

# Shetland's Annual Child Poverty Action Report, Year 3





## Foreword

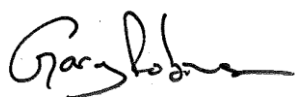
We are pleased to introduce Shetland's third Annual Child Poverty Action Report. The purpose is to share, with a broad audience, what has been achieved and it also fulfils the duty placed on Local Authorities and NHS Boards to report annually on steps they are taking, and will take, to reduce child poverty.

This year has seen a number of changes to all of our lives, due to Covid-19: as we firstly moved from lockdown to the lifting of some restrictions; the return of children and young people to in-school learning; and a period of relative stability with the virus at bay across Shetland for the most part. The Christmas period brought new challenges and a return to lockdown, with the virus more prevalent at times across parts of the Isles, causing a rise again in people's anxieties, yet with the added hope brought through the success of the local vaccination delivery and response. As this report is finalised, we have reached the next milestone in the country's recovery with the removal of many restrictions and the welcome move to our 'new normal'.

Over this period, the difficulties faced by those children, young people and their families who live in poverty has become more widely acknowledged and better understood, but has also become the reality for some who have never been in this situation before. Child poverty figures were released in May 2021 for 2019/20. Whilst the Council and NHS Shetland were working hard, along with our partners, such as HIE, Police Scotland, Third Sector organisations and community organisations, to do what we could to reduce levels of child poverty and to make it easier for those families living in poverty, the percentage of children and young people living in poverty increased from 13.3% to 15.8%. This figure will undoubtedly have increased again due to the economic downturn caused by the pandemic across 2020/21. The work outlined in this report demonstrates that across our services, staff understand local poverty issues and have, with the help of those with lived experience, identified a wide range of different strategies and supports that can help make a difference in our communities.

Examples of this work are peppered throughout this report. These show the variety and number of different projects, initiatives and practical supports that have been put in place: from the work of the community anchor organisations; the innovative economic developments across the islands; support to maximise family incomes; directly supporting children, young people and their families with period products, digital connectivity, attending school and free school meal payments.

With the introduction of the United Nations Convention of the Rights of the Child into our legal framework in Scotland, we, as public servants, have a duty to uphold these rights in all aspects of the work we undertake. Article 27, is most significant here stating that: *'Every child has the right to a standard of living that is good enough to meet their physical and social needs and support their development. Governments must help families who cannot afford to provide this'*. Levels of child poverty in Shetland are still amongst the lowest in Scotland but this doesn't reflect the higher cost of living in Shetland - between 20-60% more to have an acceptable standard of living, compared to the UK average. Although levels here are lower than in other areas, we must not be complacent, the rights of children to a 'good enough' standard of living applies to every child. We must continue to tackle the underlying causes of poverty, focus on early intervention and prevention, and work hard to remove the stigma sorely felt by those who experience the realities of poverty in their daily lives.



Gary Robison, Chair, NHS Shetland



George Smith, Chair, Education and Families Committee, Shetland Islands Council

# Contents

Approach .....	1
Understanding the Issues .....	2
Increasing Household Income .....	5
Reducing Cost of Living .....	8
Building and Nurturing Relationships .....	11
Building Capacity .....	12
Impact .....	15
Strategic Approach .....	18
Monitoring and Evaluation .....	21
Appendix 1: Background and Legislative Requirements .....	23
Appendix 2: 2020/21 Actions and 2021/22 Plans.....	25
Appendix 3: Strategic Diagram of Shetland Partners .....	39
Appendix 4: Shetland’s Food Larder .....	40
Appendix 5: Shetland Islands Council – Ensuring Equity Event, Outputs .....	41

## APPROACH

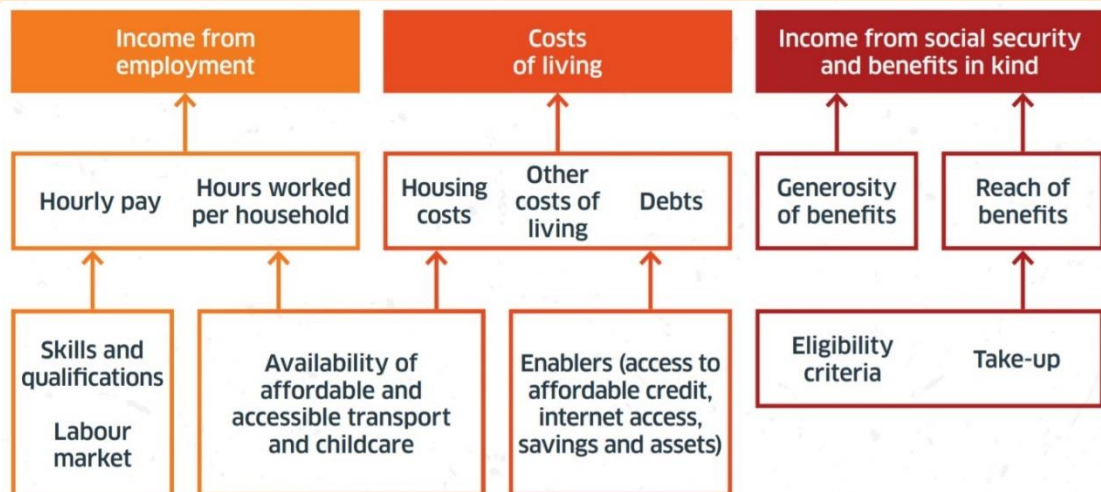
In Shetland, we recognise that there are many ways to reduce child poverty within our community.

What is important is that:

- we involve children, young people and their parents and wider families in shaping projects, products and services; and
- we monitor impact, to inform future work – for example, recognising that failing is not a failure, as long as we fail quickly and learn from our experiences and we learn from things have gone well, sharing the learning into other areas of our work.

These projects and services may be specifically targeted at children, young people and their families or may be wider, tackling the drivers of child poverty.

### DRIVERS OF CHILD POVERTY



### REPORTING AND PLANS

The action and impact from 2020/21, and our plans for 2021/22 are set out under the following headings, making reference to the impact of COVID-19, where relevant:

- Understanding the Issues
- Increasing Household Income
- Reducing Cost of Living
- Building and Nurturing Relationships
- Building Capacity
- Impact
- Strategic Approach
- Monitoring and Evaluation

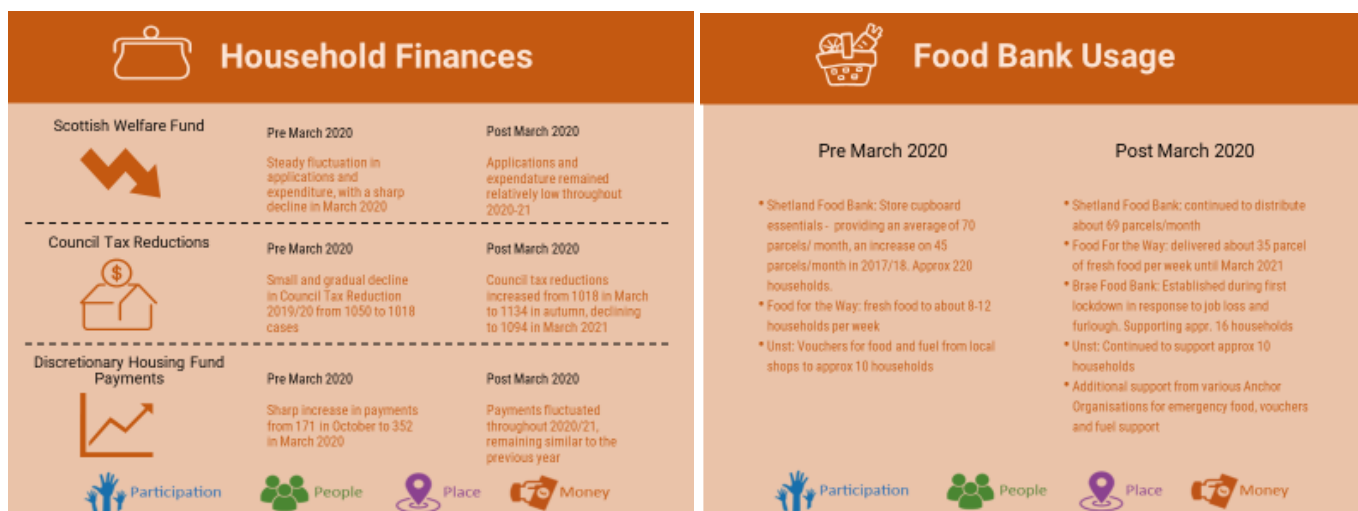
In addition to reporting to the Scottish Government on what we are doing within Shetland to reduce Child Poverty, this document will be used by Shetland Islands Council, NHS Shetland and Shetland Partnership's Management and Leadership Team, in order to ensure that actions are being effectively monitored.

# UNDERSTANDING THE ISSUES

## WHAT WE’VE DONE....

In recent months, we have become more strategic in our use of data. We use national data sources, such as the Scottish Index of Multiple Deprivation and Child Poverty statistics. Onto this, we overlay rurality and cost of living in Shetland, which we know is 20-60% more than the UK average; this means all of the issues addressed through this Plan need to be seen through the lens of our high cost of living, rather than through poverty, alone.

We also use local data sources, to aid our understanding:



We continue to marry our understanding gained from national and local data, with lived experience. For example, in the last year:

- We continued to support the Voices for Change Project, and promoted the ‘Voices for’ methodology<sup>1</sup>.
- We supported people living in Shetland to participate in the Social Renewal Advisory Panel.
- We supported young people to participate in listening events, on behalf of NHS Shetland, to determine support around health and well-being.
- We ensured children and young people’s involvement in planning for improvement across almost all schools, and that Head Teachers and school staff were supported by our Attainment Advisor and Central Staff in the use of available data to demonstrate a greater knowledge and understanding of equity and the impact of poverty. (Scottish Attainment Challenge 2015-20 Impact Report: Shetland, 2021).

Shetland’s Community Planning Partners Equality Outcomes Progress & Mainstreaming Report, 2021/25<sup>2</sup> highlights that the pandemic will have had a disproportionate longer term impact on women and that there’s a need to improve communication, including to people who are visually impaired, British Sign Language users and whose first language is not English.

<sup>1</sup> Voices For Projects: [www.shetland.gov.uk/homepage/181/voices-for-projects](http://www.shetland.gov.uk/homepage/181/voices-for-projects)

<sup>2</sup> <https://www.shetland.gov.uk/downloads/file/1839/shetland-outcomes-and-mainstreaming>

### USING DATA TO TARGET SUPPORT FOR CHILDREN AND FAMILIES THROUGH THE PANDEMIC

At the early stages of the first lockdown, and through the first year of the pandemic, people working within different agencies were able to share information and intelligence quickly, in order to ensure our response was agile and effective. Everyone was working very hard to put in place the response required, but we also found the time to gather information, understand what it was telling us, share appropriately with others, and respond accordingly.

For example, we were able to track Free School Meal and Clothing Grant uptake, across the School Estate whilst also having awareness of the economic picture, such as furlough, with support from colleagues in economic development agencies.

The Food Group was established in April 2020. It brought together all of the emergency food providers in Shetland, alongside those services who relied on food banks to support households, and those services who could support this effort. It continues to meet every four weeks, to share information, and practically resolve any issues being faced; ensuring children and their families, are supported with food, and with additional support, such as financial health and energy advice services.

The relationships and trust that already existed, across services and communities, enabled the sharing of intelligence and planning to react to that, quickly. There was also a huge willingness, across the board, to do everything possible to ensure families were supported.

Care for People Team, Emergency Response, 2020/21

### COMMUNITY UNDERSTANDING OF THE ISSUES FACED BY FAMILIES

Highlands and Islands Enterprise (HIE) were one of the key funding partners involved in administering the Covid19 Supporting Communities Fund and the successor programme, the Communities Recovery Fund, throughout 2020 and early 2021. This involved working closely with a range of community anchor organisations and social enterprises in Shetland (CAOs), who have been supporting people and communities respond to the challenges presented by Covid19, including supporting families living in poverty.

At the start of the pandemic, the vital role community development companies, development trusts and community councils play in understanding their communities, was recognised. Working in partnership with key partners, local intelligence was used to shape support packages and funding approvals. There was a willingness by CAOs the length and breadth of Shetland to support people impacted by lockdown, including families whose personal financial circumstances had quickly changed or who had insufficient digital access to support remote learning. Ultimately though, many of our CAOs became much more informed about pre-existing need, exacerbated by lockdown, and much more aware of the needs for families in their communities.

Of those CAOs who delivered short term food and/or fuel support schemes, volunteers and staff have become more knowledgeable about other support services and more confident in promoting and/or making referrals to income maximisation support routes, for example. This involvement and knowledge-gain is resulting in projects being developed by CAOs to respond to this need – empowering communities further to tackle poverty, inequality and rural disadvantage with the local assets, services and projects they develop and run. Innovative solutions and support to help people maximise their incomes and minimise their outgoings continue to be developed. In one area of Shetland, the experience of using Supporting Communities Funding to provide fresh food top ups to families experiencing financial challenges has kicked off a Grow Local project and aspirations to develop a community exchange fridge for everyone in the community.

A community activist and developer of key community asset-based projects over many decades admitted: “At the start of the pandemic, I thought I knew my community but I realise now that I didn’t have a broad enough understanding about the real financial difficulties that some people in our community face. It has completely changed our thinking in terms of being a community and development company and I believe we now have improved credibility too – with locals and other service providers. We handled all approaches with a great degree

of sensitivity and confidentiality, and we have built trust. The confidence of managers and staff at our local shops has grown too [in dealing with redeemable food vouchers]. Although our short-term scheme is coming to an end, there remains a significant need and we are determined to work with key services going forward to ensure that vulnerable families in our community are supported. There is no doubt that this experience will help shape projects and services we develop in the future”

Community Resilience Forum, Emergency Response, 2020/21

#### WHAT MORE WE HAVE PLANNED....

We are running seminars on Poverty and Inequality in Shetland, for our Elected Members, and for our Shetland Partnership. There will be follow-up activity on a number of key topics, including attainment, energy and fuel poverty, community wealth building and early action.

We will build on our baseline data, for the purposes of monitoring our impact, building on best practice examples from elsewhere in Scotland.



## INCREASING HOUSEHOLD INCOME

### WHAT WE'VE DONE....

Locally, the Council, Highlands & Islands Enterprise and the private sector, amongst others, continue to invest in economic development activity across Shetland, in order to support resilience in communities and contribute to ensuring wage levels are able to support our higher cost of living.

#### SUPPORTING ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

Activity to support people to access, obtain and sustain good quality well-paid employment opportunities across the islands, includes:

**Fish Markets:** The Scalloway Fish Market was completed in 2020, a state of the art facility built to provide the very highest standards of health & safety and environmental hygiene throughout all processes from landing to dispatch. The new facility has doubled the capacity of the old site. The Lerwick Fish Market was officially opened in July 2021, although the first whitefish was landed following the 'soft opening' in August 2020. It extends to 1,600 square metres, compared to 726 square metres in the old market. The fish catching and processing sectors in Shetland support around 650 jobs directly employed in the sectors, and account for economic output of around £200m per annum.

**Space Centre:** Shetland's location in the northernmost reaches of the UK make it an optimal place for the space economy. Unst was identified in an independent report for the UK Government as the best location in the country for the launch of small vertical rockets transporting small satellites into low earth orbits. Its northerly location also means it is ideal for tracking and communicating with satellites already in orbit. It is estimated the launch facility will create around 140 jobs on Unst and inject at least £4.9m per annum into the island's economy. It is anticipated a further 70 jobs will be provided throughout Shetland, adding a further £2.9m in gross value to the economy.

**Energy Transition:** The ORION Project (Opportunity, Renewables, Integration, Offshore Networks) plans to create green hydrogen on a large scale via a partnership between the Council and the Oil and Gas Technology Centre in Aberdeen, involving Highlands and Islands Enterprise and the wider UK energy industry. Using existing infrastructure and know-how around the Sullom Voe terminal to create hydrogen is part of the project's overarching ambition for Shetland to transition from fossil fuels to clean energy, using onshore and offshore wind to reduce emissions to net zero and reduce fuel costs on the islands.

**North Isles Fibre:** The Council completed this project, which extended the Council's fibre optic network from Graven in the North Mainland to Yell and Unst. The project attracted funding of £1.9m from the UK Government Department of Digital, Culture, Media and Sport through the Local Full Fibre Network programme.

The fibre network connects public buildings in Yell and Unst to fibre, allowing for the benefits of high speed data connections to be rolled out to the most northerly schools, care centres and health centres in the UK. Remote teaching opportunities, remote health consultations and the delivery of telemedicine services are all potential benefits of the improved data links.

Extension of the fibre optic network will incorporate a number of 'community connection points'. These will serve as Points of Presence where further network deployment can take place to serve homes and businesses with community owned broadband networks. In most cases these connection points will be provisioned within the public building being served with the new fibre network. This model has worked successfully in Shetland in the past.

Place Priority, Shetland Partnership Plan, 2020/21

We continue to raise awareness around national and local benefits available:

- More of our staff are aware of benefits available, and how to support families to access them. The Money Worries training is having an impact on our staff's skills and confidence in having conversations about money.
- Our Citizen's Advice Bureau (SICAB) remains the primary referral agency for undertaking benefit checks, through their Financial Health Service. The service quickly moved on-line, with support from the NHS's Near Me, remote appointment service.
- We ran a campaign encouraging people to ask for help – 'it's okay not to be okay'.
- We very quickly put in place a means of making direct payments to families eligible for Free School Meals, when our school buildings closed, a week earlier than across the country, for the first lock-down. Although we haven't yet joined up access to benefits, across the Council, the services involved are working collaboratively, assisted by the pandemic.
- NHS staff supporting pregnant women have benefited from the Money Worries training.

#### FINANCIAL SUPPORT TO FAMILIES, DURING THE PANDEMIC

At the early stages of the pandemic, during the first lockdown, local authorities across Scotland were awarded money to support low-income households. Shetland Islands Council decided to use a proportion of this funding to make direct payments to those households in receipt of Free School Meals (FSM) and School Clothing Grants (CG), to the sum of the daily free school meal allowance per pupil, uplifted by 20%, to reflect Shetland's higher cost of living. It was agreed to make this payment during school building closures and holidays. A storyboard sharing information about this can be found on page 21.

There was a subsequent increased uptake in FSM and CG, by 15.5% and 10% respectively over the year, due to a change in circumstance, or not applying before. The Finance Officer responsible for administering these schemes, became aware, through conversations with families, that they weren't aware of other benefits they could access, such as Best Start Grants and Warm Homes Discount. She sought help from the Early Help Team, who picked up conversations with families, and supported them to apply for these additional benefits. If necessary, referrals were made to SICAB. The feedback from families was very positive, and this piece of work highlights how good understanding and communication are key to supporting families.

Children's Services and Revenues & Benefits, Council, 2020/21

## Case Study

### Increasing a family's household income

A client contacted the Citizens Advice Bureau to see if she might be entitled to any extra financial help as she has a child with significant health problems who requires hospital treatment on the mainland. Client is a single parent with 3 school-aged children and no family support in Shetland.

The CAB Benefits Adviser completed a full benefit check to check that the family were receiving all the help they were entitled to. Client was in receipt of standard allowance Universal Credit and receiving the elements for children and housing. The adviser supported the client to make an application for Disability Living Allowance (DLA) for her child. This involved gathering medical evidence and completing the DWP application form. DLA was awarded for "middle rate care" resulting in an additional weekly payment of £58.70.

Once DLA was awarded for her eldest child, the client was also awarded Disabled Child and Carers elements in her Universal Credit and this increased the family income by a further £291.17 per month. With her child in receipt of DLA, the client was also able to make a successful application for Carers Allowance which triggered payment of the Scottish Carer's Allowance Supplement of £442 per annum. She was also able to move to the 'no work related activity



group' category for Universal Credit. This means she does not need to meet job-seeking requirements, reducing another source of pressure for her.

As a result of CAB advice, this family have increased their income and the whole family's well-being has improved.

Shetland Islands Citizens' Advice Bureau, 2021

The Council's Youth and Employability team wasn't able to deliver through the Parental Employability Support Fund last year, due to COVID. However, a small number of parents were supported through the Pathway and Bridges.

#### WHAT MORE WE HAVE PLANNED....

We will continue to strengthen links between Child Poverty activity and other strategic areas. For example:

- Development of Shetland's 10 Year Economic Development Plan, including Community Wealth Building and Fair Work.
- Progressing Islands' Deal, including Knab Redevelopment.
- Maximising the benefits of the Shared Prosperity Fund.
- The process to develop Shetland's next Local Housing Strategy.

We wish to increase the understanding of partner agencies of the role they have, as employers, for reducing Child Poverty, through for example, Living Wage Accreditation, procurement, and delivery of Money Worries training to staff in order to increase referrals to money and energy advice services.

The Council's Youth and Employability team have now recruited a dedicated member of staff to the position of engaging with and supporting parents with employment.

We intend to develop and deliver a marketing campaign, using print and social media, to build on the 'it's okay to not be okay' work of 2020. This will take account of the needs of people with protected characteristics.

NHS staff supporting pregnant women will continue to be engaged in developing our work, and learning from it, to ensure these women are getting the financial support they are entitled to.

## REDUCING COST OF LIVING

### WHAT WE'VE DONE....

Home working has restricted ad hoc conversations and networking opportunities, which are effective in developing understanding across services, around the direct and hidden costs of accessing services, for example. However, the pandemic has led to a shift in understanding, across services and communities, about households in Shetland, who may be struggling to have an acceptable standard of living.

- Our Transport Service is continuing with the review of transport fares.
- Our Health and Care workers now have access to pool cars, in part driven by understanding of the cost of living, and ensuring workers do not have to have access to a private vehicle, which are costly to run.
- The introduction of NHS remote technology, such as Near Me, means people do not have the cost of travelling to surgeries, or appointments. Travel costs are covered for certain appointments, however, these do not account for the ancillary costs associated with health travel.
- Cost of the School Day presentations have been delivered to all Head Teachers, school managers and Parent Council Chairs, across Shetland.

There has been a large increase in the level of emergency food provision, across Shetland – with responses from Community Groups, as well as through Schools:

- Community Response: a number of Community Anchor Organisations (CAOs) took on a role in supporting the provision of food to people living in their communities, such as food delivery, food parcels and food vouchers to use in local shops (see Case Study on page 3).
- Food Larders: were established through schools in response to feedback from families at the start of the pandemic. Many were struggling to pay for everyday items due to their financial circumstances; some had been furloughed, some made redundant, others felt more able to ask for help. The Early Help Team contacted schools and asked for them to speak to families who were receiving Free School Meals (FSM) to see if they were interested in having a food parcel or needed some clothes. Others came via word of mouth. A summary of Food Larders can be found in Appendix 4.

Shetland's Fair Food Project is progressing. Two community groups have been awarded funding, through the Council's Crown Estate and other funders:

- Grow Shetland is a new 3 year project (2021-2024) being delivered by Transition Turriefield. The purpose is to support the Shetland community to grow more of its own fruit and vegetables, increase access to affordable food and encourage healthy eating. The project works with individuals, groups, communities and schools to create new growing spaces and take up food growing, fresh food sharing, cooking and eating. In the first few months the project has been able to support a number of community groups, schools and residential establishments. The project is also supporting families, through the local housing association and through a 'Growing Undercover Shetland' social media group with over 1,500 members, many of whom are new to growing fruit and vegetables during the pandemic.
- Grow Local is a new project through Northmavine Community Development Company, which aims to support local growing and food production by individuals and groups in Northmavine (see Case Study on page 3).

We know that many households in Shetland are struggling with the cost of heating their homes. There are a number of agencies able to support households with fuel poverty, such as Home Energy Scotland, the

Energy Advice and Financial Health Services through SICAB, as well as the Council's home improvement scheme and delivery of the Scottish Welfare Fund for the provision of funding for fuel cards to avoid disconnection.

Fuel Bank is a national social enterprise, who are able to readily provide fuel vouchers to householders with prepayment meters, at the request of support services. Voluntary Action Shetland (VAS) have established a partnership with them, and local services are now making requests for householders, for pre-payment electric card meters, gas, oil and coal. Fuel Bank have received funding from the Scottish Government, and VAS have topped this up with recent COVID Recovery Funding. It is at an early stage of implementation but will be a useful resource, moving forward, particularly during the winter months.

It is increasingly the case that households are getting all the support they can, yet they remain in fuel poverty or extreme fuel poverty.

### SUPPLYING FREE PERIOD PRODUCTS

The implementation of Free Period Products, through schools and colleges in Shetland, trialled postage of products to pupils' home address (paid for by the Council). A survey was sent out to all secondary age girls, and cascaded to parents, through schools, offering a one-off trial pack or a three month subscription. An electronic order form, to choose which products they would like, was made available.

Having this system in place was particularly useful, through lockdowns and the closure of schools. Demand doubled in the last six months of the financial year, with 312 pupils from across Shetland now receiving regular products directly to their homes.

Access to free period products has received very positive feedback from pupils, schools and families. For low income families, it means that they have had money to spend on other essential items. It has also led to more open conversations about periods reducing stigma around the topic. More recently there have been requests for reusable products, to reduce the environmental impact of disposable items.

Stigma remains around not taking products from the school, with pupils preferring to get the products delivered to their home address. The long-term aim would be for products to be visible in the classroom instead of hidden away in the girls' bathrooms or in cupboards, which are hard to access.

Children's Services, Council, 2020/21

## Case Study



### Illustrating the impact of the Debt Service on improving health, and reducing Child Poverty

A woman in her 40s came to the Citizens Advice Bureau as she was struggling financially following a relationship breakdown. She was extremely stressed about her debts and was being constantly harassed by creditors.

She was recently separated with 3 children, employed full time and living in social housing. She had catalogue debts and problems with her electricity account. She wasn't sure if her electricity bills were correct and wasn't managing to pay her catalogues on time, so she was incurring late payment charges.

The Money Adviser carried out a benefit check to see if the family would be entitled to any benefits and prepared a Financial Statement based on the client's income and expenditure information. The Money Adviser checked the family's electricity bills and found them to be correct. The client had recently switched energy supplier but she had a debt of £420 with her previous supplier. The Money Adviser phoned her previous electricity supplier and negotiated for the client to pay back this debt over the next 12 months.

The Financial Statement showed that after all income and expenditure was taken into account the client had some free income each month, with which to make affordable offers of repayment for her catalogue debts.

The Money Adviser negotiated a repayment plan with the client's 3 creditors and was successful in getting all interest and charges stopped for the duration of the plan, meaning that all the money the client was paying was going towards the debt and not being eaten up by interest and charges. The Money Adviser advised the client to set up direct debits for agreed payments, which would make sure payments were made regularly and on time.

The creditors agreed to a repayment plan for an initial period of 12 months. At this point, the Money Adviser will contact the client again to carry out a case review. It is hoped that she will have paid off the electricity arrears by then, so that she will be able to increase the repayments for her catalogue debts. This will reduce the time it will take to pay off the debts in full.

The client is very relieved that her payments are affordable. She is no longer being chased by creditors and she feels her debt is manageable. Stress has been reduced for the whole family.

Shetland Islands Citizens Advice Bureau, 2021

#### WHAT MORE WE HAVE PLANNED....

In the coming year we will:

- Adapt and roll out the Money Worries training, so that employees of the Council and NHS know where to go, to access support, if they are struggling financially.
- All School Improvement Plans for the 2021/22 academic year will make reference to how the school will take account of and put in place actions to address the Cost of the School Day.
- Continue to run Food Larders, through the school network, recognising that many families do not have enough money to feed themselves and heat their homes.
- Support the development of food growing, across our communities.

## BUILDING AND NURTURING RELATIONSHIPS

Building and nurturing relationships between staff and families is essential. However, we're also learning about the importance of building and nurturing relationships between staff, across services and agencies.

### WHAT WE'VE DONE....

The Anchor Project, funded through the Communities Fund, supported the Early Help Team, through the first year of the pandemic.

#### ANCHOR: EARLY HELP TEAM

The Anchor Project provides practical and emotional support to improve outcomes for families. It uses a strength-based model to empower the family to bring about sustainable change. Many of the families supported aren't in receipt of benefits they are eligible for nor accessing support, such as counselling, advocacy, employability services, that would benefit them. Many don't have a close support network and have often had bad experiences with existing services.

Year 2 of the Project began just after the first lockdown. The team and project were redeployed in an attempt to support all families and schools, across Shetland, from Term 1 of the 2020/21 academic year. The team was augmented with staff from other Council services, with varied experience and expertise. Awareness was raised through school staff who could signpost and encouraged individuals to come forward through their schools.

One family supported by Early Help Team was signposted from the school and didn't know where to turn. On the first visit, Mum was at her wits end and spoke for over an hour about all the issues going on in her life; her child's behaviour, the volatile relationship she has with her partner and their financial worries. We helped Mum to seek help from Citizens Advice for her debt and spoke about her mental health and problem with alcohol. We suggested local services that would be available to her. Most of all, the Early Help Team provided a safe space and a listening ear for someone that didn't have anyone to share their burdens with;

*"Early Help Team is a really good thing. I found out about it through Sound School, got in touch with them and just offloaded everything. They helped me with applying for grants and we get food parcels every second week. I do have money but not much and they are really good at helping me. I've already told a couple of people about the service who I know are struggling. Don't be scared to ask for help – I did and it's helped me a lot."*

A friendly, informal approach has worked really well to engage these families. Having a team with wide-ranging experience has also been useful in order to provide holistic support to families and peer-support to colleagues.

Small change is still change. We have learned not to underestimate how one conversation with a family or professional may set the ball rolling for greater outcomes; this will take time. With learning we are encouraging families to have a greater focus on their own support networks and really unpick who might be 'in their bubble' of emotional support even when that support doesn't live close by.

Anchor Project Board, 2021

### WHAT MORE WE HAVE PLANNED....

We successfully obtained further funding, through the Promise Partnership, to increase the reach of the project. The final delivery year of the Anchor Project will develop an early action toolkit, operate in some different geographic settings and initiate collaborative service redesign to support early action.

## BUILDING CAPACITY

### WHAT WE'VE DONE....

We continue to see many great examples of how the capacity of children, their families, services and communities, are being built, in order to tackle problems, such as child poverty. A few examples are shared here:

- **Equity Event:** the Northern Alliance Regional Improvement Collaborate in collaboration with Education Scotland held an Equity week (28<sup>th</sup> September – 2<sup>nd</sup> October 2020)<sup>3</sup>. Equity week consisted of numerous varied workshops across the week, on subjects from *The Nature and Impact of Poverty* to *What does Equity mean in your Classroom?* It was well attended by staff across Shetland's schools and the wider partnership, some of whom were also presenting. It was an opportunity to better understand the drivers of poverty, our own data and what is being done locally, as well as being an opportunity to share good practice and research across the Alliance and participate in professional learning opportunities focused on understanding equity, raising attainment and closing the poverty related attainment gap. Appendix 5 shows a summary of the outputs from school managers during the event.
- **GIRFEC Shetland Practice Framework:** multi-agency work on updating the Shetland Practice Framework and our local version of the Child's Plan is almost complete. This is a strengths based approach to enable families and provide support as needed, and recognises the difficulties that living with poverty can bring to family life. Consultation work with staff across services has taken place and some testing of the paperwork has helped further hone the process. Consultation with families and children is currently planned and should be complete during Term 1 of the new academic session. Online training modules are also in development and will be available on the Council's i-Learn platform as well as through the Safer Shetland website.
- **GIRFEC process and relationships** between services during the pandemic have been key to our responses, ensuring that our most vulnerable children and families have been central to all planning to support them and to ensure a holistic and joined up approach, wherever possible. Where people's circumstances have changed due to and during the pandemic, GIRFEC processes have been effective in ensuring that needs are planned for and met as best they can. This is embedded in practice across all agencies, including third sector organisations, with Voluntary Action Shetland represented as a core partner in all GIRFEC developments.
- **Digital divide:** the difficulties experienced by numerous families during lockdown where parents and carers were trying to work remotely and support their children with home learning brought the digital divide that exists in Shetland into sharp relief. The quality of devices, number of devices in larger families, connectivity, digital proficiency and skills were all identified as issues that needed attention early in the first lockdown. Government funding was sought and received that allowed the Schools Service to purchase devices for children and young people identified through schools and youth workers, Anchor, health services or social work, as learners who would benefit from receiving a device. Most devices from schools were sent home during lockdown to families who needed them to help to mitigate

<sup>3</sup> <https://northernalliance.scot/2020/11/the-real-impact-of-promoting-equity-week-2020/>



against digital poverty and were then returned as children and young people returned to in-school learning in August 2020.

The Scottish Government's Equity Audit<sup>4</sup> published on Wednesday 13 January 2021 will act as a reference point for all schools in Shetland to support equity and our more vulnerable children and families moving forward. Key points linked to **Digital Infrastructure and Connectivity** identified nationally in the Equity Audit include:

- Access to technology and digital capability is, and will remain, a fundamental aspect of education in Scotland.
- There is an inherent need for appropriate digital devices, connectivity and the skills to use online platforms well.
- Variation in the availability of technology for children and young people was evident, with socio-economically disadvantaged children and young people being most negatively affected.
- As well as those living in socio-economically disadvantaged communities, connectivity was a particular issue for remote/rural communities.

Locally, 470 mobile devices were prepared and distributed to children and young people between October and December 2020 to address the digital divide and support learning through Scottish Government funding. Further to this, dongles, devices that plug into computers or laptops to support a computer to access the internet, were distributed to young people and families whom services were aware had poor connectivity, and data contracts were also purchased for some families with learners who were unable to purchase data due to the prohibitive cost.

Children's Services, with colleagues from across the Council, have developed a Digital Learning and Teaching Strategy due for publication in autumn 2021 with a focus on narrowing the digital divide with support for devices and connectivity.

### MONEY WORRIES

These online workshops were developed with the aim of supporting people to see the role they can play in raising the issue of money worries, and to improve knowledge and understanding of the support offered by CAB. The Money Worries sessions have been run virtually as a joint venture between Shetland Citizens Advice Bureau, Anchor and NHS Shetland's Health Improvement Team.



The sessions begin by setting the scene in the context of health inequalities associated with poverty and discuss the impact of stigma as a barrier to both services raising the issue, and individuals seeking support. Details of the support that CAB offer are then discussed, followed by real life case study examples to illustrate the beneficial impact of engaging with the service. The Anchor team give examples of how they have engaged with families during the pandemic and use this to facilitate discussion on how people can go about raising the issue of money worries with families they are working with.

The intended outcome is that attendees will then share this information back with their teams, initiate more conversations about money worries and refer into CAB. There are plans to develop these sessions further, to ensure conversations about financial circumstances become routine.

Money Priority, Shetland Partnership Plan, 2020/21

<sup>4</sup> [Coronavirus \(COVID-19\): impact of school building closures - equity audit - gov.scot \(www.gov.scot\)](https://www.gov.scot/resources/information/coronavirus-covid-19-impact-of-school-building-closures-equity-audit/)

### YOUNG MUM SUPPORTING OTHER FAMILIES

One of the mums who had received support through the Early Help Team suggested this help could be beneficial to other mums, who she attended a parenting group with. She felt many of the attendees needed a little extra guidance, especially with their budgeting and finances. She felt in a position to lead the group since her circumstances had changed; she was more financially secure but remembered what it had been like for her when she was struggling.

She was keen to find funding and help to provide practical solutions and engage her peers. She applied and secured funding to provide fresh fruit and vegetables for the group; liaised with local producers to organise growing workshops; and opened discussions with everyone around their budgeting and money worries. Parents shared stories and were encouraged to ask for help if they needed it. Many parents were signposted to Citizens Advice Bureau and subsequently received support with their debt. Others received help from local voluntary organisations in the form of fuel and clothes vouchers.

As a result the families have a better balanced diet; the cost of weekly shopping has reduced so they have money for other necessities, energy bills and childcare costs; this has allowed them space to access education or look for work. The group hope to start growing from their venue, cooking and sharing meals with one another when restrictions allow.

Community Response, 2020/21

We have begun to invest time in raising awareness about the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC). The Council buys in support from UNICEF to support the Rights Respecting Schools Award across schools. This Award recognises a school's achievement in putting the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child into practice within the school and beyond. Shetland currently has eight schools engaged in this award with Cullivoe Primary looking to renew their 'Gold' status in 2021.

The Council's Youth and Employability Service promotes UNCRC through schools in a number of ways. For example:

- An Introduction to UNCRC workshop (in partnership with the Children and Young People's Commission and UNICEF) was delivered to 231 secondary pupils across Shetland schools. This is an introduction to the principles behind UNCRC and raises awareness of young people's rights.
- As part of Youth Work delivery during the pandemic, 93 young people were supported to engage in LGBTi support chat groups. As part of LGBT History month, Youth Development Workers delivered 46 support packs for young people.
- A standalone PSE workshop created by RespectMe on prejudice was also delivered by Youth Development staff to over 120 pupils in schools. The workshop explores the importance of celebrating difference, and to increase awareness of prejudice, stereotypes and racism in society.

Shetland Schools and Youth & Employability Staff have now attended Train the Trainer sessions, nationally, on introducing the Scottish implementation Bill for UNCRC and have presented to Head teachers on the same theme. This will be rolled out to other areas of the authority and to more school staff next year.

## IMPACT

We are improving our working practices, so that involving children and their parents in the development of services and measuring the impact of what we're doing is becoming the norm.

### WHAT WE'VE DONE....

Inclusion of children and young people with protected characteristics continues to be a theme, particularly as research has shown the greater impact of poverty on both the BAME (Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic) community and on people with a disability. Guidance materials, INCLUDE, commissioned by the Northern Alliance Equalities Group, have been produced by young people within the Alliance and were launched in May 2021. They will be disseminated to all services working with children and young people on 16<sup>th</sup> August 2021 as the new academic year begins. This resource will provide schools and other services working with children and young people with self-evaluation materials and guidance to support the rights of those children and young people with any of the protected characteristics.

Hubs were set up to support essential workers and vulnerable families early in the first lockdown but evolved and developed across time taking account of feedback and identified need from children and young people, parents/carers and other professionals across the partnership.

#### CRITICAL CHILDCARE AND ASN HUBS

As a direct response to COVID-19, critical childcare and ASN hubs were quickly established to support children and families across Shetland. The aims were:

- To provide childcare for key worker families to ensure that essential services across Shetland were maintained;
- To provide support for vulnerable families and families with children with additional support needs;
- To work closely with colleagues in social work and health to support families with children in need of care and/or protection through our GIRFEC framework to ensure all were supported but not overwhelmed by contact overload from numerous services.

Each Hub was specifically designed to meet the needs of the families in each local community. For each, an appropriate venue was identified and resourced. Some hubs operated from school facilities and others from community facilities. In the case where a community venue was selected, the venue had to be registered by the Care Inspectorate as a 'day care of children' service. This required effective partnership working with colleagues in the Care Inspectorate who worked quickly and tirelessly to ensure that the service could be established as quickly as possible.

Where possible, private sector childcare providers were invited to work in partnership with the Council to provide the service. This helped to increase the capacity of the services. Staff from across the wider Children's Services department and some third sector organisations were re-deployed into the Hubs.

In some cases, school transport was repurposed to ensure equal access for all families, particularly in more rural and remote areas of Shetland and where families had no access to other means of transport. Hot meals were provided daily by the School's catering service, with children having opportunities to develop the menu. Enhanced cleaning was also put in place, with school cleaning staff being used where possible.

Once in place, the views of the young people helped shape each of the services and the day-to-day activities, with an emphasis on play, wellbeing and being outdoors.

Social work colleagues were key partners from the outset along with health visitors and the school nurse service. Third sector organisations, such as Ability Shetland were also involved in the provision. This ensured we were meeting the needs of families identified as likely to benefit from further support.

258 children (from birth to 12) from around 112 families attended critical childcare hubs. An additional 154 children with additional support needs attended the hubs or were supported in their school settings.

A total of 95% of families stated that critical childcare had been a positive experience for their child/ren when surveyed.

One parent regarding the continuation of provision for vulnerable children through the longer summer holiday period said, *"This has been a huge lifeline for my family and given back freedom and agency to my son. He loves the support workers and seeing his friends and always come home smiling. This has also been very important towards his transition back to nursery as it is providing peer development and interaction, something that this pandemic has taken away from us."*

Another parent, working in a local grocery and considered an essential worker during this time said, *"Without the service, I would not have been able to work at all through the pandemic. It has been a complete saviour to me and most definitely my children. Child A had not attended childcare before and since attending has come on leaps and bounds with his speech and social skills. Routine has been incredibly important to us and with being able to maintain some form of normality has been amazing!"*

Colleagues in health and social work services regularly fed back the positive impact that children and young people's attendance was having, not only on the wellbeing of the children but also on the wellbeing of the parents and carers.

Our ability to create these new services in such a short period of time shows we have a very agile and flexible system across Shetland's Children's Services, with a clear focus on providing the best service for those most vulnerable families in our communities; the learning from our experiences will be utilised in any future service development.

Children's Services, Shetland Islands Council, 2020/21

#### ATTAINMENT: POVERTY RELATED ATTAINMENT GAP

In some year groups and subjects such as Primary 7 literacy, there is evidence that for pupils identified through the Shetland Vulnerability Criteria, the attainment gap has significantly reduced and has almost closed by Secondary 3. For pupils in receipt of school meals, there is good progress in closing the gap in almost all stages in literacy. A similar positive picture is emerging for numeracy in primary with some progress in closing the poverty related gap in secondary. Work continues as a priority across Shetland's schools to use data and local knowledge to identify and target support to tackle the poverty related attainment gap in the most appropriate ways for the individual learners.

Since 2016 there has been a slight dip of approximately 2% in attendance of pupils in receipt of free school meals and there has been a gap of around 5% between Free School Meal pupils and all pupils. Our attendance is consistently above the national average but schools continue to focus on supporting the small number of children and young people who have difficulties with attendance through a variety of targeted interventions.

There is no trend in exclusions for children experiencing poverty with the overall number of exclusions remaining very low.

Children's Services, Shetland Islands Council, 2020/21

#### CONTINUITY AND TRANSFORMATION: KEEPING THE CAB SERVICE OPEN DURING THE PANDEMIC

Shetland Citizens Advice Bureau (CAB) has remained open for service throughout the pandemic. Paid staff have been delivering advice from home by phone and email since 23 March 2020, with volunteers advising since October 2020. Provision of IT and phones for advisers was a challenge but the bureau was able to secure additional COVID-related funding to equip them with laptops and internet phoning.

During 2020/21, all advice was delivered remotely, mostly by phone and email. 1528 people were advised on 8279 issues. CAB was able to save money in some areas (e.g. travel expenses) and invested more in others, including marketing, to make sure that local people knew how to access help. CAB introduced remote advice clinics delivered by Zoom and also participated in the pilot for delivering advice through NearMe video conferencing software, the same system being used by the NHS.

Paid staff and volunteers have had to learn new systems 'on the job' and CAB has, at times, struggled due to a lack of IT training and support. This has been a year of learning not just in digital skills but with advisers needing to keep updated on rapidly changing advice developments – often they were being asked for advice on questions to which the answer had not yet been written. Providers such as the Child Poverty Action Group, ACAS and Citizens Advice Scotland put their courses online and this opened up access for many more advisers to attend.

CAB volunteers carried out a client survey of everyone who accessed the CAB service in August 2020 with very positive results: 94% of clients had found it easy to access advice, 92% were satisfied that the advice provided had helped them to sort out their problems, and 99% would recommend the service to others. However CAB is concerned about the people who have found it more difficult to access advice during the pandemic, including isolated older people, those with no or limited digital skills/access, and those who found it easier to come to drop-in sessions in Lerwick and rural communities. To reach more vulnerable people, CAB has worked with partners to further develop referral pathways and has co-delivered a regular programme of Money Worries awareness-raising training. In 2021/22, CAB plans to continue using the remote delivery methods which have worked well for clients over the last year, but will also build back in face-to-face advice for those who require it and work towards re-establishing outreach and home visit services.

Shetland Islands Citizens' Advice Bureau, 2021

#### WHAT MORE WE HAVE PLANNED....

We will further align our strategies around reducing levels of Child Poverty and mitigating the negative impacts of low household incomes on our Children and Young People. However, the greatest challenge is ensuring that our households have enough money, whether able to work, or not, against the continued pressures of increasing household costs, particularly energy costs.

## STRATEGIC APPROACH

### WHAT WE'VE DONE....

In the autumn of 2020, despite the continuing pressures of supporting service delivery through the pandemic, strategic managers from Shetland Islands Council, the Integration Joint Board, NHS Shetland, Police Scotland and Voluntary Action Shetland came together with a joint purpose. These managers participated in workshops to develop a new 'Vision for Change' for what the system of support should look and feel like for Shetland's residents when life becomes more challenging.

The aim is to shift towards early intervention and prevention, with a subsequent reduction in crisis intervention. The following strategic outcomes have been set:

- Shetland's residents access early support;
- Shetland's residents receive strength-based support;
- Shetland's residents find no door is the wrong door when seeking support.

The role and remit of the Anchor Project Board has been expanded to become the Early Action Programme Board, with a number of research and enabler projects, all designed to shift support to earlier intervention, across all life stages: research projects include Anchor and Trauma-Informed Practice; enablers include workforce capability, technology, communications, measuring impact and alignment of change.

#### EARLY ACTION PROGRAMME

Shetland's organisations have continued to progress strategic developments, which will contribute to reducing levels of child poverty, despite dealing with the pandemic. The Anchor Project has supported the development of a new Programme for Change – the Early Action Programme to support the following Vision for Change to be achieved:

- The support available to individuals in Shetland is **enabling and kind**.
- When Shetland's residents encounter difficult to overcome challenges, **early interaction** with potential support is the norm.
- **Friends and family** play a vital and widely recognised role in the provision of support.
- Where support from services is sought, the presumption is that support will be delivered in a **local community-based setting** that creates a comfortable environment for the individual.
- The support system works with an individual using a **strengths-based approach** and targets improvement in an individual's confidence and capacity to act.
- The organisations providing support services operate under a **no door is the wrong door** policy.
- The **individual is listened to**. What an individual says they need is listened to and the whole household is considered.
- The **value of time** spent with an individual to build a trusting relationship is recognised as a good investment by service providers. Engaging in simple practical helpful actions can be transformative.
- The individual receives **tailored and flexible support** that meets their needs and is matched to their capacity to act.
- The individual experiences a **seamless transition** from touch point interactions to, where appropriate, working with more specialist services on issues at the core of experienced challenges.
- **Professionals and support workers have a wide knowledge base**, supported by learning on the job, the sharing of best-practice, and good relationships between services.

This brings together senior managers from across the Council, NHS, Police and Third Sector, to act on the information gathered directly from families, through the Anchor Project.

The next steps will be to use the Scottish Approach to Service Design, supported by The Promise, to involve families further, in helping to shift services to achieve the vision – as we know that's what families want, and we've seen the impact it has.

Early Action Programme Board, 2021

Pupil Equity Funding is additional funding allocated to schools by the Scottish Government to target closure of the poverty related attainment gap. The total Pupil Equity Funding allocation to Shetland Islands Council for 2020/21 was approximately £230k, with allocations to 23 individual establishments, based on the number of pupils in each establishment registered for free school meals, ranging from £1k to £33k. Scottish Government guidance makes it clear that Head Teachers are responsible for developing plans for the use of their school's allocated funding, and arrangements to monitor and assess its impact.

In April 2021, Shetland Islands Council's management of Pupil Equity Funding was audited by Internal Audit, Glasgow City Council, during term two and term three of school session 2020/21. The scope of the audit was to ensure there are sufficient and appropriate controls in place covering the management of Pupil Equity Funding. The Audit found that:

- Key controls are in place and generally operating effectively;
- Support and resources have been made available from Children's Services through the provision of proposal templates, a framework for measuring impact of Pupil Equity Funding and financial monitoring;
- General assistance on Pupil Equity Funding matters like staffing, procurement of goods and services is also available and managed through the Council's existing policies and processes;
- Budget monitoring and control arrangements at Shetland Islands Council appropriately consider Pupil Equity Funding and expenditure, meaning that Pupil Equity Funding is correctly accounted for.

The audit identified some scope for continuous improvement in the existing arrangements and one 'low priority' recommendation for Children's Services to address. This single recommendation has been addressed by providing Head Teachers with updated local guidance which supplements the national operational guidance on Pupil Equity Funding, issued annually by the Scottish Government.

#### **PUPIL EQUITY FUNDING (PEF): TWO EXAMPLES**

**Bell's Brae Primary School: Use of PEF to improve attendance and engagement at school by removing the barrier of getting to school on time.**

Regular attendance monitoring led the school to become more aware of levels of attendance and punctuality to school for a number of pupils. School staff engaged with the families, and found that they were struggling to get their children up and out in the mornings and this was causing significant distress. The school decided to use PEF to provide lifts to school in the school car. This offer was accepted by two families.

Attendance and punctuality levels improved and Early Learning and Childcare pupils that had previously not attended were supported to attend the setting, and relationship between the school and families has developed.

One parent stated that 'this took the stress out of mornings and made mornings more manageable'.

One of the children who was collected on a daily basis told the escort that 'he got excited when he saw her coming as he knew he was going to school'.

The school continue to monitor attendance levels, tracking learning, pupils' work and through teacher judgement.

Ollaberry Primary School: Use of PEF to offer real life, age appropriate experiences to support the health and wellbeing of all the children and explore approaches to using outdoor education as a means to facilitate development of STEM skills.

Activities included the design and building of bridges, stiles and mini outdoor areas to support mindfulness activities in and around the school grounds. This work then provided opportunities for identified children to access outdoor experiences through the development of a cross-country run. The skills and experiences acquired through will carry over in to the pupils' activities and experiences outside of school.

The pupils and staff worked with a number of partners to develop the cross-country run, with STEM opportunities incorporated through designing and building bridges and stiles. The school worked with parents, STEM ambassadors, active schools and the P.E specialist to plan and implement opportunities for pupils to take part in a cross-country run.

Outdoor clothing and all necessary resources were provided so no pupil was disadvantaged by not being equipped for these activities.

The legacy of the project is an improvement to the outdoor learning environment and the participation of all the children in what can now be termed a community resource. This project will help to build ideas for how outdoor education and STEM can be linked.

#### WHAT MORE WE HAVE PLANNED....

We are building on the new Shetland Children's Partnership, by undertaking a review of its direction and operation.

We will continue to develop and deliver the Early Action Programme.



# MONITORING AND EVALUATION

We are continuing our work on developing a shared language across the Shetland Partnership, in order to measure and share impact.

## WHAT WE'VE DONE....

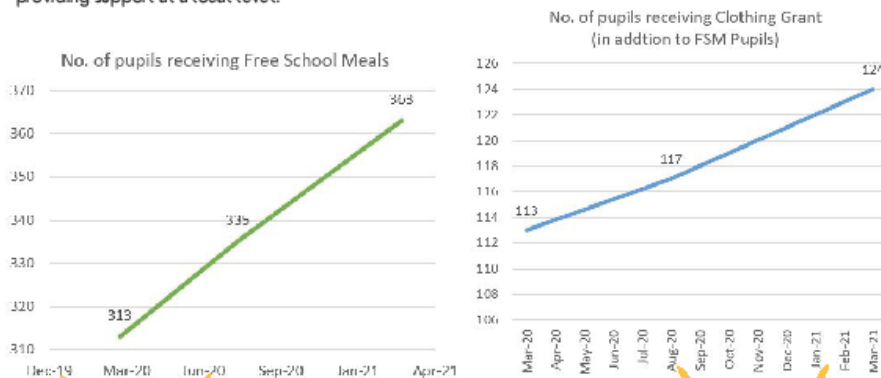
Despite the pressures of the pandemic, for example there has been a halt to the roll-out of Scottish Improvement Foundation Skills (SIFS) training, it has been heartening to see that monitoring and evaluation of activity undertaken to support Shetland's response has been prominent.

### STORYBOARDS: FREE SCHOOL MEAL UPTAKE



**Aim** To support low income families sensitively and quickly, during the pandemic of 2020/21

At the early stages of the pandemic, during the first lockdown, local authorities across Scotland were awarded money to support low-income households. Shetland Islands Council decided to use a proportion of this funding to make direct payments to those households in receipt of Free School Meals and School Clothing Grants, to the sum of the daily free school meal allowance per pupil, uplifted by 20%, to reflect Shetland's higher cost of living. It was agreed to make this payment during school closures and holidays. Over the past year, additional initiatives, such as the Food Larder, were established, and have grown, and developed, as more people have got involved in providing support at a local level.



**Free School Meals Initiative is helping 191 families as of March 2021 this is an increase of 28 families since March 2020**

**SIC is the only local authority in Scotland that provides the Clothing Grant to Early Learning and Childcare (ELC) pupils**

**SIC have helped with two payments of £100 to families who claim Free School Meals and a further payment is expected again this summer**

**Clothing Grants were paid to 69 ELC pupils 2020/21**

- Achievements**
- The Council administered these payments to families very quickly
  - Families were provided with non-stigmatised support which enabled them to use the funding to choose their own food
  - Travel restrictions meant that a lot of money was used to purchase from local shops

- Learning Points**
- Staff across the Council were able to respond in an agile way
  - The increased uptake of support is an indication that the approach of direct payments was welcomed by families

- Next Steps**
- Anchor to continue to destigmatise FSM/CG application, promoting in schools and to staff working with families
  - Continue to work alongside Children's Finance Staff to disseminate easily accessible information regarding benefits to schools and families

**Snapshot**

Our pilot at Sound Primary School was successful at raising awareness of FSM/CG. more information can be seen in this report by Scottish Poverty & Inequality Research Unit (page 17)



## MONEY WORRIES

The anticipated impact of the Money Worries sessions is:

- To improve knowledge and understanding of the support available through CAB
- To improve confidence in broaching the subject of money worries with individuals, and
- To help people see the role they can play in raising the issue.

Since January 2021 brief questionnaires have been introduced to support monitoring and evaluation of the project.

The pre session questionnaire seeks to identify:

- how confident people feel about raising the issue of money worries,
- whether they already have conversations about money regularly,
- what support they are aware of
- whether they see it as their role to ask about money.

By the end of April 2021 the following responses have been obtained:

- Most people were mid-range on a scale of not confident to very confident, however, there were a few who did not have much confidence
- Two thirds did not have regular discussions about money with their clients, patients or service users
- Everyone was aware of the Citizens Advice Bureau, over half were aware of the DWP, and just over a third were aware of Social Security Scotland
- Nearly two thirds did not see it as their role, to ask about money

A post-session questionnaire has been sent to any participants who have attended a workshop since the beginning of 2021. The post-session questionnaire has only received a third of the responses, so data is limited.

- 80% found the session very useful (10/10), whilst 20% scored 7/10
- 100% found the follow up resources useful
- None had used the CAB referral form
- The following was gained from the session:
  - 80% of respondents said “more confident in raising the issue of money”
  - 100 % of respondents said “more knowledge to draw upon when raising the issue of money”
  - 100% of respondents said “more knowledge of services available to help individuals”
  - 60% of respondents said “networking opportunity with other services.”
- 100 % said the session was what they were expecting.

Feedback received both anecdotally at the end of the workshop and in the post session questionnaires, has been positive. Introduction of pre and post session questionnaires will allow us to continue to monitor the impact of the workshops. Approaching target groups to offer the workshop allows us to tailor the session as required, and provides an opportunity for attendees to discuss any issues within their own services.

The questionnaires could be updated to gather additional data – for example, we have observed that despite finding the sessions useful, respondents had not made a referral into CAB. It would be useful to know if these people had instead signposted to the service or if they had taken any other actions as a result of attending the workshop, such as discussing the resources with a colleague.

Money Priority, Shetland Partnership Plan, 2020/21

## WHAT MORE WE HAVE PLANNED....

We intend to review where we are, in terms of monitoring and evaluation, and put in place actions, as required, to ensure our activity is evaluated and adjusted, accordingly.

## APPENDIX 1: BACKGROUND AND LEGISLATIVE REQUIREMENTS

The requirement to produce an Annual Child Poverty Action Report (ACPAR) is set out in the [Child Poverty \(Scotland\) Act 2017](#)<sup>5</sup>.

The legislation states that the report must ‘**describe any measures taken in the area of the local authority during the reporting year....for the purpose of contributing to the meeting of the child poverty targets.**’ The Act also requires local authorities and NHS Boards to set out, in their local child poverty action reports, information on measures that they plan to take to contribute to the meeting of the Child Poverty reduction targets set out in the Act, with the aim of ensuring the reports provide a strategic forward look as well as an account of progress to date.

The Act sets out a **clear agenda for tackling, reporting on and measuring child poverty**. The Act:

- Sets out four statutory income targets, to be met in the financial year beginning 1 April 2030.
- Sets out four interim income targets, to be met in the financial year beginning 1 April 2023.
- 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.

The Act sets out four statutory, **income-based targets (all after housing costs)**, to be achieved by 2030:

- Less than 10% of children are in relative poverty
- Less than 5% of children are in absolute poverty
- Less than 5% of children are in combined low income and material deprivation
- Less than 5% of children are in persistent poverty

The Act also sets out **interim targets**, to be met in the financial year beginning on 1 April 2023 – which is the halfway point between the position at the time the Child Poverty (Scotland) Act was passed and the 2030 target date for the meeting of the targets - as below:

- Less than 18% of children are in relative poverty
- Less than 14% of children are in absolute poverty
- Less than 8% of children are in combined low income and material deprivation
- Less than 8% of children are in persistent poverty.

[Guidance](#)<sup>6</sup> on the approach and content of the ACPAR is available. The key considerations are:

- Production of one Report for Shetland (the first covering 1<sup>st</sup> April 2018 to 31<sup>st</sup> March 2019);

<sup>5</sup> <http://www.legislation.gov.uk/asp/2017/6/contents/enacted>

<sup>6</sup> <https://www.gov.scot/publications/local-child-poverty-action-report-guidance/>

- The Council and NHS Shetland are required to jointly prepare and publish a report, but are encouraged to involve all partners contributing to reducing Child Poverty (through Community Planning);
- Aim to publish by 30<sup>th</sup> June each year, after local approval by the Council and NHS Shetland;
- Feedback will be provided from the Scottish Government;
- Links should be made with implementation of the:
  - Fairer Scotland Duty
  - Children & Young People (Scotland) Act 2014
  - Community Empowerment (Scotland) Act 2015, and
  - Education (Scotland) Act 2016;
- Evidence must be provided that shows consideration is being given to the different barriers that parents with different protected characteristics<sup>7</sup> may face and specifically include action to help parents to maximise income, by accessing financial inclusion services;
- Evidence that shows lived experience of poverty is being brought into strategic decision-making;
- In addition, the guidance highlights the following for inclusion:
  - Sharing 'what's working' and 'lessons' learnt
  - Reference to work to tackle Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACEs)
  - The building and nurturing of relationships across the partnership, and
  - Demonstration of partner involvement in activity to meet poverty targets.

The [Scottish Government's Delivery](#)<sup>8</sup> Plan identifies a number of priority groups being targeted as particular beneficiaries of the Plan's commitments:

- Lone parents
- Families where a member of the household is disabled
- Families with 3 or more children
- Minority ethnic families
- Families where the youngest child is under 1
- Mothers aged under 25

Living in areas of high material deprivation and remote rural locations were also identified as additional barriers faced by families in these groups.

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<sup>7</sup> Age; disability; gender reassignment; marriage and civil partnership; pregnancy and maternity; race; religion or belief; sex; sexual orientation.

<sup>8</sup> <https://www.gov.scot/publications/child-chance-tackling-child-poverty-delivery-plan-2018-22/>

## APPENDIX 2: 2020/21 ACTIONS AND 2021/22 PLANS

This summary table stipulates the nature of the activity and who should benefit; responsibility, timeline and resources for delivery; the intended child poverty driver that the activity will impact upon and how this is measured. The table also refers to the impact of COVID-19 on delivery and plans. Inevitably, due to our resources being deployed in different ways than anticipated, because of the pandemic, some actions have been carried forward. However, we achieved other things, due to the opportunities and flexibility provided by the changes.

### Actions taken forward during 2020/21

Action e.g. new services offered, increasing flexibility of existing services	Group (s) the action is intended to reduce poverty amongst e.g. who is service targeted at and who is using it?	Who action is carried out by e.g. list of all partners involved in action	Resources allocated	Timescale for action	Poverty driver (s) the action is intended to impact	How impact has / will be assessed
Promote Living on a Low Income in Scotland’s Islands Research	All those people in Shetland facing poor outcomes because of inequalities, including children living in poverty	<b>Lead:</b> Director of Children’s Services, Council <b>Partners:</b> Council, Highlands and Islands Enterprise, Police Scotland, NHS Shetland, SFRS, Northern Alliance	Staff time, within substantive roles	Held up, due to COVID pressures	Cost of Living	Understanding and use of research (at local and national level)
Voices for Change established and implemented, in parallel with the Government’s Social Advisory Panel	Young people and families, particularly those at important transition points / newly vulnerable as a result of COVID-19	<b>Lead:</b> Policy Manager, Council <b>Partners:</b> Council, Highlands and Islands Enterprise, Police Scotland, NHS	Re-purposed budget from within Community Planning and Development, Council	Project still underway, with 6 learning matches.	Hours Worked Per Household Skills and Training Labour Market	Number of learning matches Evaluation report based on project outcomes

		Shetland, SFRS, Third Sector				
Close monitoring, analysis and sharing of information in light of COVID-19: e.g. Free School Meals direct payments / economic changes / knowledge of Community Anchor Organisations	All those people in Shetland facing poor outcomes because COVID-19 including children living in poverty	<b>Lead:</b> Director of Children’s Services, Council <b>Partners:</b> Council, Highlands and Islands Enterprise, Police Scotland, NHS Shetland, SFRS, Third Sector	Staff time, within substantive roles	Ongoing	All drivers	Allocation of resources to those already vulnerable and those newly vulnerable  Inform any future national funding sources, such as Supporting Communities Fund
Investment of funding and resources to support economic development activity	All those people in Shetland facing poor outcomes because of inequalities, including children living in poverty	<b>Lead:</b> Director of Development Services, Council <b>Partners:</b> Council, Highlands and Islands Enterprise, Private Sector	Investment of funding and staff time	Ongoing	All drivers	Economic output Jobs created
Right Support, Right Time: building capacity and understanding of staff and volunteers, within local communities (Money Worries online training, and using front-line staff to support assessment, linked to Cost of the School Day and role of Community Anchor Organisations)	Support staff working with families, including children in poverty  Families	<b>Lead:</b> Director, Highlands and Islands Enterprise <b>Partners:</b> NHS Shetland, Citizens Advice Bureau (SICAB), Council, SIC Children’s Services	Staff time within SICAB, NHS Shetland  SIC Children’s Services staff repositioned as Early Help Team	Money Worries training sessions continue to be run for all staff	Cost of Living Rise of Out of Work and In Work Poverty Reach of Benefits Information  Low Uptake of Benefits	Uptake of Free School Meals and other benefits (data held within SIC and SICAB)

Right Support, Right Time: target school systems				COSD presentation to Head Teachers COSD presentation to Parent Council Chairs		Involvement of Teachers, School Support Staff and Parents in Money Worries / Cost of the School Day
Enhancement of formal income maximisation referral routes between the early years workforce and local money/welfare advice services	Pregnant women and low income families with young children	<b>Lead:</b> Senior health Improvement Advisor <b>Partners:</b> NHS Shetland Early Years workforce and Citizens Advice Bureau	£2,535 allocated by Scottish Government Regional funding also available, but not clear how this will be spent yet	Money Worries training delivered to school staff, nursing and health visiting staff	Maximising the income of pregnant women and low income families with young children.	Increase in referrals to money advice service. Increase in number of referrals with a named professional to facilitate engagement. Engagement of Maternity and Health Visiting staff with Money Worries training. Increased local uptake of Healthy Start scheme.
Right Support, Right Time: one application to access all Council administered benefits	Low income families with children	<b>Lead:</b> Director of Children's Services, Council	Staff time, within substantive roles	Held up, due to COVID pressures	Reach of Benefits Information Low Uptake of Benefits	One system to access Free School Meals / School Clothing Grants / Council Tax Reduction and Housing Benefit
Right Support, Right Time: awareness of affordable credit	Low income families with children	<b>Lead:</b> Director, Highlands and Islands Enterprise	Staff time, within substantive roles	Held up, due to COVID pressures. Now underway.	Cost of Living Rise of Out of Work and In Work Poverty	Community awareness of

		<b>Partners:</b> NHS Shetland, Highlands and Islands Enterprise, Council				ethical loan opportunities
Proactive support to those impacted upon by economic downturn, including developing access to employment opportunities through national employment schemes e.g. Kickstart and Youth Employment Guarantee.	All children and their families, living in poverty / low income	<b>Lead:</b> Director of Development Services, Council <b>Partners:</b> Highlands and Islands Enterprise, Skills Development Scotland, College, Council and Developing the young workforce.	Employability Team and time commitment from partners as part of substantive roles	June 2020: Employability Partnership established	Rise in Unemployment and Underemployment as a result of COVID-19	Number of people supported into employment
Money-Proofing Policies: review of Public Transport Fares and developing concept of Transport Hubs	All children and their families, living in poverty / low income	<b>Lead:</b> Lead Officer, ZetTrans <b>Partners:</b> NHS Shetland, Highlands and Islands Enterprise, Council	Time commitment, as part of substantive roles	Fare Review ongoing; reducing inequalities and child poverty as key driver.	Cost of Living Rise of In Work Poverty Silo Policy Making	Understanding of issues and drivers of child poverty, amongst policy leads  Examples of changes in policy, as a result
Fair Food: continue to respond to emergency food needs, linking with financial health and energy advice support. E.g. trial of Food Larders in schools / Direct Payment of FSM	All children and their families, living in poverty / low income, impacted up on by COVID-19	<b>Lead:</b> Chief Social Work Officer, Council <b>Partners:</b> NHS Shetland, Highlands and Islands Enterprise, Council, Third Sector	Time commitment, as part of substantive roles	Ongoing, as part of Emergency Planning response	Cost of Living Rise of Out of Work and In Work Poverty	No known food needs  Referrals to Citizens Advice Bureau



Fair Food: aspiration is to eradicate Food Poverty in Shetland	All children and their families, living in poverty / low income	<b>Lead:</b> Director, Highlands and Islands Enterprise / Policy Manager, Council <b>Partners:</b> Communities, NHS Shetland, Council	Time commitment, as part of substantive roles. Additional resources to be secured using external funding.	Food Growing Strategy in October 2020 Implementation ongoing	Cost of Living Rise of In Work Poverty Welfare Reforms Risk of Food Bank becoming Institutionalised	Demand for Food Bank, from Families Area of land used for local food consumption
Anchor – Early Action / Early Help Team (links with Money Worries / Cost of the School Day) and seek to inform the Government’s approach to Family Support	Vulnerable families	<b>Lead:</b> Anchor Project Board <b>Partners:</b> across the Shetland Partnership	Staff time, within substantive roles. £321,000 from Big Lottery to invest in catalyst of change	Early Help Team supporting families and schools, since August 2020.	All drivers, by taking a family-centred, holistic and flexible approach	Detailed monitoring framework under-development to measure outcomes for families and for our system
Evaluation of impact of Pupil Equity Fund	Children living in poverty Vulnerable families	<b>Lead:</b> Director of Children’s Services, Council	Staff time, within substantive roles.	June 2021	All drivers, by taking a family-centred, holistic and flexible approach	Monitoring of impact of PEF spend through: -attainment -participation -engagement -attendance -inclusion
GIRFEC Shetland Practice Framework	Vulnerable families	<b>Lead:</b> Director of Children’s Services, Council	Staff time, within substantive roles.	Framework updated, September 2021	All drivers, by taking a family-centre, holistic and flexible approach	Through the Quality Assurance Framework

		<b>Partners:</b> NHS Shetland, Police Scotland, Third Sector				
Digital Divide Access to digital devices and software Equity of access to current broadband	All children and their families, particularly those who are vulnerable / living in poverty / low income	<b>Lead:</b> Director of Children's Services, Council <b>Partners:</b> Northern Alliance	Time commitment, as part of substantive roles. Additional resources to be secured using external funding	October 2020: Access to digital devices and software December 2020: Access to alternative means of connectivity	Cost of Living Rise of Unemployment and In Work Poverty Low Income Rurality	Number of children and young people engaging in digital learning activities regularly Monitoring of online learning and engagement
Test flexible childcare model	All children and their families in the North Mainland of Shetland	<b>Lead:</b> Director of Children's Services, Council <b>Partners:</b> Third Sector, ZetTrans, Council	Time commitment, as part of substantive roles. Additional resources to be secured using external funding.	Unsuccessful bid for external funding	Cost of Living Rise of Unemployment and In Work Poverty	Monitoring and Evaluation Framework to developed as part of project development
Embed Shetland's Children's Partnership	All children and their families, particularly those who are vulnerable / living in poverty / low income	<b>Lead:</b> Director of Children's Services, Council <b>Partners:</b> NHS Shetland, Police Scotland, Third Sector, Council	Time commitment, as part of substantive roles.	Quarterly meetings established from April 2020 Assessed strategic priorities, in line with new legislation and COVID-19 impacts Initiated review of the Partnership	All drivers, by taking a family-centred, holistic and flexible approach	Attendance at meetings Impact of activity
Emotional Wellbeing and Resilience Project delivery of the National Trauma Training Plan	Vulnerable children	<b>Lead:</b> Director of Children's Services, Council <b>Partners:</b> NHS Shetland, Voluntary	Project staff funded from Shetland Islands Council Spend to Save budget	Rollout of National Trauma Training Plan	Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACEs)	Trauma informed and trauma responsive services Number of service improvement projects to support

		Action Shetland, Police				trauma responsive services
Stigma: upskilling staff (links with Money Worries training)	All children and their families, particularly those who are vulnerable / living in poverty / low income	<b>Lead:</b> Director of Children’s Services, Council  <b>Partners:</b> all	Staff time, within substantive roles.	Held up, due to COVID pressures	Cost of Living Rise of Unemployment and In Work Poverty Low Income Rurality	Staff engaging with workshops. Follow up with participants re: changes in practice. Referrals from services to CAB. Review outcomes of self-assessment tool chosen when pilot underway.
Stigma: community awareness				Planned approach held up, due to COVID pressures. However, pandemic has led to some de-stigmatisation		Annual Population Survey Instances of public communications discussing Child Poverty
Stigma: organisational (for example, delivering the vision from the 2020 Anchor Workshops / Money Proofing / Cost of the School Day / Voices for Equity)				Ongoing: to inform training and encourage engagement of service leads, placing tackling poverty and inequalities at centre of improvement work.		Engagement with workshops and data shared, evidenced changes in practice through case studies and experience reports of staff and service users

## Actions planned for 2021/22

Action e.g. new services offered, increasing flexibility of existing services	Group (s) the action is intended to reduce poverty amongst e.g. who is service targeted at and who is using it?	Who action is carried out by e.g. list of all partners involved in action	Resources allocated	Timescale for action	Poverty driver (s) the action is intended to impact	How impact has / will be assessed
Deliver Seminar to Elected Members and Shetland Partnership, on Poverty and Inequality	All those people in Shetland facing poor outcomes because of inequalities, including children living in poverty	<b>Lead:</b> Chief Executive, Council <b>Partners:</b> Council, Highlands and Islands Enterprise, Police Scotland, NHS Shetland, SFRS, Northern Alliance	Staff time, within substantive roles	Seminars by September 2021 Follow up Sessions on: attainment, early action, fuel poverty & energy, community wealth building by December 2021 Follow up actions to be included in Shetland Partnership Delivery Plan review	Rise of Out of Work and In Work Poverty Cost of Living	Understanding and use of research (at local and national level)
Improve collection and use of data sources, such as FSM, SCG, DHP, CTR, SWF, as key baseline data	All those people in Shetland facing poor outcomes because of inequalities, including children living in poverty	<b>Lead:</b> Policy Manager, SIC <b>Partners:</b> NHS Shetland, Highlands and Islands Enterprise, Council	Staff time, within substantive roles	Data collection by August 2021	Rise of Out of Work and In Work Poverty Cost of Living	Understanding and use of research (at local and national level)
Voices for Change established and implemented, in parallel with the Government's Social Advisory Panel	Young people and families, particularly those at important transition points / newly vulnerable as a result of COVID-19	<b>Lead:</b> Policy Manager, Council <b>Partners:</b> Council, Highlands and Islands Enterprise, Police Scotland, NHS	Re-purposed budget from within Community Planning and Development, Council	Complete project by October 2021	Hours Worked Per Household Skills and Training Labour Market	Number of learning matches Evaluation report based on project outcomes

Action e.g. new services offered, increasing flexibility of existing services	Group (s) the action is intended to reduce poverty amongst e.g. who is service targeted at and who is using it?	Who action is carried out by e.g. list of all partners involved in action	Resources allocated	Timescale for action	Poverty driver (s) the action is intended to impact	How impact has / will be assessed
		Shetland, SFRS, Third Sector				
Investment of funding and resources to support economic development activity	All those people in Shetland facing poor outcomes because of inequalities, including children living in poverty	<b>Lead:</b> Director of Development Services, Council <b>Partners:</b> Council, Highlands and Islands Enterprise, Private Sector	Investment of funding and staff time	10 Year Plan refresh, during 2021/22	All drivers	Economic output Jobs created
Strengthen strategic linkages between Child Poverty and Economic Development, for example, through Fair Work and Community Wealth Building	Low income families with children	<b>Lead:</b> Director of Development Services, Council <b>Partners:</b> Council, Highlands and Islands Enterprise, Private Sector	Staff time, within substantive roles	Consideration within Delivery Planning for Shetland Partnership Plan, approval early 2022	Cost of Living	Reducing Child Poverty is driver for economic development policy and approach
Understand role as employers, e.g. through Living Wage Accreditation, Procurement, referrals to money and energy advice services, with commitment to action for 2022/23	Low income families with children	<b>Lead:</b> Director of Development Services, Council <b>Partners:</b> Council, Highlands and Islands Enterprise, Police Scotland, NHS Shetland, SFRS,	Staff time, within substantive roles	Assessment, December 2021 Actions agreed, March 2022	Cost of Living	Audit of approach by 5 statutory community planning partners (Living Wage, Procurement, Referral routes) Action Plan in place

Action e.g. new services offered, increasing flexibility of existing services	Group (s) the action is intended to reduce poverty amongst e.g. who is service targeted at and who is using it?	Who action is carried out by e.g. list of all partners involved in action	Resources allocated	Timescale for action	Poverty driver (s) the action is intended to impact	How impact has / will be assessed
Develop strategic linkages between Child Poverty and the Local Housing Strategy	Low income families with children	<b>Lead:</b> Executive Manager, Housing, Council <b>Partners:</b> Highlands and Islands Enterprise, Council, NHS Shetland, Hjaltland Housing Association	Staff time, within substantive roles	Consideration within LHS Planning, approval early 2022	Cost of Living	Reducing Child Poverty is driver for housing policy and approach
Right Support, Right Time: one application to access all Council administered benefits	Low income families with children	<b>Lead:</b> Director of Children's Services, Council	Staff time, within substantive roles	March 2022	Reach of Benefits Information Low Uptake of Benefits	One system to access Free School Meals / School Clothing Grants / Council Tax Reduction and Housing Benefit
Right Support, Right Time: communication campaign, including awareness of affordable credit	Low income families with children	<b>Lead:</b> Policy Manager, SIC <b>Partners:</b> NHS Shetland, Highlands and Islands Enterprise, Council	Staff time, within substantive roles and CP&D budget for external support	Spring and Summer 2021: External support to develop messaging and communication campaign	Cost of Living Rise of Out of Work and In Work Poverty	Members of the community aware of support available to them  Community awareness of ethical loan opportunities
Proactive support to those impacted upon by economic	All children and their families, living in poverty / low income	<b>Lead:</b> Director of Development Services, Council	Employability Team and time commitment from	New staff started July 2021	Rise in Unemployment and Underemployment as	Number of people supported into employment

Action e.g. new services offered, increasing flexibility of existing services	Group (s) the action is intended to reduce poverty amongst e.g. who is service targeted at and who is using it?	Who action is carried out by e.g. list of all partners involved in action	Resources allocated	Timescale for action	Poverty driver (s) the action is intended to impact	How impact has / will be assessed
downturn, including developing access to employment opportunities through national employment schemes e.g. Kickstart and Youth Employment Guarantee.		<b>Partners:</b> Highlands and Islands Enterprise, Skills Development Scotland, College, Council and Developing the young workforce	partners as part of substantive roles Dedicated Parental Employability Support Fund Worker employed	Induction complete, August 2021 Term 1 onwards: engagement with parents, through groups and schools, putting in place support through the Pathway.	a result of COVID-19 as well as ongoing barriers to employment faced by the people we will be supporting.	Number of people supported into more financially stable employment
Money-Proofing Policies: Concessionary Scheme	All children and their families, living in poverty / low income	<b>Lead:</b> Policy Manager, SIC <b>Partners:</b> NHS Shetland, Highlands and Islands Enterprise, Council	Time commitment, as part of substantive roles / CP&D, SIC budget to commission external support	September 2021: commission research into concessionary fares scheme, and implementability, to conclude in December 2021	Cost of Living Rise of In Work Poverty Silo Policy Making	Understanding of issues and drivers of child poverty, amongst policy leads Examples of changes in policy, as a result
Money-Proofing Policies: Cost of the School Day	All children and their families, living in poverty / low income	<b>Lead:</b> Executive Manager - Inclusion, SIC <b>Partners:</b> NHS Shetland, Highlands and Islands Enterprise, Council		Cost of the School Day evidenced in all School Improvement Plans by September 2021	Cost of Living Rise of Out of Work and In Work Poverty	Number and percentage of School Improvement Plans evidencing COSD
Fair Food: continue to respond to emergency food	All children and their families, living in poverty / low income,	<b>Lead:</b> Chief Social Work Officer, Council	Time commitment, as part of substantive roles	Ongoing, as part of Emergency Planning response	Cost of Living Rise of Out of Work and In Work Poverty	No known food needs

Action e.g. new services offered, increasing flexibility of existing services	Group (s) the action is intended to reduce poverty amongst e.g. who is service targeted at and who is using it?	Who action is carried out by e.g. list of all partners involved in action	Resources allocated	Timescale for action	Poverty driver (s) the action is intended to impact	How impact has / will be assessed
needs, including Food Larders	impacted up on by COVID-19	<b>Partners:</b> NHS Shetland, Highlands and Islands Enterprise, Council, Third Sector		Linking with Fuelbank / skills development to manage household budgets / financial support & energy advice / food growing		Referrals to Citizens Advice Bureau
Fair Food: aspiration is to eradicate Food Poverty in Shetland	All children and their families, living in poverty / low income	<b>Lead:</b> Policy Manager, Council <b>Partners:</b> Communities, Transition Turrifield, NHS Shetland, Council	Time commitment, as part of substantive roles. Additional resources secured using external funding.	As per Fair Food Strategy and Grow Shetland Project	Cost of Living Rise of In Work Poverty Welfare Reforms Risk of Food Bank becoming Institutionalised	Demand for Food Bank, from Families Area of land used for local food consumption
Anchor – Early Action (links with Money Worries / Cost of the School Day / The Promise)	Vulnerable families	<b>Lead:</b> Early Action Programme Board <b>Partners:</b> across the Shetland Partnership	Staff time, within substantive roles. £321,000 from Big Lottery to invest in catalyst of change	June 2021: evaluation of Anchor Yr 2 and Early Help Team, to inform future developments August 2021: commence Yr 3 of Anchor, in collaboration with The Promise	All drivers, by taking a family-centred, holistic and flexible approach	Detailed monitoring framework under-development to measure outcomes for families and for our system

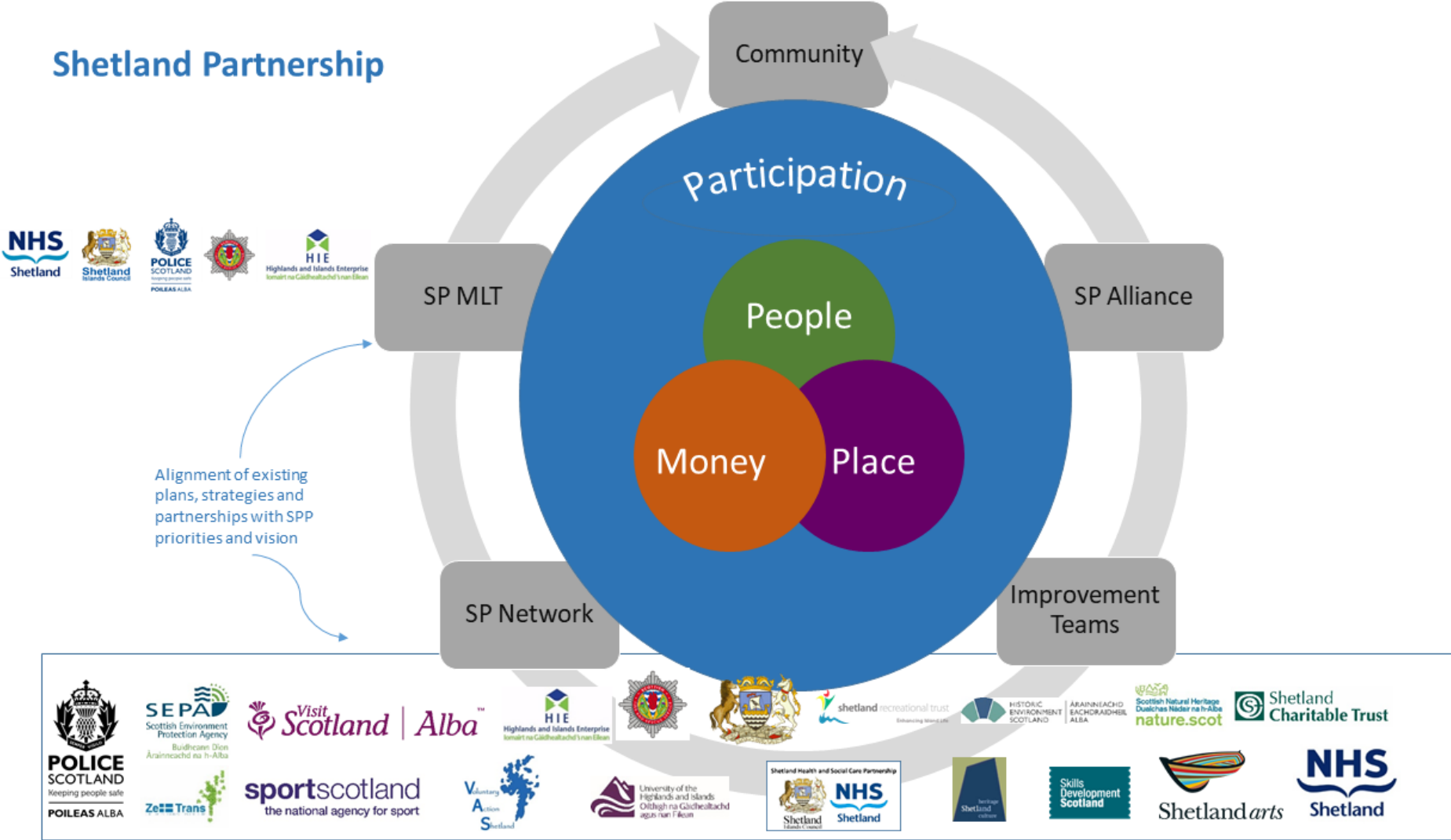


Action e.g. new services offered, increasing flexibility of existing services	Group (s) the action is intended to reduce poverty amongst e.g. who is service targeted at and who is using it?	Who action is carried out by e.g. list of all partners involved in action	Resources allocated	Timescale for action	Poverty driver (s) the action is intended to impact	How impact has / will be assessed
Evaluation of impact of Pupil Equity Fund	Children living in poverty Vulnerable families	<b>Lead:</b> Director of Children's Services, Council	Staff time, within substantive roles	November 2021 (for academic year 2020/21)	All drivers, by taking a family-centred, holistic and flexible approach	Monitoring of impact of PEF spend through: -attainment -participation -engagement -attendance -inclusion
Digital Divide Access to digital devices and software Equity of access to current broadband	All children and their families, particularly those who are vulnerable / living in poverty / low income	<b>Lead:</b> Director of Children's Services, Council <b>Partners:</b> Northern Alliance	Time commitment, as part of substantive roles. Additional resources to be secured using external funding	November 2021: approval and implementation of Digital Teaching and Learning Strategy for Shetland	Cost of Living Rise of Unemployment and In Work Poverty Low Income Rurality	Number of children and young people engaging in digital learning activities regularly Monitoring of online learning and engagement
Embed Shetland's Children's Partnership, by refining role and priorities	All children and their families, particularly those who are vulnerable / living in poverty / low income	<b>Lead:</b> Director of Acute Services and Nursing, NHS Shetland <b>Partners:</b> NHS Shetland, Police Scotland, Third Sector, Council	Time commitment, as part of substantive roles.	Series of workshops, underway, to conclude by September 2021	All drivers, by taking a family-centred, holistic and flexible approach	Alignment of Strategic Priorities and Interventions Knowledge of impact of activity through implementation of Performance Management Framework.

Action e.g. new services offered, increasing flexibility of existing services	Group (s) the action is intended to reduce poverty amongst e.g. who is service targeted at and who is using it?	Who action is carried out by e.g. list of all partners involved in action	Resources allocated	Timescale for action	Poverty driver (s) the action is intended to impact	How impact has / will be assessed
						Targeted investment in developing community understanding that child poverty is a children's rights issue.
Stigma: community awareness	All children and their families, particularly those who are vulnerable / living in poverty / low income	<b>Lead:</b> Director of Children's Services, Council <b>Partners:</b> all	Staff time, within substantive roles.	August 2021 to March 2022: as part of Early Action Programme Communications Plan	Cost of Living Rise of Unemployment and In Work Poverty Low Income Rurality	Instances of public communications discussing Child Poverty

# APPENDIX 3: STRATEGIC DIAGRAM OF SHETLAND PARTNERS

## Shetland Partnership



# APPENDIX 4: Shetland's Food Larder



Food Larder - Early Help Team  
Sept 2020 - April 2021



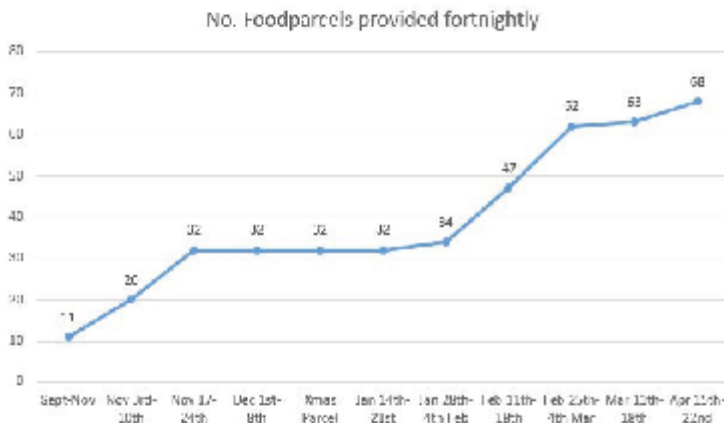
Food Larders were established through schools in response to what families we were working with needed at the start of the pandemic. Many were struggling to pay for everyday items due to their financial circumstances; some had been furloughed, some made redundant, others had not had a change to their income but had felt more able to ask for help.

We contacted schools and asked for them to speak to families who were receiving Free School Meals (FSM) to see if they were interested in having a food parcel or needed some clothes. Others come to us through word of mouth; we have also seen folk requesting food parcels from outwith the school community.



### Young Mums and Turrieveg Veg Boxes

We teamed up with local growing initiative to provide fresh, locally grown veg boxes to families fortnightly. Feedback was overwhelmingly positive. Families enjoyed trying new veg to cook with and were delighted to get help to reduce the cost of family food bills.



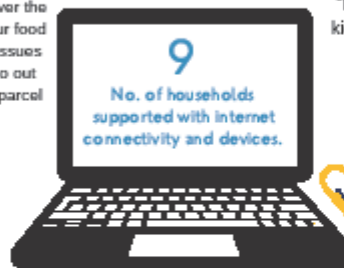
### Reasons for Need:

- Fuel Poverty
- In-work Poverty
- Reduced income due to maternity leave
- Redundancy
- Furlough
- Anxiety due to COVID
- Ill-Health/Shielding

"I am one of the lucky people to have had help from you over the coronavirus period, honestly you've no idea how much your food parcels have really helped me, I suffer from a few health issues one of which is depression and anxiety at times I didn't go out the house for weeks at a time so having the extras in the parcel really really helped" Foodparcel Recipient



Individuals not connected to a school, have been supported in the wider-community through word of mouth.



"I've felt less stressed and anxious putting the kids back to school since they've got new stuff" Food, Clothes and Footwear Recipient



Schools have been connected to families receiving foodparcel and support for clothes

### Snapshot

Alice lives with her son, Jack. Alice has been unable to work due to health concerns and has been shielding. Alice feels very isolated, the pandemic has worsened her anxiety and she doesn't feel confident leaving her house.

She is overwhelmed with the cost of her heating and following a review of her benefits, there is no further financial support available for her. She feels frustrated and desperate.

Anchor has provided regular calls to Alice and supported the household to get a laptop and clothes.

19 households have accessed our Clothes Store



If you need help, don't sit and struggle; everyone struggles sometime and those are the times you need to ask for help. I'm not the kind of person to ask - it's one of the hardest things I've had to do. But the help has been amazing - I won't always need it but it's something I've needed at this time.

Food, clothes and Footwear Recipient

"This has really helped us out and stopped us having to borrow more money from my Mum."

Food, Clothes and Footwear Recipient

# APPENDIX 5: Shetland Islands Council – Ensuring Equity Event, Outputs



Shetland Islands Council

**Building a brighter future together**



## Ensuring Equity

October 2020

**Achieving equity:**  
ensuring every child has the same opportunity to succeed, with a particular focus on closing the poverty-related attainment gap.  
National Improvement Framework

**How do we know?** 

Enthusiastic and engaged learners

Data - attendance and lateness, attainment, participation, engagement, inclusion

Qualitative data

Feedback



**Technology**

- ★ Provision of devices
- ★ Blogs
- ★ Developing skills for all
- ★ Homework set online



**Schools and Families**

**What is working well?** 

- ✓ Knowing our learners, families and communities
- ✓ Using a range of wellbeing supports - counselling, mindfulness, lego therapy, staff training
- ✓ Targeted programmes for numeracy, literacy and health and wellbeing
- ✓ Tracking wider achievement
- ✓ Supportive culture and ethos - in our schools, in our communities and across Children's Services.

Clear, regular communication

Responsive and creative solutions

Positive relationships

Partnerships - Anchor, Early Help Team



Sudden changes in family circumstances

COVID-19 restrictions - limits to who can be in school

Staffing

Knowing appropriate partners to support

Bureaucratic processes and referrals

Time

Stigma and pride - perceptions, small communities, uptake of free school meals, accessing relevant supports.



Cost of the School Day

Attainment Scotland Fund

Participatory Budgeting

### Points to consider:

- To what extent is there a shared understanding of equity across all staff?
- How are we using data effectively to plan and monitor interventions?
- How confident are we that our interventions and approaches, whether universal or targeted, are leading to improvement? Do we change our approaches if they are not having the intended impact?
- How are we regularly collecting evidence of the impact of our interventions and approaches?
- How effectively are we at differentiating learning and teaching, and using strategies to address the socioeconomic challenges and barriers faced by children and young people?

### USEFUL LINKS

[National Improvement Framework](#)

[Delivering Excellence and Equity in Scottish Education](#)

[How good is our school?](#)

[Interventions for Equity](#)

[Sac Evaluation Resource](#)

[Education Endowment Foundation](#)

\*Information collated from school managers Promoting Equity Week discussion October 2020

Information can on request be made available in Braille, on tape, in large print and in different languages (русский, 汉语, evsjv, Polski, ภาษาไทย, Español, Magyar).

For further information please telephone Children's Services on:

01595 743967, or email [education.and.social.services@shetland.gov.uk](mailto:education.and.social.services@shetland.gov.uk)



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