Item 5

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Glasgow Community Planning Partnership
Strategic Partnership

Report by John Sherry, Head of Service, Financial Inclusion & Transformation and Mike Burns, Assistant Chief Officer, Children's Services

Contact: John Sherry: john.sherry@glasgow.gov.uk

GLASGOW'S CHILD POVERTY PATHFINDER

Purpose of Report:

This report provides members of the Strategic Partnership with an update on the work of Glasgow's Child Poverty Pathfinder, and the opportunities to strengthen our city approach to child poverty afforded by the refresh of the Local Outcome Improvement Plan.

Recommendations:

Members are asked to;

I) note the detail set out in this paper.; and
II) continue to consider the opportunities for alignment of our child poverty ambition across the Partnership and individual organisations

1 Introduction

1.1 This report provides members of the Strategic Partnership with an update on the work of Glasgow's Child Poverty Pathfinder, and the opportunities to strengthen our city approach to child poverty afforded by the refresh of the Local Outcome Improvement Plan.

2 Glasgow's Child Poverty Pathfinder

2.1 In February 2022, organisations with a role in supporting children and families came together to discuss child poverty in Glasgow. Facilitated by the Improvement Service, a series of intensive workshops collated detail on the successes and ongoing challenges to the effective delivery of child poverty interventions.

2.2 Our growing understanding of the persistent levels of child poverty, the ongoing impact of the pandemic and the cost of living crisis demanded that Glasgow embrace bold new approaches to make a real difference for our families. The levels of child poverty in Glasgow remain significantly higher than our statutory target of less than 10% of children in relative poverty by 2030. Currently in Glasgow there are;

- 24,252 (24%) children living in 12,932 households in poverty;
- 14,837 (7,742 households) of these children have been in poverty for three of the last four years (persistent poverty);
- 5,256 children (2,898 households) that are just above the poverty line;
- 9,781 children (5,259 households) living **on or around** the poverty line; and
- 9,972 children (5,557 households) living in **deep** poverty (with a weekly income of less than 40% of the UK median).

2.3 The process identified and agreed the practical actions and new ways of working necessary to deliver the well-functioning system required to address child poverty. Specifically, city partners agreed the need for change capacity to understand and articulate the complexity and opportunities to deliver whole system change.

2.4 Glasgow therefore committed to a Child Poverty Pathfinder funded through the '*Best Start, Bright Futures – Child Poverty Action Plan'.* Working alongside colleagues from Scottish Government, the Pathfinder has focused on;

i) Delivering a No Wrong Door model at scale across the city;
ii) Identifying and addressing barriers to systemic change; and
iii) Improving the wellbeing of our children and young people as demonstrated by the child poverty targets.

3 Current Position

3.1 The No Wrong Door (NWD) model provides improved access to person centred, holistic support, aligned to the relaunch of 'Getting it Right for Every Child' along with the aspirations of 'The Promise'. Alongside this, NWD provides the necessary flexible 'scaffolding' of broader support that will ensure

that no matter where somebody first interacts with 'the system' in the city, they receive 'the right support, in the right place, at the right time' or more simply 'when you engage with one of us, you get the best of all of us'.

3.2 The Pathfinder is working with services and organisations across the third, public and RSL sectors to co-produce a NWD model that works best for Glasgow. To date, almost 130 organisations have pledged their commitment to shaping this approach.

3.3 Exploratory work with services, such as the Family Support model implemented by the HSCP Children & Families Service, and Glasgow Helps has demonstrated the potential that can be achieved through intensive person-centred work. Furthermore, we know that by developing an infrastructure of person-centred support, we can secure systemic change and deliver better outcomes for our people and our organisations.

3.4 The Child Poverty Pathfinder has built strong relationships with colleagues in Children & Families Services to share learning across our work with families in need. The intensive work undertaken to deliver a sustained and seismic transformation for looked after and accommodated children and young people provides significant insights for the Pathfinder on the delivery of wholescale system change.

3.5 Using informed investment in Health Visiting staff (increased by 82%) alongside access to additional financial support for families, Glasgow has achieved a 51% reduction in the number of children in formal care. This equates to 1,413 children in 2016 to 617 now. Over the same period there has been an 82% reduction in the number of children under 5 in formal care (from 105 to 80 now).

3.6 In addition, our analysis of families in poverty highlights the increased likelihood that they are known to social work and have experience of the care system. Working with a significant number of the same families further strengthens the case for alignment across our person-centred methodologies.

3.7 The work of the Pathfinder and Children & Families Services has reaffirmed unequivocally, the criticality of providing person centred supported underpinned by a collaborative infrastructure, as is being developed by No Wrong Door. Engagement directly with families continually reinforces the value of this model and our experience demonstrates that it works both in times of crisis but can also successfully deliver early and even preventative support.

4. Systemic Change – Addressing Barriers

4.1 Glasgow's Child Poverty Pathfinder has also undertaken work to much better understand the barriers that prevent system change. These have been identified as; how we share and use **data**, how we design and deliver **funding and commissioning** models, and how we agree and demonstrate our **accountability and cultures**.

4.2 Early successes secured across this work include a shift towards improved **data** sharing protocols including the creation of a Third Sector Data Sharing Agreement and also between GCC and Department for Work & Pensions. This has strengthened our understanding of the extent of poverty. In turn, better joined up use of data has informed targeted service provision.

4.3 Our detailed analysis of poverty across the city has been refreshed and updated using additional data previously unavailable to us. This has added greater accuracy to our understanding of poverty in the city. The newly created Child Poverty Dashboard provides key analytics to inform understanding of both breadth and depth of the child poverty challenge and will aid decision-making to appropriate target our finite resources.

4.4 Our understanding of the **impact** of poverty has also been greatly enhanced by interrogating a wider range of additional datasets alongside the Dashboard. The correlation of disadvantage across these indicators (including hospital admission, employability support, literacy and numeracy levels, qualifications, accessing support services, overcrowding) with poverty rates has provided unequivocal evidence of the extent of disadvantage experienced as a result of poverty. This further confirms our earlier understanding that the same families are working intensively with a number of services and organisations. The increased sharing of data within and across our organisations will continue to improve our understanding and insights.

4.5 Significant engagement has been undertaken with Scottish Government to secure the appropriate **flexibility for funding** allocated to the local authority, specifically the Whole Family Wellbeing Fund and the No One Left Behind funding. This will enable Glasgow to determine the best use of financial resources allocated to the city that previously came with strict criteria of use or eligibility. If successful, this will facilitate the creation of a bespoke funding resource of £22.1m over the next 3 financial years, to invest in both the capacity to undertake significant change activity but also targeted innovations in specific communities to secure improved wellbeing for our children and young people. Discussions are nearing their conclusion on this. Learning will be used to inform further conversations to understand the opportunities to apply this approach more broadly, for example the All Aged Childcare funding.

5. Next Steps

5.1 Glasgow's Community Planning Partnership (GCPP) is currently refreshing the city's Local Outcome Improvement Plan (LOIP). This will embed family poverty as a key priority across our city partners, ensuring a collective 'lean in' to address this challenge and placing prevention and early intervention at the heart of what we do. The inclusion of a child poverty priority in the recently published Integrated Children's Services Plan, also overseen through the Community Planning structures, provides a further opportunity to align and strengthen both the city's collective resolve and the governance arrangements around our child poverty ambitions.

5.2 This shared responsibility will be supplemented by targeted action in line with both the GCPP's place based agenda and work specifically for families with young children. This provides an opportunity to align our action planning processes and accountability frameworks. Community Planning Partners are requested to participate as appropriate in the more detailed development of actions and be prepared to undertake targeted activity.

5.3 Given this opportunity for alignment across our city structures, agreement is now required on the specific next steps to create momentum for targeted but significant change for our families in poverty. Using the Child Poverty Dashboard it has been possible to identify the communities with the highest concentrations of child poverty in the city. Furthermore, our analysis has identified specific challenges and opportunities for those families who are experiencing **deep poverty** (income of 40% or less than the UK median) and those that are **on the cusp of poverty,** with a view to undertaking targeted action in these communities. The wards identified are;

- Canal
- Calton
- Drumchapel/Anniesland
- East Centre
- Garscadden/Scotstounhill
- Greater Pollok
- Govan
- Linn
- Southside Central
- Springburn/Robroyston

5.4 Engagement with stakeholders has emphasised the potential transformative impact of specifically targeting families with a child aged 0-5 years (including the pre-natal stage). It is widely agreed that there is scope to secure significant preventative or early intervention outcomes across this cohort.

5.5 Work will take place to engage across the community planning partners to determine the specific activities required. Foundational work undertaken across Children & Families Services and the Child Poverty Pathfinder has identified an opportunity focused on a programme of practice change across Health Visitors, Family Nurse Practitioners and Midwives. This proposal is in keeping with the principles of use for the Whole Family Wellbeing Fund, allocated to the city to support transformation change.

5.6 The fundamental shift to delivering person-centred, preventative and early intervention support alongside work in targeted communities requires thoughtful measurement. The Community Planning Partnership will work collaboratively, supported by the Child Poverty Pathfinder, to develop a **single performance management framework** for the city. This will use our collective expertise to set clear, ambitious targets as well as develop impact matrices and outcome-based performance measures that can demonstrate the difference our **collective endeavour** makes in the short, medium, and long term to our child poverty levels. This work will be intensive and will require investment in capacity as outlined above.

6 Recommendations

6.1 Members are asked to;

I) note the detail set out in this paper; and
II) continue to consider the opportunities for alignment of our child poverty ambition across the Partnership and individual organisations.