

Argyll and Bute Council: Equality and Socio-Economic Impact Assessment


Section 1: About the proposal

Title of Proposal
Child Poverty Action Plan Review 2022 - 2023

Intended outcome of proposal
<p>The Child Poverty (Scotland) Act 2017 places a duty on local authorities and health boards to report annually on activity they are taking and will take to reduce child poverty. This review report aims to meet that obligation. Progress and challenges are noted and proposed new work is flagged up.</p> <p>It is intended that children, young people and other stakeholders are able to see what actions are being taken to tackle child poverty in Argyll and Bute.</p>

Description of proposal
This is the fourth review of the initial Child Poverty Action Plan Report, published in June 2019; reviews will take place annually up to 2030.

Business Outcome(s) / Corporate Outcome(s) to which the proposal contributes
Child Poverty outcomes; noted under Outcome 4.

Lead officer details:	
Name of lead officer	Mandy Sheridan
Job title	Service Improvement Officer
Department	HSCP
Appropriate officer details:	
Name of appropriate officer	Fiona Davies
Job title	Chief Officer
Department	HSCP
Sign off of EqSEIA	
Date of sign off	21/7/23

Who will deliver the proposal?
The Argyll and Bute Child Poverty Action Group which is led by Fiona Davies

Section 2: Evidence used in the course of carrying out EqSEIA

Consultation / engagement

Consultation did take place with children and young people prior to the initial Child Poverty Report. For the first and second reviews of the plan, child friendly versions were created and shared through schools and children's groups. For the third (2021-022) review However a child friendly, graphic version, "Plan on a Page" of the report was compiled and was used to inform children and young people. This was created in coproduction with children and young people. In the past year there has been some engagement using the Plan on a Page which was shared widely, including schools and young carer's centres. This plan was well received not only by young people but also those adults who prefer a graphic version of a plan. In health venues the plan was placed next to the "Money Worries" leaflet. The graphic plan contained a QR which directed people to a Council webpage that acted as a one stop shop for support and advice. Information sharing has also taken place with other stakeholders, through the Living Well Networks and other service user groups run by Argyll and Bute Child Poverty Action Group Members, for example in areas such community planning, education, housing and the third sector. Close contact has been maintained with the Financial Inclusion and Advice Group who have developed a "Cost of Living Crisis Group". This group and the CPAG have ensured appropriate communications and advice has been going out to children, young people and adults on actions being taken to support them in this difficult time and tackle child poverty.

Data

Fairer Scotland Duty 2018; Child Poverty (Scotland) Act 2017; Equality Act 2010; Child and Young People (Scotland) Act 2014. The UNCRC (Incorporation) (Scotland) Bill 2020.

Other information

Guidance from and discussion with, the National Coordinator for local Child Poverty Action Reports, Hannah McCulloch (Improvement Service). Data regarding the nature of child poverty in Argyll and Bute; see for example: NOMIS; Child Poverty Dashboard; NOLB Data Toolkit; SIMD 2020V2 Local Authority Analysis.

Gaps in evidence

The best use of multiple data sources to best support work on child poverty is a major issue across Scotland. Workshops and consultation on this issue are ongoing, run by the Improvement Service and the Scottish Government. Argyll and Bute are currently working on a model using Powerbi which will seek to identify those families in need who are not claiming their full benefit entitlement. If successful next steps will be to focus resources, such as Advice Services, on these families. Other gaps in evidence, on a national and local level, currently being looked at include the particular challenges and costs when living in remote, rural and island places in a time of high inflation and cost of living crisis.

Section 3: Impact of proposal

Impact on service users:

	Negative	No impact	Positive	Don't know
Protected characteristics:				
Age			X	
Disability			X	
Ethnicity			X	
Sex			X	
Gender reassignment		X		
Marriage and Civil Partnership		X		
Pregnancy and Maternity			X	
Religion		X		
Sexual Orientation			X	
Fairer Scotland Duty:				
Mainland rural population			X	
Island populations			X	
Low income			X	
Low wealth			X	
Material deprivation			X	
Area deprivation			X	
Socio-economic background			X	
Communities of place?			X	
Communities of interest?			X	

Impact on service deliverers (including employees, volunteers etc):

	Negative	No impact	Positive	Don't know
Protected characteristics:				
Age			X	
Disability			X	
Ethnicity			X	
Sex			X	
Gender reassignment			X	
Marriage and Civil Partnership		X		
Pregnancy and Maternity			X	
Religion		X		
Sexual Orientation			X	
Fairer Scotland Duty:				
Mainland rural population			X	
Island populations			X	
Low income			X	
Low wealth			X	
Material deprivation			X	
Area deprivation			X	
Socio-economic background			X	
Communities of place?			X	
Communities of interest?			X	

If any 'don't know's have been identified, at what point will impacts on these groups become identifiable?

How has 'due regard' been given to any negative impacts that have been identified?

No negative impacts identified.

Section 4: Interdependencies

Is this proposal likely to have any knock-on effects for any other activities carried out by or on behalf of the council?

The work detailed in the Child Poverty Action Plan Review, links to a number of different areas. For example it affirms work being children's rights into policy and practice. Also this review notes a wide range of poverty focused actions taking place in areas including: employability, housing, fuel poverty, benefits and social security, perinatal mental health, youth work, free school meals and free period products.

Clear links to Children's Rights Report; Children and Young People's Service Plan, ABOIP, Community Justice Plan, Joint Strategic Plan, Joint Strategic Commissioning Strategy, Local Housing Strategy, Education Strategic Plan, HSCP Equality Outcomes and Mainstreaming Report, Argyll and Bute Employability Plan, Community Learning and Development Strategic Partnership Plan.

Details of knock-on effects identified

As a plan that brings diverse actions under the umbrella of tackling child poverty, it works to give a clearer picture of the whole and facilitates multi-agency working and new work. Examples of this would include the Flexible Food Fund and the help and advice book "Do You Have Money Worries". Another good example would be the range of training events for staff and others that has been delivered this year and is ongoing. These offer poverty awareness as well as practical skills in addressing poverty issues. This training will have a very positive knock-on effect in the practice of participants and the lives of service users supported, respected and understood better as a consequence. By doing this, the review and the work it reflects, has the potential to impact on most of the Council's / Health Board's / Partner activities. This is particularly important as in September 2023 it is anticipated that the UNCRC will be embedded into Scottish Law and the duties around recognising and respecting children's rights and needs will increase. . It is also felt that by raising the importance of addressing child poverty and better understanding the needs of children and families, decision making across the Council, Health Board and partners, will be improved.

Section 5: Monitoring and review

How will you monitor and evaluate the equality impacts of your proposal?

Equality impacts will be monitored by the Argyll and Bute CPAG. This group will ensure that each activity produces positive outcomes for children and meets the aims and objectives of the Councils Outcome Improvement Plan 2013 – 2023 and its Equality Policy. The group will also ensure that key legislation is adhered to, including: Fairer Scotland Duty 2018; Child Poverty (Scotland) Act 2017; Equality Act 2010; Child and Young People (Scotland) Act 2014. Outcomes of monitoring will be reflected in the minutes of the groups meetings, reports to governance groups (CPP, IJB etc.) and in the next annual review report. In all its actions the group will ensure that the rights of children are respected and due regard is given to the UNCRC and The Promise.