners, DWP staff and Third sector partners Recovery Across Mental Health.</p>	<p>Community Connectors as part of Renfrewshire HSCP Social Prescribing project.</p>
<p>Renfrewshire HSCP recognised the importance of employability and the impact it can have on those with mental health and addictions issues. As a result the HSCP worked in partnership with Invest in Renfrewshire to set up a single point of contact for all referrals from HSCP mental health and addictions services into Invest in Renfrewshire's employment support services.</p>	<p>Renfrewshire HSCP Planning and Public Health Team. Renfrewshire HSCP Community Mental Health Team. Renfrewshire Drug Service. Integrated Alcohol Service. Invest in Renfrewshire.</p>	<p>Ongoing sessions to promote the single point of contact where delivered and Employability resources distributed among the teams.</p>	<p>Participants / Patients who are accessing Mental Health and Addictions Services.</p>
<p>HSCP Chairs the Renfrewshire Local Employability Partnership (RLEP) health subgroup, led by the HSCP Planning and Health Improvement Team collaborated to identify the barriers to work and services required to improve employment outcomes for those in recovery or experiencing mental health issues.</p>	<p>Renfrewshire HSCP Health Improvement Team Invest in Renfrewshire. DWP Recovery Across Mental Health. RLEP Health Sub group.</p>	<p>RLEP mapping report was developed and discussed at RLEP meeting.</p>	<p>Priority groups include individuals in recovery or experiencing Mental Health issues, those with Addiction issues and in Recovery from Addiction and those with MSK issues.</p>
<p>Renfrewshire HSCP supported the development of the Recovery Task Force and the Recovery Hub in Renfrewshire for those in addiction and/or mental health recovery</p>	<p>Renfrewshire HSCP Health Improvement Team  Invest in Renfrewshire.</p>	<p>Health Improvement, RAMH &amp; DWP are partners in the recovery task force group working on Renfrewshire Recovery Hub which is on schedule to open in 2021. Currently exploring options for</p>	<p>LEP partners to explore opportunities to deliver employability interventions to those in both Addictions and Mental Health recovery.</p>

		support to be run from within building	
NHSGGC is now Living Wage Accredited and a Living Wage Employer ensuring all staff receive a fair wage which is independent of and more in line with expected living costs than other wage levels, it is based on a “basket of goods includes housing, childcare, transport and heating costs” for all working people.	NHSGGC	Numbers of staff receiving living wage instead of minimum wage.	All low income NHSGGC staff and their families either working in Renfrewshire or outwith but live in the area.
Renfrewshire HSCP support local members of the community to access volunteering opportunities within NHS settings and this has been especially prevalent during the Covid-19 Pandemic when NHSGGC included the Scotland Cares scheme to assist with Drop and Go at hospitals, befriending and all other volunteering opportunities.	Renfrewshire HSCP Health Improvement Team NHSGGC.	Local people from Renfrewshire are part of core volunteering team within NHS GGC increasing their confidence and skills and supporting them along the employability pipeline.	Individuals in Renfrewshire furthest from the labour market who often have one or more significant barrier to employment.

## Appendix B

### Driver – Cost of Living

Description of Activity	Who is involved	Assessment	Groups the action is intended to reduce poverty amongst
Renfrewshire Council is on target to deliver 1140 hours of Early Learning and Child Care for all eligible children by the deadline of August 2021. As at 31 December 2020, 86% of children attending nursery were already receiving 1140 hours per year	RC	Numbers accessing service	All families with eligible children
Advice Works and Renfrewshire Citizens Advice Bureau are trusted partners referring clients in need to Renfrewshire Foodbank for fuel vouchers.	RC Advice Works/RCAB/Renfrewshire Foodbank	Numbers accessing/demographic	All in need of fuel support
Support with childcare options given to those seeking to access employment.	RC Advice Works/DWP	Numbers of clients	All families with children
The Advice Works service provides budgeting support and money advice to the citizens of Renfrewshire.	RC Advice Works and partners	Numbers/Demographics/Client Financial Gain/Debt Managed	All
Renfrewshire Citizens Advice Bureau is funded by Renfrewshire Council to provide budgeting support and money advice to the citizens of Renfrewshire.	RC/RCAB	Numbers/Demographics/Client Financial Gain/Debt Managed	All with focus on priority groups
Renfrewshire Council provides advice in the Renfrewshire Foodbank to help clients maximise income/deal with problems.	Renfrewshire Foodbank/RC Advice Works	Client Financial Gain (demographics collected)	All
Renfrewshire HSCP and Advice Works worked together to deliver a pilot embedding advice in two GP's surgeries. This will be expanded to 4 more GP surgeries in 21/22	RC Advice Works/HSCP/NHSGGC GP Practices	Numbers accessing service/ Client Financial Gain (demographics collected)/Whether 1 <sup>st</sup> time accessing advice.	All in need, but particularly those with ill-health.
Renfrewshire Council provided funding of £10,000 to Renfrewshire Foodbank.	RC/Renfrewshire Foodbank	Numbers fed/reasons/Ward/ Demographics	All. This year, the Foodbank has provided food to <b>725</b>

			single parents and <b>538</b> families with <b>2590</b> children fed.
Renfrewshire has an Energy Advocacy Service which offers support to families to reduce energy bills, manage debt and obtain any assistance to which they are entitled, including Warm Home Discounts. One adviser works specifically with our Families First service.	RC Energy	Numbers/ongoing and one-off CFGs	In 20/21 Energy Advocates have worked with <b>1049</b> clients to reduce bills and energy debt saving them almost <b>£315,000</b> including ongoing savings, write offs and Warm Home Discounts. This includes <b>343</b> families with young children who saved <b>£112,881</b> .
By working closely with tenants, Housing Officers establish where clients may be eligible for charity grants and help with applications.	RC Housing	Actions recorded	Tenants in need of support due to difficult circumstances.
Local Authority 'super membership' purchased by Renfrewshire Council from FareShare to provide food for community groups for Place Based responses to food insecurity. Collection and distribution network formed and supported by Council.	RC/FareShare/Kibble/RAMH/STAR Project/Tannahill Centre/Kairos/EBI Unites/Lochwinnoch Food Group/St Conval's	Numbers of organisations accessing FareShare/numbers of families accessing	All suffering food insecurity.
Renfrewshire Council facilitated Community Food meetings with interested parties to coordinate and improve community food response in Renfrewshire.	RC/SG/FareShare/ Kibble/RAMH/STAR Project/Tannahill Centre/Kairos/EBI Unites/Lochwinnoch Food Group/St Conval's/Food Train/ROAR		All suffering food insecurity.
Home Energy Scotland Workshops held for practitioners to encourage partnership work in Renfrewshire to tackle fuel poverty and access fuel vouchers.	Engage Renfrewshire/Home Energy Scotland	Numbers attending with increased awareness	All with fuel poverty

Families First (as described in narrative) is a free service which supports families with children aged 0-8 years old to help them maximise their income and manage their debt. An Energy Adviser works specifically with this service.	RC	Numbers accessing services/Client Financial Gain	All families with children aged 0 – 8.
Street Stuff Clubs provide free activities for children in the evenings, during the holidays and at weekends. A free healthy meal is provided and the Street Stuff buses also have free wifi to ensure young people aren't digitally excluded. During Lockdown Street Stuff supported young people in Childcare Hubs.	RC/Street Stuff/ Police Scotland, Scottish Fire & Rescue, Engage Renfrewshire and St Mirren FC.	Numbers attending/Community safety stats showing reduction in vandalism and youth disorder.	All young people aged 10-18
Breakfast clubs continue providing a healthy breakfast to all pupils universally, relieving financial pressure on low income families, but most importantly, making sure that children start the school day ready to learn.	RC	Numbers of breakfasts/anecdotal evidence from teachers re. impact.	Universal, but schools involved are in areas identified as having high levels of deprivation.
The Cost of the School Day fund, bolstered by £75,000 funding from the Tackling Poverty programme, continues to operate across all primary and secondary schools in Renfrewshire, directly supporting families in a variety of ways. As per the narrative, flexibility has allowed families facing difficult circumstances to be supported with food and fuel vouchers.	RC	Numbers using/what costs supported	Families identified as in need of support
NHSGGC has seen a major increase in staff using their fuel poverty and staff money worries programme.	NHSGGC	320% increase on last year. 1060 staff using service.	NHSGGC staff
Free sanitary products funded by Scottish Government have been distributed via home delivery. As they reopen supplies will also be available throughout community venues in Renfrewshire, including all libraries/town hall/leisure centres and Council HQ public area as well as third sector organisations.	RC/RL/SG/Remode/RAMH/STAR Project/EBI Unites/RCAB	Budget spend	Families in need
Paisley YMCA provided a 'Laptop Loans' service loaning digital equipment to young people and providing laptops and other equipment, for example Raspbery Pis as well as	Paisley YMCA	Numbers loaned/numbers engaging	Young people in need of digital equipment and 8 - 17.

sharing digital expertise. These were delivered to young people during lockdown.			
Budgeting Workshops online to help service users maximise income and minimise outgoings.	STAR Project/ RCAB	Individual organisations count engagement within their own stats	STAR Project service users
Ongoing delivery of the Energy Efficiency Standard for Social Housing (EESH) means warmer houses and cheaper fuel bills.	RC Housing	78% of housing stock currently meets standard	All council tenants.
Renfrewshire's Housing Options approach includes a Common Allocation Policy developed with RSLs to assist customers obtain a suitable property. The Options service also includes advice, for example, employability advice for those who would benefit as part of the assessment process.	RC Housing/Bridgewater, Linstone, Paisley and Williamsburgh HAs	Number of properties allocated	All in need of affordable homes prioritised as to agreed policy. The new common policy enables multiple needs to be taken into consideration when assessing an application.
An additional £84,000 has been awarded to Renfrewshire Citizens Advice Bureau for a two year Welfare Rights project.	RC/RCAB	Numbers/client demographics/client financial gain	All, but contract specifies priority groups for advice in line with child poverty priority groups.
The Advice Partnership works together to develop and promote a collective vision for advice in the area and ensure advice services are proactive, accessible and customer focussed, and so meet client need. This includes provision of income maximisation and budgeting advice.	RC/RCAB/RAMH/ Foodbank/UWS/HSCP/ RACA/Linstone HA/ Engage Renfrewshire/ICJ/ Social Security Scotland/You First Advocacy	Partnership has led to improved relationships between advice providers and increased understanding and awareness of each other's work reducing gaps and duplication in service.	All
Automated process for Young Scot cards in Renfrewshire to promote maximum take up. All P7 pupils have their photo taken and application made. They can then access discounts and rewards.	RC Youth Services/RC Schools	Numbers	All school pupils once reaching P7

STAR Project/Social Work and others identify families in poverty and work with Renfrewshire Toy Bank to provide gifts at Christmas.	STAR Project/SWD/Renfrewshire Toy Bank	Numbers accessing	Families in need
The Housing Team work with existing tenants to maximise their income and reduce outgoings, eg. referral to advice works and energy advisers. They establish where rent can be waived and contact rent collection services on clients' behalf to arrange this.	RC Housing	Outcomes recorded	All tenants
Renfrewshire Council's partnership with Experian through the Rental Exchange project allows tenants to build their credit scores through their rent payments, as happens through mortgage payments for those who own their property. This increases access to Affordable Credit.	RC Housing/Experian	Numbers accessing service	All tenants
Before a tenancy is offered income, expenditure and benefit entitlement are assessed. The most appropriate, affordable housing can then be offered, and DHPs put in place where appropriate.	RC Housing	Numbers accessing service	Prospective tenants
The Family Nurse Partnership offers intensive support to mums aged 19 or under. This year due to Covid, this involves engaging with the young mums during pregnancy through initial home visits and thereafter by telephone or other media. Developing a therapeutic relationship and using this to create a secure base and as a vehicle for positive behaviour change. FNP nurses support the young mums with a variety of issues, such as claiming benefits, housing options, budgeting, training and employability support. The role of the Family Nurse is to support the young mum with these aspects but with a continuous encouragement towards self-efficacy.	HSCP/DWP/SDS/Barnardos Threads/Invest/Homestart/Shelter/SWD	Benefits claimed, employment destinations, and education destinations at 6 monthly intervals from pregnancy until 2 years of age.	Pregnant women, young mums under 25, parents with children under 1.
Free wifi is available in the outdoor town centres in Renfrewshire. It is also available in all public libraries, sheltered housing complexes, town halls, sports centres,	RC/RL	Annual billing information	All

community centres and childrens' homes, as well as other leisure venues and on the Street Stuff buses that provide activities for young people.			
Children's Services distributed 1,800 Chromebooks to young people who needed them to complete their school work.	RC/SG Digital Inclusion	Numbers distributed to families in need	Families with children.
1590 Wi-Fi enabled devices distributed and Mi-Fis as part of the Connecting Scotland Programme. Support to set up and use devices also provided through RC Youth Services/Digiteers and orgs involved.	RC/SCVO/SG/Engage/Community Partners	Numbers distributed in each phase	1134 devices issued to families and young care leavers in Phase 2.
Klas Care offers families bespoke childcare contracts to help counter in-work poverty and free food to families in need.	Klas Care	Numbers accessing service	Families with nursery/primary aged children.
Renfrewshire Affordable Credit Alliance (RACA) works together to increase and promote forms of affordable credit in Renfrewshire, as per narrative. Events are run twice a year to inform practitioners and animations produced. Emphasis this year has been on stopping loan sharks, offering alternative low cost credit and scams and online loans.	RC/Engage Renfrewshire/UWS/STAR Project/RCAB/RWCU/Gleniffer CU/Scotcash/Fair for You/TSS	Increased CU membership/Increased use of fair credit uptake in Renfrewshire	All
Credit Unions have been supported by the Council through the MyCreditUnionRenfrewshire website and social media. Credit Union payroll savings and deductions are also promoted with RC staff. This has continued in online sessions. Credit unions promoted and linked with organisations working with those in need of affordable credit options.	RC/RWCU/Johnstone CU/White Cart CU/Gleniffer CU	Membership figures/Interest saved from instant loans/loan numbers	All
Renfrewshire HSCP Health Improvement Team co-ordinated with NHSGGC and Home Energy Scotland to deliver 4 online sessions to inform staff about available financial supports for energy use and minimise their costs of energy in their homes.	Home Energy Scotland.NHSGGC Renfrewshire HSCP Health Improvement Team	Numbers of and attendees at online sessions	Staff and families of staff who work in Renfrewshire HSCP and NHSGGC.

Information provided to Renfrewshire HSCP Staff in relation to gaining help and support with financial issues, both existing and developing.	Renfrewshire HSCP Health Improvement Team/Advice Works/RCAB/The Wise Group/Home Energy Scotland.	Information provided in staff bulletins, Chief Officer Brief, social media channels and in community network meetings of where assistance could be gained and what type of assistance was offered (rent support, living costs, debt support and income maximisation availability).	Staff and families of staff who work in Renfrewshire HSCP and NHSGGC.
Renfrewshire HSCP created and distributed a local resource also to staff working within the partnership detailing food and fuel provision during the pandemic. This showed alternative methods of food provision in the forms of “grow your own” schemes and reduced cost purchasing options.	Renfrewshire HSCP	Numbers receiving resource	NHSGGC/HSCP staff
Renfrewshire HSCP distribute foodbank voucher to patients within services who require these, this is monitored by the Renfrewshire HSCP Planning and Health Improvement team.	Renfrewshire Foodbank/Renfrewshire HSCP children’s services, Renfrewshire HSCP Community Mental Health team, Renfrewshire Addictions Service NHS GGC Midwives and Health Visiting Teams.	Renfrewshire HSCP services distributed over 332 foodbank vouchers, and the numbers fed included 66 children.	Families who receive services from Renfrewshire HSCP Children’s Services, Renfrewshire HSCP Community Mental Health team, Renfrewshire Drug Service NHSGGC Midwives and Health Visiting Teams.
HSCP ensured wide coverage on social media and through networks on the provision of help lines and supports open during holiday periods such as the Festive Period Housing Associations opening times and helplines, National helplines, local opening times for supports and local 24 hour helplines.	Renfrewshire HSCP Health Improvement Team.	Reach of social media campaign Numbers of partners sharing	Families who may have faced financial, food or fuel crisis when traditional services are not available.

Renfrewshire Libraries have been running a home delivery service for all families with pre-school, primary and secondary children throughout the pandemic.	RL	Numbers accessing service	Families with children of all ages, including young and school age.
Support of Free Sanitary Products scheme through promotion of service available to residents on a low income or reduced income within the Renfrewshire area – both through HSCP staff channels and HSCP Social Media	Renfrewshire HSCP Health Improvement Team/RC	Social media and network reach ( including education, mental health supports, BAME Groups)	Families and young people who are on a low income or are facing a financial crisis
Renfrewshire Council and Engage Renfrewshire support Talk Money Week each year through a RACA event, promoting advice and affordable credit options. This year HMRC - Help To Save scheme, Right Way Credit Union and University of the West of Scotland presented and there was a launch of new RACA video resources; loan sharks and affordable credit.	RC/Engage/RACA	Number of attendees	Low income families
Home-Start offers volunteer led parent-to-parent support, working alongside families to help them improve their lives for the better and help the children achieve their potential. They also provide practical help, such as food, essential supplies, Christmas presents, buggies etc	Home Start	Numbers of types of assistance	Families with at least one child 5 or under, all priority groups.
Renfrewshire Foodbank provides fuel vouchers on referral from RCAB/Advice Works who provide advice to the client on energy and income maximisation.	Foodbank/RCAB/RC	Numbers of fuel vouchers issued	All in need
Fuel vouchers issued throughout pandemic from a variety of sources.	RC schools/Foodbank/STAR Project/Linstone HA	Numbers of fuel vouchers issued	Families/All

## Appendix C

### Driver – Income from Social Security and Benefits in Kind

Description of Activity	Who is involved	Assessment	Groups the action is intended to reduce poverty amongst
Council funded advice service at Renfrewshire Citizens Advice Bureau provides benefit advice and completes Financial Health Checks (FHCs) to ensure benefits are maximised. (3 year contract)	RC/RCAB (SG funding for FHCs since Jan 19)	Numbers attending/Client Financial Gain/Demographics	Available to all Renfrewshire residents, however particularly targeted at clients with multiple issues and the following priority groups; Low Income Households, Households affected by Welfare Reform, Parents of children in poverty, People who are currently unemployed, Individuals living with long term health conditions, People experiencing poor mental health, People living with a physical disability, Care Experienced. (SG funding targets families and older people)
£84,000 over two years has been awarded to RCAB for a Welfare Rights service which will begin in May 2021.	RC/RCAB	Numbers/Demographics/Client Financial Gain	All, but Child Poverty Priority groups are specified in contract.
The Council Advice Works service provides benefit advice to the citizens of Renfrewshire. The service	RC	Numbers/Demographics/Client Financial Gain	All/families in priority groups

has continued during the pandemic by telephone and online. Advice Works continues to provide the advice for the Healthier Wealthier Children (HWC) service described in the narrative.			
An additional £100,000 was allocated in the Council budget to support Discretionary Housing Payments.	RC	Numbers accessing DHPs	All entitled to DHPs
The Scottish Welfare Fund has increased flexibility and met increased workload demands on the service and the overall level of spending to meet the increased number of applications due to the pandemic.	RC	<b>10305</b> Crisis Grant applications this year, an increase of 1191 on last year. Average grant has increased by approx. <b>£22</b> this year.	All in need of financial support
Schools/Nurseries and Social Security Scotland worked together to promote Best Start Grant.	RC/SSS	Numbers claiming in area	Low income families
Automation of school clothing grant to those who receive free school meals. Payments made direct to bank accounts.	RC	Numbers receiving school clothing grant	Families receiving relevant benefits
£11.25 per week allowance for Free School Meals paid directly to the bank accounts of eligible families during lockdown.	RC/SG	Numbers receiving FSMs	Families receiving relevant benefits
Housing teams provide ongoing advice to vulnerable tenants, for example ensuring rent increase information provided to DWP.	RC Housing Assistants, Housing Officers and Tenancy Management Officers	Numbers accessing service, referral rates, DHP rates, rent arrears managed.	Tenants receiving social security benefits.
The Housing Services Team identifies tenants who may need support to pay their rent or with low income. They then work very closely with partners across the Council and beyond, signposting these tenants to teams to assist with income maximisation through employability services financial advice and fuel poverty advice, including DHP claims.	RC Housing Assistants, Housing Officers and Tenancy Management Officers/ Advice Works, Invest in Renfrewshire/ Energy Advocates.	Numbers accessing service/rent arrears managed/client financial gain	Tenants in need of support
A new process has been developed to capture Council Tax Reductions by telephone as well as	RC Stakeholder Teams	Numbers claiming CTR	All clients in need

proactively contact citizens who may need this support.			
Advice Partnership Renfrewshire is a partnership between a variety of advice providers in Renfrewshire, working together to ensure appropriate advice is available and easy to find. Working in partnership, advice agencies signpost and refer to each other to ensure clients maximise benefit income.	RC/RCAB/RAMH/ Foodbank/UWS/HSCP/RACA/Linstone HA/Engage Renfrewshire/ Social Security Scotland/ICJ	Partnership has led to improved relationships between advice providers and increased understanding and awareness of each other's work. Also improved communication, eg. around Scottish Social Security benefits.	All
Families First (as described in narrative) is a free service which supports families with children aged 0-8 years old to help them maximise their income and manage their debt. This includes benefit advice.	RC	Numbers accessing services/Client Financial Gain	All families with children aged 0 – 8.
Both Advice Works team and Renfrewshire Citizens Advice provide regular online outreach to clients to ensure accessibility of advice in local areas. They meet regularly to ensure they are not duplicating services.	RC Advice Works/RCAB	Numbers attending/Client Financial Gain and debt managed.	All, however some specific outreaches are targeted through location, eg. Disability Resource Centre
Renfrewshire Council provides advice in the Renfrewshire Foodbank to help clients maximise benefit income/deal with benefit problems.	RC Advice Works/Foodbank	Numbers using service/Client Financial Gain	All who attend foodbank
Digiteers – Free coaching sessions on a one-to-one basis for those who need help with basic IT skills available at all 12 Renfrewshire Libraries when open. This allows clients to claim benefits and maintain their claims. Online/telephone support given at other times and Digiteers acted as Digital Champions for Connecting Scotland Devices.	RL Libraries (who have recruited volunteers to provide this service/RC.	Numbers of learners/number of hours coaching provided/user satisfaction/case studies	All digitally excluded
Tenancy Sustainment Officers work with tenants to establish where rent arrears can be written off, and advocate on their behalf with collection teams.	RC Housing	Numbers seen/arrears written off managed	Tenants in rent arrears

The Refugee Resettlement Team, including their Welfare Rights Officer work with Syrian Refugee families to ensure all relevant benefits are claimed.	RC/RRT	All families supported	Minority ethnic families, Families where the youngest child is under 1, Mothers aged under 25
Public Wifi is available all day, every day in Renfrewshire town centres and Council and Renfrewshire Leisure premises. This allows users to maintain their benefit claims.	RC	Annual Billing information.	All
Community Connectors social prescribing service in each GP's surgery in Renfrewshire which can help with benefit and housing issues as well as health, referring on for complex cases.	HSCP/Linstone HA/ RAMH	Numbers of clients/reason presenting/referrals/ number of GPs visits/demographics	All
Welfare Rights service offered by Linstone HA to all Linwood residents	Linstone HA	Numbers/Client Financial Gain	All in geographical area
NHSGGC and Renfrewshire HSCP supported the planning of a new Support and Information Service within the Royal Alexandra Hospital which includes benefits advice. Due to Covid restrictions on external visitors this is staffed by NHSGGC 4 days per week, but organisations such as Advice Works, Social Security Scotland and ICJ will be there, as well emergency energy provision from Home Energy Scotland.	Renfrewshire HSCP/ NHSGGC/SSS/ICJ Advice Works. Home Energy Scotland.	Numbers supported	Patients and their families.
Improving the Cancer Journey provides advice and assistance to those with a cancer diagnosis in Renfrewshire. Part of this is ensuring all relevant benefits are claimed.	RC/Macmillan	Numbers/demographic/CFG	All those with a cancer diagnosis.
Renfrewshire Council works closely with Social Security Scotland (SSS) Local Delivery to maximise uptake of benefits. The Local Delivery Lead for Renfrewshire represents SSS on our Advice	RC/SSS	SG statistics on benefit take-up rates in Renfrewshire	All who may be entitled to SSS benefits

Partnership to help ensure maximum benefit take-up.			
Renfrewshire HSCP and Advice Works worked together to deliver a pilot embedding advice in two GP's surgeries. This will be introduced to 4 more GP practices in 21/22.	RC Advice Works/ HSCP/NHSGGC GP Practices/	Client numbers/demographics/client financial gain	All patients of GP practices in Renfrewshire.
Renfrewshire HSCP Health Improvement Team promoted Social Security Scotland's benefits such as Best Start Grant and Scottish Child Payment across staff using a whole team approach as well as to the public via social media channels. This covers all SSS benefits and will continue as new benefits are rolled out.	Renfrewshire HSCP Social Security Scotland.	Numbers claiming benefits	Families with young children.
Social Security Scotland have a monthly section in education newsletter to all staff to promote their benefits.	RC/HSCP/SSS	Numbers claiming benefits	Families with young children
Renfrewshire HSCP Health Improvement Team supports campaigns and activities linked to child poverty such as Poverty Alliance Get Heard, Engage Renfrewshire's New Buddies Officer sessions for BAME communities and national campaigns such as Challenge Poverty and Talk Money weeks.	Renfrewshire HSCP Health Improvement Team	Numbers reached through networks, newsletters and social media	All low income families
Renfrewshire HSCP Health Improvement Team provided support to Renfrewshire Children's Services to increase awareness of and increase referrals into HWC by: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Scottish Social Security benefits and HWC inputs to Health Visiting teams</li> <li>• Identifying Poverty Champions within Health Visiting teams</li> </ul>	Renfrewshire HSCP Health Improvement Team Children's Services staff. Healthier Wealthier Children Advisor Advice Works.	328 referrals in 2020/21  £988,374 generated in Client Financial gain.	Pregnant women and families with infants

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Renfrewshire specific Income Maximisation referral information included within Health Visitors Universal Pathway Resource.</li> <li>• Developing referral resource for pandemic specific and emergency supports</li> <li>• Linking Health Visiting Staff to services in specific emergency cases.</li> </ul>			
The HWC Returns data was reviewed and brought in line with National Data Reporting and current availability of benefits/financial supports in order to provide up to date and relevant information and to create better analysis and comparison with other HWC services.	Renfrewshire HSCP Health Improvement Team  Healthier Wealthier Children Advisor - Advice Works.	Improved recording and responsiveness to trends in referral and uptake of HWC services.	Increase targeted promotion and awareness of service among families and those who are affected by poverty.
Updated resources on HWC distributed to the NHSGGC Midwife Team for onward cascade to new and expectant parents.	Renfrewshire HSCP Health Improvement Team/RC/ NHSGGC Midwife Team/ NHSGGC Poverty Leads/ NHSGGC Financial Inclusion Group.	Referral numbers	Pregnant women with low income.
Digital awareness sessions by the Health Improvement Team and HWC worker to provide Information on available resources and the referral pathway which is supported through NHSGGC as well as the shift in the way financial issues are asked about during pregnancy and after birth to gain better results.	Renfrewshire HSCP Health Improvement Team/RC/ NHSGGC Midwife Team/ NHSGGC Poverty Leads/ NHSGGC Financial Inclusion Group.	Referral numbers	Pregnant women with low income.

## Appendix D – Enablers to Reduce Poverty by 2030

Description of Activity	Who is involved	Assessment	Groups the action is intended to reduce poverty amongst
Renfrewshire Council has worked with Poverty Alliance on 'Get Heard Scotland' as per narrative. This is designed to help people on low incomes get their voices heard on the policies and decisions that most impact their lives and their communities	RC/Poverty Alliance/ community groups	Numbers engaging/policy input.	All, with a focus on child poverty priority groups
Renfrewshire's attainment work, as described in the narrative, is ongoing.	RC	Measures of attainment gap	All
Credit Unions continue to be promoted in Renfrewshire through the 'mycreditunionrenfrewshire' website and social media. RWCU has developed a specific Child Benefit Loan products for parents.	RC/RWCU/Scotwest/White Cart CU/Johnstone CU/ Gleniffer CU	Membership numbers	All/Parents
Active Communities support a peer health project, working with young people in secondary schools across Renfrewshire to identify key health priorities in their school and developing young people to lead their own activities to improve health and wellbeing. Funded by the Tackling Poverty Programme, the service has continued through the pandemic using digital means and providing wellbeing boxes and other resources.	RC/Active Communities	Numbers trained/Numbers engaged/case studies	Secondary school pupils
The Skoobmobile, funded by the Tackling Poverty programme, provides a mobile public library service directly to children and families in communities. This service aims to help improve children's life chances by encouraging a lasting interest in reading, literacy, physical activity and learning. Due to pandemic, packs have been provided from bus.	RL	Numbers using service	Families

£200,000 has been allocated in the Council Budget to extend the hugely successful Imagination Library book gifting pilot to all 2 to 5-year-old children in Renfrewshire.	RC/Dolly Parton's Imagination library	Numbers using service	Families with young children
Renfrewshire's 'Family Firm' approach across a partnership of corporate parents provides a suite of interventions to support and enable care experienced young people to develop employability skills and reach positive destinations post school.	RC	Numbers of young people gaining positive destinations	Care experienced school leavers
Renfrewshire Affordable Credit Alliance (RACA) attended online Money Week event at UWS.	RACA/UWS	Numbers engaging	Students
Renfrewshire Council's Youth Services aim to improve outcomes for young people in Renfrewshire through youth work, information, empowerment activities and outdoor learning. They: promote wider achievement through accredited and non-accredited awards; empower young people to have a voice, take part in decision making and making a positive contribution to the community; help young people develop skills for learning, life and work and enter employment, training and or further or higher education after school; promote health and wellbeing among young people and ensure young people benefit from good quality youth information, that helps them participate in opportunities and make informed choices.	RC	Numbers/Outcomes	Young people
Community Learning and Development (ALLS and Youth Services) continued to support children, families and young people during the lockdown with services such as delivery of activity packs that focussed on mental health and wellbeing and learning activities around keeping safe. They continued contact via	RC/RC CLD	Numbers supported	Families with children/young people

<p>telephone/doorstep contact/outdoor activities and re-assuring.</p> <p>Youth Services have had on-line engagement that was able to deliver to targeted groups and developed outdoor activities for when lockdown lifted.</p> <p>Community Learning and Development also delivered Childcare Hubs to 2000 young people (essential key worker's children and vulnerable young people) and supported the Neighbourhood Hubs in the relief and support to families.</p>			
<p>Digi Ren partnership aims to reduce the gaps in cost for services by ensuring more people are digitally able. They work together to enhance digital capability and access in Renfrewshire. Digi Ren also works to ensure accessibility.</p>	<p>A wide variety of organisations including RC/Engage Renfrewshire/ Paisley YMCA/UWS/ Libraries/Paisley HA</p>	<p>Numbers attending meetings/ feeding into conversations/ digital improvements in services</p>	<p>All digitally excluded</p>
<p>Through a variety of intervention types including mediation the Youth Officer with the Homeless Prevention team helps young people aged 16 - 24 sustain tenancies. This includes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Helping homeless young people set up and sustain tenancy for crucial first 8 weeks of tenancy, monitor property for a year with intervention as required.</li> <li>• Managing the transition to a tenancy from the family home so social network support is ever present with young persons' journey into housing (avoiding homelessness and temp accommodation)</li> </ul>	<p>RC Housing</p>	<p>Percentage still in their tenancy a year after date of entry</p>	<p>Young people with housing issues.</p>

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>If referred by housing providers, Social Work etc, help young people resolve issues in order to stop eviction or better sustain tenancy.</li> </ul>			
<p>The Home and Belonging Project aims to provide person centred support for young people with experience of care to turn houses into homes by working with them to develop or strengthen the skills they need to stay, cope and flourish in their own homes.</p> <p>Young people are given opportunities to take ownership of the environments they live in through activities such as upcycling, volunteering and engaging in mental health support, as well as support to develop practical skills such as DIY or cooking on a budget.</p> <p>There is also a Belonging Allowance of around £2000, which gives young people the power to take control of their lives and make their own choices.</p>	Quarriers/Engage/RC/Impact Arts/RAMH	25 young people per year to take part in the project, which offers person centred support.	Care experienced young people aged 16-25
<p>The My Future Pathways Programme has been designed for young people to take part in a number of work-based learning opportunities which aim to support them in their route into employment.</p>	RC Children's Services/Invest/construction companies CCG, Engie & Dalton Demolitions	Number taking part, number gaining employment, demographics	School leavers unable to access suitable college courses
<p>Renfrewshire Council are working in partnership with Barnardo's Scotland to improve the mental health and wellbeing of young people in Renfrewshire, in their 'Mental Health and Wellbeing Strategic Partnership' which was launched in October 2019.</p>	Barnardo's/RC	Numbers taking part in consultation workshops and focus interviews.	Children and Young people
<p>The NHS Credit Union offers affordable credit to staff and their families</p>	NHS Credit Union	Membership numbers, savings and loans	All NHS Staff
<p>NHSGGC briefings and marketing materials are regularly provided to early years staff and staff with money worries to alert them to referral pathways and social security benefit changes that may affect them</p>	Corporate Equality Team	Numbers of briefings, campaigns	Increased awareness of staff on responsibilities, and sources of income for patients and themselves.

Home-Start offers volunteer led parent-to-parent support, working alongside families to help them improve their lives for the better and help the children achieve their potential.	Home-Start/RC/Klas Care	Numbers of families/number of volunteers/type of help provided	Families with young children/fathers of young children. Work with all priority groups.
Renfrewshire's Participatory Budgeting event, 'Celebrating Renfrewshire – by young people, for young people', provided funding for a range of projects designed by, or for, young people aged 12-25 which would improve their lives.	RC/Young Scot	Numbers taking part, evaluation of process, evaluation of projects funded.	Young people aged 12-25
A joint project was launched in partnership with SAY Women which includes a focus on providing time limited tenancy sustainment advice and assistance for young women aged 16-25 years who are identified as survivors of child sexual abuse and/or survivors of other forms of sexual violence.	RC/SAY Women	Numbers supported/assisted	Young women aged 16-2
Career Ready programme being piloted in two schools will provide some S5 and S6 pupil with a workplace mentor, networking opportunities and a paid, 4 week internship. <a href="https://careerready.org.uk/scotland/">https://careerready.org.uk/scotland/</a>	RC/Career Ready/Employers	Impact measured using a set of outcomes designed in partnership with employers and educators.	Young people who need most support to overcome barriers
Young Persons Guarantee (YPG) is a new initiative and offers a guarantee, for all young people aged 16 – 24 years old, to receive an offer of employment, training, education, or volunteering.	RC/SG/Engage Renfrewshire	Numbers in scheme/demographics/employment gained	0-5% SIMD residents, care experienced clients, ex-offenders, those from BAME communities, 16-19 year olds with no qualifications and young people with disabilities or health conditions.
RC is a gateway organisation for Kickstart, a scheme to create new and additional jobs for young people, aged 16-24 years old and in receipt of Universal Credit.	RC/DWP/Employers	Target of 700 jobs	Young unemployed people 16-24

## Appendix E - Joint long-term objectives for NHSGGC Child Poverty Leads Group

There are 6 Local Authorities within the NHS Greater Glasgow and Clyde area. In response to the 2019 Poverty and Inequality Commission review of year one local child poverty action reports, an increased focus on partnership working, long term objective setting and outcome measures has been agreed between child poverty leads across NHSGGC.

The following joint long-term objectives will be reviewed by partners on an annual basis:

<b>Role as an employer</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Increase family friendly working approaches</li> <li>• Attaining and maintaining Living Wage Employer Accreditation</li> <li>• Parents as a priority group for interventions with staff who have money and debt worries</li> <li>• Parents as a priority group in our Employment and Health approach</li> <li>• Parents as a priority group for recruitment initiatives</li> <li>• Child poverty a feature, as appropriate of Learning and Education programmes</li> <li>• Child poverty outcomes in community benefit clauses</li> </ul>
<b>Role as a service provider (Children and Families Settings)</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ensure every opportunity is used to maximise income and reduce outgoings</li> <li>• Develop innovative co-location models (e.g. with Social Security Services Scotland, Department of Work and Pensions)</li> <li>• Ensure engagement with people with lived experience of child poverty to inform planning and review</li> <li>• Analysis, where possible, of reach of interventions by Child Poverty Act priority groups (i.e. children of lone and/or young parents, children with disabilities and/or children of parents with a disability and black and minority ethnic children and also kinship carers)</li> </ul>
<b>Role as a partner</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Leadership on child poverty at Community Planning Partnership Boards</li> <li>• Influencing, from local and regional perspectives, key national partners (e.g. SSS, DWP, Health Scotland)</li> </ul>

- Influencing, from a child poverty perspective, housing policy
- Influencing, from a child poverty perspective, transport policy

**In addition, NHSGGC will -**

- Ensure child poverty is comprehensively addressed in the Children and Families Universal Pathway
- Develop child poverty, as appropriate, as a 'golden thread' in Acute health improvement programmes
- Providing public health data for use in Acute and CPP areas **and**
- All LCPARs in the NHSGGC area aim to optimise flexible childcare approaches