

**STRATEGIC DELIVERY PARTNERSHIP UPDATE**

**COMMUNITY PLANNING BOARD OF 20<sup>TH</sup> APRIL 2023**



**FINANICAL INCLUSION SDP**

**Date of last meeting: 28<sup>th</sup> March 2023**

**CURRENT ISSUES OF CONCERN/CHALLENGES REQUIRING SUPPORT FROM THE SDP CHAIRS EXECUTIVE:**

n/a

**MAIN CURRENT FOCUS OF THE SDP**

Main areas of focus are financial hardship and raising awareness of entitlements/grants available, opportunities through the Ayrshire Growth deal, employability and lifelong learning, and implementation of the Local Child Poverty Action Plan Report.

**PROGRESS UPDATE (INCLUDING AREAS OF SUCCESS)**

Since the last CP Board, there have been two meetings of the SDP on the 8<sup>th</sup> February and 28<sup>th</sup> March. Key areas of progress arising from this meeting includes:

**COST-OF-LIVING CRISIS INCLUDING FUEL AND FOOD POVERTY**

The SDP continues to have extensive discussions on the cost-of-living crisis, and what, as community planning partners, we can do to mitigate the cost-of-living crisis to support our communities further (as highlighted in previous updates). Cosy Spaces in South Ayrshire continue to be well attended with the diary being updated regularly [South Ayrshire's Cosy Spaces Directory by Voluntary Action South Ayrshire - Issuu](#)

Fuel and food poverty continue to be standing agenda items for the SDP. The Community Food Network advised that the South Ayrshire Food pantries continue to be well used with memberships increasing across all three locations. All three Pantries await funding updates as current funding ends at the end of March 2023. Membership is capped at 800 people for Ayr Pantry, 450 at Maybole and is still open in Girvan. Challenges continue around meeting need with demand and opening up memberships again, however this would require more food and additional funding. The impact of the Pantries is significant within communities with the Ayr Pantry reporting that they had their highest number of shops in one day as 77. It was also reported that there has been a 40% increase in demand for Food Banks since last April and 881 boxes have been given out this year alone. In the last 6 months the Foodbank has given 10 tons of surplus food to other organisations, including pantries. Donations have stayed at previous levels but since demand has increased staff have had to top up from funds. Food poverty is getting worse and there are still many people who are struggling but do not come forward for help. The Household Boost fund has been designed to support vulnerable households alleviate pressure on household budgets as the cost-of-living crisis escalates. Before progressing to grant application, claimants are provided with a budgeting assessment to identify potential areas to save/reduce or offer debt solutions as well as a benefit check to maximise their current income before progressing to grant application. Applications are limited to one per household. Demand for the fund is exceptionally high and to date 743 households have received £200,300.00 in total of grant payments to date.

**EMPLOYABILITY AND LIFELONG LEARNING PARTNERSHIP**

Discussions are taking place on the development of plans for the UK Prosperity Fund which is replacing the old ESF Fund (which is around Employability particularly Employability support for adults, support people facing redundancy). Plans are continually being developed and will be a continuation from April and onwards. Multiply, which is the new fund, will be targeting numeracy and will be managed by Thriving Communities. Employability partners are in preparation to be ready to support anyone facing redundancy.

### **Financial Inclusion SDP Workshop Session**

The meeting of the SDP on the 28<sup>th</sup> March took the form of an information workshop session to allow members to hear presentations from a number of partners outlining a collaborative approach to financial inclusion and the work taking place to improve outcomes for our local communities including financial support provided to empower communities as a result of the cost of living crisis:

- Thriving Communities Service, South Ayrshire Council
- [Local Employability Partnership](#)
- [Wallacetown Community Energy Project](#)
- [Information Advice Hub](#)
- [Energy Agency](#)

Also in attendance were members of the Financial Inclusion Member Officer Working Group.

### **KEY ISSUES**

- Refresh of the Local Child Poverty Action plan in light of the new National Child Poverty plan;
- Continued implementation of the delivery plan for Period Products (Free Provision) (Scotland) Act 2021;
- Provide the Community Planning Board with an update on Ayrshire Growth Deal and Community Wealth Building (and in particular how community wealth building ties in with place-planning and regeneration);
- Continue to make connections within the SDP and members on support available to our local communities because of the cost-of-living crisis; and
- Continued progress of the Strategic Action Plan.

### **UPDATE ON ACTION TO SUPPORT THE LOIP/PLACE PLANS**

The SDP will support the strategic theme of 'Closing the Poverty Related Outcomes Gap' through the child poverty action plan and Employability and Lifelong Learning Partnership.

### **Report Completed by:**

**Officer: Jamie Tait /Susan McCardie**

**Date: April 2023**