







# East Renfrewshire Local Child Poverty Action Plan

2019-2020 (Year 2)

We want all children in East Renfrewshire to experience a stable and secure childhood and succeed. This is a summary of the actions we are taking in East Renfrewshire to reduce child poverty. This includes what we have done in 2019-2020 and what we plan to do in 2020-2021, to increase family incomes and reduce costs.

The actions are reported under three areas:

- Income from employment
- Income from social security and benefits in kind
- Costs of living

It is important to note that the actions taken were prior to the Covid-19 pandemic. The future actions were set at a time of responding to the crisis and therefore are subject to change.

We will use local and national data to monitor progress.



### PROFILE OF EAST RENFREWSHIRE

East Renfrewshire has a proportionately large population of children living in the area and a proportionately low level of child poverty in comparison to the national average. However, there is disparity in levels of poverty across the authority; varying from around one in twenty children living in poverty in the more affluent areas, to almost one in three in the less affluent areas.

The proportion of children living in poverty in East Renfrewshire is lower than the Scottish average, and comparable with the family group of Local Government Benchmarking Framework



#### **INCOME FROM EMPLOYMENT**

Unemployment rates and the proportion of workless households are lower in East Renfrewshire than the Scottish average, however we are already seeing a rise in the rate since COVID with further increases anticipated.

East Renfrewshire residents receive the highest average weekly full time pay in Scotland. However, residents are unlikely to be employed locally as those working in East Renfrewshire have the lowest weekly pay in the benchmarking group, with many workers earning less than the living wage.

What we have done in 2019-2020



Brought 10 new City Deal Community Benefits jobs to the area, including 2 new apprenticeships



Supported 3 foundation apprenticeships and 66 skills and training opportunities created and targeted at low income families



Recruited 19 Modern Apprentices, including 2 lone parents



Supported 8 care experienced young people to participate in a traineeship programme



Hosted 3 jobs fairs which included local employers in care provision, hospitality and retail



Continued work towards becoming a Living Wage accredited employer and continued to encourage local employers to adopt Fair Work practices



Employed a Parental Employability Support Office to promote and provide a programme to support parents to progress in employment and address any barriers

What we intend to do in 2020-2021

Review council
procurement and
community benefit
processes to maximise
focus and contribution
to fair work

Wage Action Group to develop and deliver an action plan to increase the number of local businesses with real Living Wage accreditation Implement a local model of the Parental Employability Support programme to increase skills, income, new employment and sustained employment

Map, review and promote in-work support programmes to low income families

### INCOME FROM SOCIAL SECURITY AND BENEFITS IN KIND

East Renfrewshire residents are less likely than the Scottish average to receive income from social security and benefits

1900 individuals are claiming for out-of-work benefits

This rate in East Renfrewshire (3.3%) is lower than the Scottish average of 5.4% and 330 of these claimants were between the ages of 16 and 24. 7.6%

Within East Renfrewshire 7.6% of all primary pupils from P4 to P7 were registered for free school meals, this increased from 7.4% in 2016 and is lower than the Scottish average of 17.1%.

7.2% 5 14.4%

In secondary schools 7.2% of pupils are registered for free school meals, which is, again, lower than the Scottish average of 14.4%, this figure has reduced steadily every year since 2012 when 9.8% of pupils were receiving free school meals.

#### What we have done in 2019-2020



Supported 775 successful claimants of the new Best Start Grant, equating to over £220,000 of payments



Provided money advice and income maximisation support to over 2,000 clients resulting in a total financial gain in excess of £6 million



Introduced a new direct referral process to the Money Advice and Rights Team for and tenant in arrears



Provided all families in receipt of Free School Meals with details about other potential entitlements



Delivered poverty awareness training to over 120 frontline staff



Provided benefits and income maximisation support staff, parents and young people within schools



Arranged a fee waiver for 29 families attending an Additional Support Needs holiday programme

What we intend to do in 2020-2021

Provide all Parental Employability Support clients with specific budgeting support and better-off calculations Promote money advice and suppor services to parents through educations settings and third sector partners

Deliver poverty training to frontline staff to improve awareness and use of referral process

What we have done in 2019-2020



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Completed 45 units as part of new build programme 2018-2024, including 23 of these aimed specifically at families



Supported volunteers to provide Food Shares in Dunterlie and Thornliebank in partnership with Fare Share



Established a partnership humanitarian response to Covid-19 offering weekly home delivered food parcels, free school meals, shopping support services and prescription delivery support



Piloted a breakfast 'Grab n Go' initiative in Barrhead High to provide free breakfasts of toast and fruit to all pupils in partnership



Delivered the expansion of free early learning and childcare from 600 to 1140 hours for every 3 and 4 year old and entitled 2 year old



Undertaken 2 transport studies to consider how we can make the area's transport links more accessible, attractive and seamless

What we intend to do in 2020-2021

Increase supporto to tackle food

**COSTS OF LIVING** 

Review housing allocation policies and rental charges to provide more affordable housing to vulnerable groups

Develop household fuel advice and guides to reduce energy costs for vulnerable residents Enhance the Pupil Equity Funding reporting to include the impact of interventions to reduce the cost of the school day

## **Useful contacts**

If you have money worries, you can contact our Money Advice and Rights Team on: mart@eastrenfrewshire.gov.uk or 0141 577 8420

If you need employment support, you can contact Work East Ren on: worker@eastrenfrewshire.gov.uk or 0141 577 8438

## Have your say

We would love to hear your opinions on the work we are doing to reduce child poverty. We are keen to get feedback on the actions we are taking and your ideas about other areas for action.

listening@eastrenfrewshire.gov.uk or 0141 577 4011