

ITEM No ...4.....

REPORT TO: POLICY & RESOURCES COMMITTEE – 4 JUNE 2018
REPORT ON: DUNDEE FAIRNESS ACTION PLAN PROGRESS REPORT
REPORT BY: CHIEF EXECUTIVE
REPORT NO: 132-2018

1. PURPOSE OF REPORT

1.1 This report updates Committee on the progress of the Fairness Action Plan for Dundee.

2. RECOMMENDATIONS

2.1 It is recommended that Committee notes the contents of this report.

3. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

3.1 There are no additional financial implications for Council revenue budget contained in this report.

4. BACKGROUND

4.1 Dundee City Council and the Dundee Partnership adopted the revised Fairness Action Plan for Dundee in November 2016 (Article IV of the Minute of the Policy & Resources Committee on 14 November 2016 refers). The previous update was presented in August 2017 (Article III of the Minute of the Policy and Resources Committee on 21 August 2017 refers)

4.2 The key actions were group under six strategic themes and progress is being achieved within each of these:

a) Stigma and Social Inclusion

- The second Dundee Fairness Commission was established in June 2017. It is jointly funded by the Scottish Government and the Dundee Partnership and members include a number of local people with lived experience of issues related to poverty, together with 'civic' commissioners including Councillors Alexander and Marra. Three subgroups are currently investigating issues identified as their top three priorities. The **Stigma** group is looking at existing and potential measures to challenge negative attitudes and behaviours towards people in poverty from the general public, service users and service providers. The **Mental Health** group is considering access to, and experience of mental health services, especially as these relate to poverty as a cause and consequence of poor mental health. The **Money** group has had an early success by influencing the preparations for the recruitment of front-line staff to be employed by the new Social Security Scotland agency to be headquartered in Dundee. The commission is scheduled to make final recommendations in autumn 2018.
- Already In 2018, 85 frontline staff from a range of services have participated in poverty sensitivity training aiming to improve service delivery. A Health Inequalities and Prevention toolkit training session was also developed and is reaching staff across the Health and Social Care Partnership. From January 2017, 41 of these sessions have been held with a total of 553 participants.
- The Recovery Friendly Lochee initiative aims to reduce the impact of stigma upon people recovering from a range of negative outcomes by working with local people, businesses and services. An ambassador scheme has been launched along with a well-received training programme that will be offered on a city-wide basis during 2017/18.

b) Work and Wages

- Dundee City Council has been nominated for a 2018 Living Wage Champions Award in the Local Authority Leadership category. Winners will be announced in June. The Poverty Alliance is finalising the criteria and process for accrediting a place as a Living Wage City. Dundee has been selected as a test site and officers are to work with the Poverty Alliance and their partners, Rocket Science, to pursue accreditation. The current number of Living Wage accredited organisations based or headquartered in Dundee now stands at 46.
- In association with local trades unions, Dundee City Council has developed a Fair Work Charter based on the principles in the Fair Work Framework by the Fair Work Convention as part of its remit to make fair work a hallmark of Scotland's workplaces. This will be presented to Policy and Resources Committee on 4 June 2018 for approval. The Council will also encourage other employers in Dundee to adopt Fair Work Charters.
- As part of the city's efforts to support the establishment of Social Security Scotland in Dundee, employability partners including Skills Development Scotland and Job Centre Plus organised a jobs fair in the City Quay in March. Employers included BT, Sleeperz, Gowrie Care, the Shared Apprenticeship Programme and Social Security Scotland itself. Extensive support was offered to enable pupils and adults to attend including transportation costs and assistance. Over 800 people aged from 16-63 attended from postcodes ranging from DD1 to DD11. Employer feedback was overwhelmingly positive and all employers are keen to be involved in any further events.

c) Benefit, Advice and Support

- As mentioned above, the Social Security Scotland HQ is to be established in Dundee. In making the announcement regarding the choice of location, the First Minister for Scotland cited the quality of partnership working in the city as a significant factor. This will provide a unique opportunity to influence the shape and delivery of the service to reflect the proactive and values based approach taken in Dundee to support those who find themselves requiring access to benefits.
- The Dundee Money Action project was launched on 14 March 2018. This new service provides free financial help to people having problems with debt, heating their homes or saving for their future. It is funded through a £3million Big Lottery Fund Scotland/ ESF Programme contract to deliver Financial Inclusion support to the most disadvantaged individuals and households in Dundee over a 3 year period. The project is being driven through a council led partnership including the following organisations from the third sector – Citizens Advice Dundee, The Wise Group, the Brooksbank Centre, Shelter Dundee, Discovery Credit Union and SCARF. The project aims to engage with 4950 people in total, and to support 2141 people. Priority clients include lone parents, people who are out of work or those households on low incomes. Services will be available throughout the city in community settings including the Lochee Community Hub, Brooksbank Centre, Ninewells Hospital concourse and the Mitchell Street Centre.
- Income maximisation support for citizens of Dundee continues to be provided through the improved model of advice that saw different Council teams come together as part of an overall service redesign. Council Advice Services now offer income maximisation and debt advice support through a dedicated advice telephone line (Welfare Rights), Community outreach venues (Connect), energy efficiency checks (DEEAP) and links to the employability pipeline (Making Money Work). The Scottish Welfare Fund service also works holistically with clients in crisis or moving back into the community from care, linking them into the above services in order to successfully claim correct entitlements. A full welfare reform update will be presented to Policy and Resources Committee on 4 June 2018.

- In 2017/18 Council Advice Services successfully claimed benefits (as at 15th May 2018) worth over £10 million, up 28% from 2016/17. Increased gains have resulted due to increased demand for income maximisation from the public, closer working between the aforementioned advice teams and innovative initiatives placing advice staff in new stigma free settings. Co-location of advice in primary care has resulted in 48,905 patients of 7 Dundee GP practices now having access to benefits advice in their own surgery when needed. This allows GPs and health professionals in those practices to ensure that they are able to concentrate more on patients' clinical needs. An Improvement Service Social Return on investment report suggested that every £1 invested this service generates up to £50 in social and health and wellbeing benefits for patients and stakeholders of the service. Establishment of an advice hub in the Ninewells Hospital concourse setting has also facilitated the introduction of extremely successful advice sessions within cancer oncology wards by the Council's Macmillan funded Welfare Rights staff. The introduction of co-located advice staff in Dundee Jobcentre has also allowed citizens to have easy access to independent advice in order to settle any issues around Universal Credit or traditional legacy benefits administered by the DWP.

d) Closing the Education Gap

- A full report on the progress being achieved through the Scottish Attainment Challenge was presented to Committee in May (Article V of the Minute of the Children and Families Service Committee on 14 May 2018 refers). This highlighted the range of improving indicators across the three priorities for the Attainment Challenge: literacy, numeracy and health & wellbeing.
- Further reports to the same committee presented proposals regarding the provision of free sanitary products in schools from August 2018 following engagement with pupils and key stakeholders, and also the introduction of an ambitious but manageable practice model for children and families services in the Lochee community supported by £100,000 from the Hunter Foundation and BBC Children in Need (Articles II and III of the Minute of the Children and Families Service Committee on 14 May 2018 refer)
- The Aspire Dundee Project is being evaluated by the University of Dundee. The third instalment of this evaluation into the impact of the programme will be published in spring 2018. The draft report identifies no major areas of concern and highlights a number of key strengths including that the programme promotes readiness for learning; opportunities for wider achievement; increased attendance and reduced exclusion; increased confidence and self-esteem in children and young people; high levels of motivation
- The Big Noise project held its launch concert and began in-school delivery in September 2017. 286 pupils from primary 1-3 in St. Pius and Claypotts Castle primary schools have participated in sessions. Nursery sessions started in October for around 150 children each week and an after school programme began after the Easter holidays. A community programme is underway with engagement at local groups and meetings.
- The BREAKTHROUGH project launched in September 2017 with the aim of helping change the lives of care experienced and disadvantaged secondary school aged young people through a mentoring approach and also offering work and learning experiences. BREAKTHROUGH aims to work in partnership with all 8 Dundee secondary schools and currently is based in Morgan Academy and St Paul's RC High and over 80 young people are currently engaging with the charity. BREAKTHROUGH will launch in a further 4 secondary schools in September 2018.
- The Cost of the School Day project has completed its first year of work in 11 primary schools, 2 secondary schools and 2 early years' centres. Its key recommendations for schools and the council address aspects of school including breakfast clubs, school lunches, uniform, school trips and homework. The full report will be presented to the

Council's Children and Families Committee in June 2018. Phase two of the project has been confirmed which will focus predominantly on supporting schools to adopt and implement action plans to remove school costs and address other financial barriers that stop children and families fully participating in the opportunities that school life offers.

e) Housing and Communities (including Food, Fuel and Funeral Poverty)

- Scottish Household Survey data over the last 8 years confirms a 7% reduction in the overall levels of fuel poverty in Dundee. Although at 35% this remains higher than the Scottish average of 31%, the scale of the reduction – particularly in social housing and pre-war flats suggests that the External Wall Insulation Programme is beginning to have a real impact. Investment of over £40m has delivered External Wall Insulation to approx. 3300 (Council and private) properties in the last 5 years.
- Following a successful bid to the Scottish Government's Social Innovation Fund, a steering group of partners has been developing proposals for an advocacy and support service for the recently bereaved who may be at risk of generating debt due to the cost of funeral services. A follow up bid has been submitted for up to £134k to pilot this service. With the support of Dundee Social Enterprise Network, a new organisation will be formed to manage this and trustees have recently been recruited for this purpose. The council is also to develop a complementary proposal for an affordable and dignified funeral service delivered in partnership with local funeral directors based on a widely admired scheme managed by East Ayrshire Council
- Xplore Dundee, Stagecoach East Scotland, Moffat and Williamson and the Council offered discounted bus travel to children and families over the Easter holiday. This followed a successful *Kids Travel for 20p* pilot that supported hundreds of journeys throughout 2017 and has been rolled over into 2018.
- Following a workshop arranged by voluntary organisations who offer outreach services to rough sleepers and street beggars, council officers are preparing a review of strategic and operational responses to these issues and other associated factors including substance misuse and poor mental health. This will form the basis for further engagement with stakeholders to identify positive responses to this complex behaviour.
- Oxfam, the Poverty Alliance and Nourish Scotland are working with local partners including the third sector to make it easier for people in a crisis to access financial support so they do not need to rely on foodbanks. The work is being shaped through an action learning approach that will enable local workers to identify innovative ways to support to widen access to money and debt services and help people to claim benefits.

f) Improving Health

- The Dundee Drug Misuse Commission was launched at a Dundee Partnership Forum conference on 26 March 2018. The Scottish Government's Minister for Public Health and Sport, Aileen Campbell, attended to offer support and spoke of the emerging new Drug Strategy for Scotland. The Commission will be chaired by Dr Robert Peat and will include members with a wealth of experience and expertise from public, voluntary, academic and treatment backgrounds. It will consider the extent and impact of drug misuse and drug deaths, scrutinise local practice and services, identify best practice examples and recommend practical and achievable action. The work is expected to take up to a year and the fact finding stage of the process began in April. A major engagement process will gather the lived experience of people who have accessed services and their families and communities and a call for evidence from all interested parties has been issued.
- The Sources of Support social prescribing service in Dundee has secured additional funding from the Scottish Government to increase the scheme from 3 link workers covering 4 GP practices to 12 link workers covering 16 practices. Discussions continue with GP practices and GP clusters. For the full year 2016/17, 256 referrals were

received from GPs and 220 patients were seen by Link Workers. These posts are to be integrated into the new General Medical Service contract and discussions are underway on the best way to embed link workers as part of primary care multi-disciplinary teams.

- The Scottish Government recently launched a consultation on the draft strategy for 'A Connected Scotland: Tackling social isolation and loneliness and building stronger social connections.' This sought views on how communities can build on the work of the Scottish Government and lead on ensuring those at risk of becoming lonely or isolated have access to the right support networks. Consideration will also be given to how the issues examined by Glasgow's Campaign to End Loneliness can be addressed in Dundee.
- 4.3 While the context continues to be difficult due to the ongoing impact of welfare reform and the social challenges caused by poverty and low incomes, across the Fairness Action Plan, a number of key milestones have been achieved and many are still in progress. In anticipation of the second Fairness Commission's recommendations later in the year, plans are in place to review and refresh the action plan early in 2019 to set out improvements to be achieved over the life of the current Council Plan.

5 FAIRER SCOTLAND DUTY

- 5.1 The Fairer Scotland Duty, part one of the Equality Scotland Act 2010 comes into force in Scotland from April 2018. It places a legal responsibility on particular public bodies (including local authorities) to actively consider how they can reduce inequalities of outcome caused by socio-economic disadvantage when making strategic decisions. Non-statutory interim guidance was published on 27 March 2018. The duty will be subject to a three year implementation phase.
- 5.2 Due to an early commitment to tackling poverty in the city, Dundee is well prepared for the forthcoming socio-economic duty, much of which was effectively anticipated in actions completed or underway. During the development of the council's Integrated Impact Assessment tool and reporting process, socioeconomic factors were included alongside environmental, equality and diversity and risk management assessments. As a result, the council's strategic decision-making currently pays due regard to the impact policies, resources and services will impact on vulnerable people and communities.
- 5.3 A full report on the new Fairer Scotland Duty, an assessment of any implications for the council and any action required to fully implement the duty over the next three years will be prepared for the Policy and Resources Committee after the summer recess.

6 CHILD POVERTY DELIVERY PLAN

- 6.1 The Child Poverty (Scotland) Act 2017 introduced a series of statutory income targets to measure reduction in child poverty in Scotland by 2030 together with interim targets to be met in the year beginning 1 April 2023:

Statutory Income Targets 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

Interim Targets to be achieved in 2023/24

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

- 6.2 The Act also places a duty on local authorities and health boards to jointly report annually on activity they are taking, and will take, to reduce child poverty. The Local Child Poverty Action

Report must be published and submitted to the Scottish Government by 30 June each year from 2019. 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.”

- 6.3 The partnership working and planning associated with the Dundee Fairness Strategy will form an effective basis for the production of this plan. Community planning partners will collaborate accordingly and the first Local Child Poverty Action Report will be presented to the Policy and Resources Committee in June 2019. This will be prepared by the Chief Executive’s Service on behalf of the Council.

7. POLICY IMPLICATIONS

- 7.1 The last Fairness Action Plan Progress Report (2012-2017) was subject to an assessment of any impacts on Equality & Diversity, Fairness & Poverty, Environment and Corporate Risk and no further assessment is required as a result of the contents of this report. A copy of the Impact Assessment is available on the Council’s website at www.dundee.gov.uk/jia
- 7.2 The progress presented in this report and all actions in the Fairness Plan for Dundee will make an impact on reducing the levels of poverty experienced by people in Dundee.

8. CONSULTATIONS

The Council Management Team was consulted in the preparation of this report.

9. BACKGROUND PAPERS

- 8.1 None

David R Martin
Chief Executive

..... 25/05/2018