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## **SCOTTISH BORDERS COUNCIL'S ANTI-POVERTY STRATEGY**

**Report by Service Director, Resilient Communities**

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**18 November 2021**

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### **1 PURPOSE AND SUMMARY**

- 1.1 This report proposes that the Community Planning Partnership (CPP) endorses the Scottish Borders Anti-Poverty Strategy and Action Plan (as approved at Council on 23 September 2021) and supports the delivery of the Strategy and Action Plan by ensuring that each members organisational plans contain reference to actions within it.
- 1.2 The Anti-Poverty Strategy (Appendix 1) sets out the steps that Scottish Borders Council and Partners plan to take in tackling poverty in the Scottish Borders in relation to - economic poverty and income, fuel poverty, housing poverty, food poverty, impact on family and community health and wellbeing, and digital poverty.
- 1.4 The Council and Partners continue to respond to the current Covid-19 pandemic and work within our communities through the Community Assistance Hubs and other services to help alleviate poverty as a result. The learning from this work and the lived experience of those in hardship will be taken into account in how the ongoing delivery of the Action Plan (Appendix 2) evolves in partnership.

### **2 RECOMMENDATIONS**

#### **2.1 I recommend that the Community Planning Strategic Board:**

- (a) Endorses the Council's Anti-Poverty Strategy and Action Plan.**
- (b) Agrees that members of the Community Planning Partnership reflect the Strategy and Action Plan within their own organisational plans and consider how this contributes to community planning objectives.**
- (c) Agrees to collaboration between CPP Partners to identify resources to deliver the Strategy and Action Plan where appropriate.**
- (d) Agrees to receive an annual Progress Report of the Anti-Poverty Strategy Action Plan.**

### **3 BACKGROUND**

- 3.1 In February 2021, Council approved the draft Scottish Borders Anti-Poverty Strategy, and agreed that the Anti-Poverty Working Group develop an approach to public consultation and create a final Strategy and Action Plan for approval and adoption.
- 3.2 The consultation was co-produced with third sector organisations and other partners to ensure that a combination of different types of engagement were undertaken. A range of partners engaged in the consultation and were able to speak directly to people experiencing poverty. This enabled us to identify further actions that could be taken to support our communities.
- 3.4 Whilst some effects of poverty are widely known and evidenced by a range of data, it is those who are experiencing some of the hidden effects of poverty that we specifically sought to engage with, and what actions could be taken to alleviate the impact of poverty and support those individuals better.

### **4 THE STRATEGY**

- 4.1 The Strategy sets out a clear vision and works with 6 themes and 11 outcomes and highlights areas of activity that the Council and Partners aim to deliver to help reduce poverty in the Scottish Borders. The final version of the Strategy is detailed at the link below:

[https://www.scotborders.gov.uk/downloads/file/7818/scottish\\_borders\\_anti-poverty\\_strategy\\_2021](https://www.scotborders.gov.uk/downloads/file/7818/scottish_borders_anti-poverty_strategy_2021)

- 4.2 The Strategy recognises that there are already many plans and strategies in existence which contribute to reducing poverty in the Scottish Borders and these are outlined in the Strategy specifically to illustrate various Partners involved.

### **5 IMPLEMENTATION OF THE STRATEGY AND ACTION PLAN**

- 5.1 An Anti-Poverty Strategy Members Reference Group will monitor the implementation of the Strategy and Action Plan from a Council perspective to ensure that it benefits those most in need.
- 5.2 The Reference Group will comprise of 7 Elected Members of Council, appointed on a non-political basis. Although this is a Council Strategy, it is anticipated that the Reference Group will receive input from the Council's partners and other organisations and individuals, including those with lived experience of poverty, to help identify any gaps or areas for further focus.
- 5.3 An annual Progress Report of the Anti-Poverty Strategy Action Plan will be brought to the Community Planning Strategic Board for consideration and to provide input to the Reference Group.

### **6 NEXT STEPS**

- 6.1 Additional community engagement will be considered to further raise awareness and identify successes and opportunities to further aims of the Strategy. It is proposed that this includes Community Planning Partners' organisations to ensure a holistic approach.
- 6.2 The actions within the Strategy will be implemented and Officers will work in Partnership with colleagues across the Borders to deliver on the commitments contained in the Action Plan. As detailed at Section 5, an annual Progress Report will be presented to Council and to the Community Planning Partnership.

## 7 IMPLICATIONS

### 7.1 Financial

There are no specific costs attached to any of the recommendations in this report. Budget provision is already reflected in the Council's budget which supports the anti-poverty agenda.

### 7.2 Risks and Mitigations

Risks associated with this report relate to the deepening problem of poverty from the longer-term impact of COVID-19. The Action Plan provides a number of mitigations to these risks, and effective evaluation and monitoring processes will be key to evidencing the impact of the Action Plan.

### 7.3 Integrated Impact Assessment

A full integrated impact assessment (IIA) has been completed and will be published on the Council's website.

### 7.4 Sustainable Development Goals

In considering each of the UN Sustainable Development Goals, the following may be considered to make a difference:

UN SD Goal	Impact
End poverty in all its forms	Local action is reported in the Anti-Poverty Action Plan which contributes to this goal, including income maximisation activity which will benefit those who need it most.
End hunger, achieve food security and improved nutrition and promote sustainable agriculture	Local action is reported in the Anti-Poverty Action Plan which contributes to this goal. A Community Food Growing Strategy is in place which aims to support and facilitate community food growing driven by the needs of communities.
Ensure healthy lives and promote wellbeing for all at all ages	Health and wellbeing (including good mental health) is recognised as an important factor in the Anti-Poverty Strategy. Work to keep people well who experience poverty continues. Improving transport connectivity will also contribute to healthy lives and this is included in the Action Plan.
Ensure inclusive and equitable quality	Work continues with Education

education and promote lifelong learning opportunities for all	Services to identify and tackle barriers to school attendance brought about through poverty. Our Community Learning and Development Plans provide technical and vocational training programmes, and our Partners also provide various opportunities through local economic development strategies. These actions all help to support vulnerable and marginalized individuals and communities to ensure access to education and training to meet their needs.
Ensure access to affordable, reliable, sustainable, and modern energy for all	Partners contribute by identifying gaps in access to affordable energy, particularly to vulnerable groups and ensuring their tenants have access to energy efficient homes.
Promote sustained, inclusive, and sustainable economic growth, full and productive employment, and decent work for all	Many of the actions contained in the Anti-Poverty Action plan are around the generation of growth and employment through local economic development opportunities
Reduce inequalities within and among countries	The Anti-Poverty Strategy and Action Plan aims to identify and tackle poverty and exclusion and boost employment opportunities and income in the poorest communities.
Make cities and human settlements inclusive, safe resilient and sustainable	work to make access to affordable housing attainable is contained within the Anti-Poverty Action Plan. Improving transport connectivity is also an aim of the Action Plan.

#### 7.5 **Climate Change**

There is no impact on climate change as a result of this report.

#### 7.6 **Rural Proofing**

There are no rural proofing implications contained in this report.

#### 7.7 **Data Protection Impact Statement**

There are no personal data implications arising from the proposals contained in this report.

#### 7.8 **Changes to Scheme of Administration or Scheme of Delegation**

There are no changes to either the Scheme of Administration or the Scheme of Delegation.

**Approved by**  
**Jenni Craig Service Director Resilient Communities**

**Author(s)**

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**Background Papers: N/A**

**Previous Minute Reference:** Scottish Borders Council 23 September 2021

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