



Community Planning Partnership Board

West Lothian Civic Centre
Howden South Road
LIVINGSTON
EH54 6FF

18 August 2022

A virtual meeting of the **Community Planning Partnership Board** of West Lothian Council will be held within the **MS Teams Virtual Meeting Room** on **Monday 22 August 2022** at **10:00am**.

For Chief Executive

BUSINESS

Public Session

1. Apologies for Absence.
2. Declarations of Interest - Members must declare any interests they have in the items of business for consideration at the meeting, identifying the relevant agenda items and the nature of their interests.
3. Order of Business, including notice of urgent business and declarations of interest in any urgent business.
4. Confirm Draft Minute of Meeting of the Community Planning Partnership Board held on 21 February 2022 (herewith).
5. Local Outcomes Improvement Plan - report by Susan Gordon, Community Planning Development Officer (herewith).
6. Cost of Living - A National Perspective - report by Neil Cowan, The Poverty Alliance (to follow).
7. West Lothian Foodbank - Presentation by Steven Turnbull, West Lothian Foodbank (herewith).
8. Cost of Living & Poverty in West Lothian - report by Gillian Pearson, Financial Inclusion Manager (to follow).

DATA LABEL: Public

9. COVID Data Set - report by Michael Davis, Performance Officer (herewith).
10. Anti-Poverty Reports -
 - (a) West Lothian Anti-Poverty Strategy: End of Year Report 2021/22 and Proposed Action Plan for 2022/23 - report by Nahid Hanif, Anti-Poverty Manager (herewith).
 - (b) Anti-Poverty Task Force - report by Nahid Hanif, Anti-Poverty Manager (herewith).
11. Community Justice Outcome Activity Across Scotland Local Area Annual Return Report 2021-22 - report by Fiona MacKenzie, EEI/Community Justice Lead (herewith).

NOTE **For further information please contact Lorraine McGrorty on 01506 281609 or email lorraine.mcgrorty@westlothian.gov.uk**

MINUTE of MEETING of the COMMUNITY PLANNING PARTNERSHIP BOARD
held within MS TEAMS VIRTUAL MEETING ROOM, on 21 FEBRUARY 2022.

Present –

Councillor Kirsteen Sullivan (Chair)	West Lothian Council
Councillor Tom Conn	West Lothian Council
Councillor Andrew McGuire	West Lothian Council
Graham Hope (Chief Executive)	West Lothian Council
Elaine Cook (Depute Chief Executive)	West Lothian Council
Graeme Struthers (Depute Chief Executive)	West Lothian Council
Julie Whitelaw	West Lothian Council
Craig McCorriston	West Lothian Council
Alice Mitchell	West Lothian Council
Alison White	Integration Joint Board
Katie Dee	NHS Lothian
Ashley Goodfellow	NHS Lothian
Jackie Galbraith	West Lothian College
David Sharp	Scottish Fire and Rescue Service
Steven Michie	Scottish Fire and Rescue Service
Chief Inspector Alun Williams	Police Scotland
Dave McCallum	Skills Development Scotland
Jonathan Pryce	Scottish Government
Tim Dent	West Lothian Leisure
Alan McCloskey	Voluntary Sector Gateway
Karen Morrison	NatureScot
Gill Jardine	Jobcentre Plus
Mark McMullen	Scottish Enterprise
John Sives	Joint Forum of Community Councils

In Attendance –

Susan Gordon	West Lothian Council
Jim Henderson	West Lothian Council
James Cameron	West Lothian Council
Jill Staniforth	West Lothian Council
Dougie Grierson	West Lothian Council
Nahid Hanif	West Lothian Council

Apologies –

Councillor Moira Shemilt	West Lothian Council
Charles Wardman	West Lothian Chamber of Commerce
Brenda Cumming	West Lothian Chamber of Commerce

1. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest made.

2. MINUTE

The Board confirmed the Minute of its meeting held on 15 November 2021. The Minute was thereafter signed by the Chair.

3. ECONOMIC REVIEW

The Board received a comprehensive presentation from Jill Staniforth on the West Lothian Economic Review that covered the following topics:

Economic Outlook;
Labour Market/Employability;
Living Standards;
Skills (including Upskilling/Retraining); and
Business Feedback.

The Board then considered a report providing further information and statistics on the current Economic Review that had been conducted to assess the economic impact of the Covid-19 pandemic on the West Lothian economy.

It was recommended that the Board note the development and outcome of the Economic Review 2021/22.

Decision

To note the terms of the presentation and report.

4. THEMATIC FORUM UPDATES

The Board received an informative presentation from the Lead Officers of each of the Board's Thematic Forums setting out their achievements, lessons learned to date and the planned work and priorities for each Forum from 2022 onwards.

It was recommended that the Board note the terms of the presentations.

Decision

To note the presentation.

5. LOCAL OUTCOMES IMPROVEMENT PLAN

The Board received a report providing an update on the review process of the Local Outcomes Improvement Plan.

It was recommended that the Board:-

- (i) Note the update on progress with the new LOIP;
- (ii) Note and agree the considerations as part of the review process;
and
- (iii) Consider and discuss the questions circulated prior to the Board to inform the development of the LOIP.

Due to time restraints, a separate focus session would be arranged to allow partners to provide their views on the questions circulated to inform the development of the new LOIP

Decision

To note the terms of the report.

6. CPP COVID-19 DATASET

The Board received a report presenting the latest data within the CPP Covid-19 sentinel dataset for information.

It was recommended that the Board note the dataset.

Decision

To note the Covid-19 dataset update.

7. DATES OF NEXT MEETINGS

To agree that meetings of the Board would take place on the following dates:-

14th June 2022 at 2pm

22nd August at 10am

21 November at 10am

Local Outcomes Improvement Plan

1. Purpose of Report

To update the CPP Board on the review process of the Local Outcomes Improvement Plan.

2. Recommendations

The CPP Board is asked to:

- Note the update on progress with the new LOIP;
- Agree the high-level pillars of the LOIP and key focus areas
- Agree next steps

3. Discussion

Background

It was agreed at the Steering Group held in November 2021 that work should resume on the review of the Local Outcomes Improvement Plan. The review process which started in 2019 was postponed in early 2020 due to COVID-19.

The LOIP should demonstrate the added value that can be delivered by the CPP over and above individual partner plans. The LOIP should fill any gaps identified and focus on the partnership activities that are not already being delivered.

It is intended that the significant work already carried out to develop the draft LOIP and LOIP Delivery Plan should be built on, rather than develop a new LOIP from scratch.

LOIP Review Process

The review process has built on the significant work that had already been carried out to develop the LOIP in 2019. Discussions have allowed partners and key stakeholders the opportunity to reflect on and review the original outcomes and priority areas and refocus where necessary to reflect the current context.

From December 2021 there have been a number of discussions in relation to the development of the LOIP; These have included CPP Partner strategic discussions with key stakeholders and officers, through the CPP Board and Steering Groups, and through one-to one discussions with senior managers. A number of smaller focus group discussions have also taken place focusing on the individual outcomes of the LOIP. These discussions have informed the development of the four pillars of the LOIP that are being proposed, and the key areas of focus within these. These are based upon the original focus areas and outcomes that had been developed prior to COVID-19.

In developing the pillars and focus areas of work, it was recognised that it is important to focus on what can be done differently as a partnership, what the partnership can do more efficiently and effectively, whilst not replicating work that is already ongoing in

these areas of work currently. A small number of priority areas of work have been identified where each priority addresses inequalities and is based on partnership action.

The main areas of focus of the LOIP remain broadly the same, however there are a number of themes and issues that may now feature more consistently through the LOIP and potentially provide more focus for activity of the CPP than originally anticipated as a result of COVID-19. The guiding principles of prevention, inclusiveness, community resilience and empowerment, and tackling inequalities are even more significant in the present context.

LOIP Pillars

The LOIP pillars can be found in Appendix 1, with the relevant outcomes and key focus areas of work detailed in Appendix 2.

The four pillars are:

- Creating skills and jobs
- Improving health and wellbeing
- Creating net zero carbon communities
- Creating affordable and sustainable housing

Within these pillars are key focus areas of work that will relate to the added value that the partnership can bring collaboratively, whilst not duplicating activity that is currently ongoing.

Public Consultation

It is proposed that a period of consultation is carried out in relation to the LOIP. It is recognised, however that there may be a number of other consultations being planned by West Lothian Council and other partners, therefore consideration needs to be given as to the most appropriate way to do this.

The purpose of this consultation is to raise awareness of the focus areas of the new LOIP, how they were developed and to gain a better understanding of these issues from a local perspective. Using existing locality planning structures and networks will be key to this process, strengthening the link between the LOIP and how this will be delivered at a local level. The refreshment of the LOIP provides a significant opportunity to ensure that the CPP's Locality Plans are fit for purpose and deliver the LOIP at local level.

Delivery Plans

It is proposed that the LOIP will be underpinned by LOIP Delivery Plans which will set out the detail of the actions that will be taken forward to achieve the outcomes in the LOIP. These will be taken forward by the relevant thematic forum within the CPP structure. It is recognised that robust governance arrangements and delivery mechanisms are required to ensure that the outcomes and actions set out in the LOIP delivery plan are delivered and achieved. This may involve looking at the roles and

remits of the groups within the structure, ensuring that there is consistency and clarity on the role of sub-groups in relation to the LOIP, and clear accountability and reporting arrangements in order to monitor activity on a regular basis. It is also important that the LOIP is delivered at a local level therefore a review of local Regeneration Plans, which are the CPP's Locality Plans will take place to ensure that the plans are a robust mechanism for delivering the LOIP at a local level.

The Place Principle & Community Wealth Building

Discussions also highlighted the importance of 'Place' as a central element from which all other pillars hang. Taking a place-based approach means working collaboratively, and allows the partnership to understand the interconnections and relationships between issues in West Lothian, and will help to identify collaborative action. The Place Principle, adopted by the Scottish Government and COSLA aims to help overcome organisational and sectoral boundaries and to encourage better collaboration and community involvement which aligns with what Community Planning seeks to achieve. Using place as the lens through which we look at West Lothian and those key issues that the LOIP aims to tackle, encourages a more integrated, collaborative and participative approach to how the CPP works together to achieve the shared vision for West Lothian.

West Lothian are currently developing their Community Wealth Building approach which will be embedded through the LOIP. This approach will be a key way that the CPP can achieve the long-term vision and outcomes that will be set out in the LOIP, particularly around tackling inequalities and building local economic resilience. The CWB Action Plan that is being developed will support and enable services, partners and communities to work in partnership to build a strong and resilient local economy – a key focus of the LOIP.

Next Steps

Work has begun on scoping out how engagement and consultation will be carried out in local areas. Focused sessions have also been planned with appropriate thematic forums and focus groups to develop the LOIP delivery plans and performance information.

August	CPP Board discussion – agreement of LOIP Pillars
August/September	Thematic Forum sessions to develop delivery plan actions/performance information
September-December	Engagement work linking to local regeneration areas through a place-based approach
November	CPP Board – Update on engagement & delivery plans presented to Board
February 2023	Final version of LOIP reported to the Board for sign off

4. Summary of Implications

Relevant LOIP outcome (s)	ALL
Relevant LOIP performance indicator (s)	ALL
Resources	The new LOIP will be developed within existing resources
Link to prevention/community engagement	The new LOIP will be informed by robust community engagement and will have a focus on preventative activity that can only be achieved in partnership
Impact on inequalities	The LOIP's key focus will be to tackle inequalities
Key risks	N/A

5. Consultations

Engagement with both partners and communities is currently being undertaken to ensure the LOIP reflects an up to date understanding of local needs and opportunities.

6. Conclusions

A significant number of discussions have taken place with key stakeholders and officers, through the CPP Board and Steering Groups, and one-to one discussion with senior managers, and smaller focus groups which have informed the development of the LOIP.

Report written by/contact details/date

Susan Gordon, Community Planning Development Officer, August 2022

susan.gordon@westlothian.gov.uk

References

N/A

Appendices: Appendix 1 - LOIP Pillars

Appendix 2 – LOIP Outcomes and focus areas

Prevention

Inclusiveness

**IMPROVING
HEALTH &
WELLBEING**

**CREATING
SKILLS &
JOBS**

West Lothian is a
place where
everyone who
lives, works, learns & does
business has an
improved quality
of life

**CREATING
NET ZERO
CARBON
COMMUNITIES**

**CREATING
AFFORDABLE &
SUSTAINABLE
HOUSING**

Community
Resilience &
empowerment

Tackling
inequalities

CREATING SKILLS & JOBS

West Lothian delivers sustainable, inclusive and diverse economic growth enabling businesses to create good quality jobs that everyone can access

- Attracting good quality jobs
- Addressing the skills gap & skilling up our young people to access future jobs
- Tackling in-work poverty/reskilling the workforce

IMPROVING HEALTH & WELLBEING

West Lothian is a place where everyone has the opportunity to enhance their mental and physical health and wellbeing

- Developing a preventative approach to population level mental wellbeing
- Developing a preventative approach around alcohol (availability, environment, culture, attitudes)
- Taking a whole systems approach to improving the food and physical activity environment

CREATING AFFORDABLE & SUSTAINABLE HOUSING

Everyone has access to appropriate, affordable and sustainable housing which meets their needs

- Provision of the right kind of housing that meets the needs of individuals, families and communities
- Develop messages around housing options and choices
- Developing a strategic, preventative approach to homelessness

CREATING NET ZERO CARBON COMMUNITIES

Everyone who lives, works and delivers services in West Lothian builds a sustainable, nature rich, net zero carbon community

- Developing a partnership approach to achieving net zero carbon
- Developing nature-based solutions, carbon off-setting and energy generation
- Embedding climate change across sectors/CPP activity (leadership)

WEST LOTHIAN FOODBANK HELPING LOCAL PEOPLE IN CRISIS

West Lothian Foodbank

Aiming to end hunger & poverty in West Lothian

- **Poverty** is where household income does not meet household needs; in Scotland that is typically a household income of less than £333 per week for a household of 3 people.
- **Food insecurity** is where a person is reducing food quantity or skipping meals, and has insufficient resources for a healthy diet.

The Poverty Picture in West Lothian

- ▶ West Lothian has a population of 180,000 people
- ▶ Out of the 32 local authorities in Scotland, West Lothian is the 12th poorest
- ▶ 23% of people in West Lothian are living in poverty
- ▶ That's 42,000 people living in poverty in our area
- ▶ Almost 10,000 of these people are children
- ▶ Children in poverty are, in their lifetime, more likely to achieve lower qualifications, experience chronic illness, mental health issues, substance abuse, unemployment and have a shorter life expectancy

WEST LoTHIAN FOODBANK

HELPING LOCAL PEOPLE IN CRISIS



Trussell Trust

- Started by Christians in Salisbury in 1997 to provide 3 days of emergency food to families waiting for benefits
- Grown to be the largest group of foodbanks in the UK at over 1,300
- Now the wait is 5 weeks for benefits
- National campaigns and lobbying
- £20million funding from ASDA and other support from Tesco, Sainsburys, Morrisons, Waitrose to end UK hunger
- Pathfinders program to find ways to get people out of poverty and not need a foodbank

WEST LoTHIAN FOODBANK
**HELPING LOCAL
PEOPLE IN CRISIS**

Agenda Item 7

November 2012



- West Lothian Foodbank is born!
- One combined distribution point and storage facility at Whitburn Pentecostal Church
- A handful of volunteers
- Supported 20 people in that first month

October 2019



- 11 distribution centres, a charity shop and a central warehouse with offices
- Over 250 volunteers and 7 paid staff
- 150 referral partner agencies
- 5,457 followers on social media
- Provided 270,135 meals to 30,015 people in crisis, as well as toiletries and toys
- Providing dresses/outfits for proms, weddings, funerals, job interviews, etc.
- Providing work experience & training
- Money skills courses



- Closed the 11 distribution centres and opened 2 new ones (charity shop and WLC advice shop)
- Acquired 4 vans and started delivering to people's homes
- 3 warehouses and bought walk-in fridges/freezers, racking systems, pallet lifter, roll on/off scales, wheel bases for crates
- Went from 250 active volunteers to <20
- Went from 7 paid staff to 14
- Went from 150 referral partner agencies to 2
- Appointed as coordinators of West Lothian Food Network
- Set up the Community Food Hub to take donations of surplus food and centrally store purchased food
- Acquired major funding for us and the Network partners
- Started buying food and distributing daily to the network partners
- Added fresh vegetables, fruit, bread, dairy to our food parcels



- Made 6,000 deliveries in 12 months
- Moved to bigger, fit for purpose warehouse and offices
- Went from 14 paid staff to 28
- Grown to 10,000+ followers on social media
- Saved 140T of food going to waste and bought 240T of food through WL Food Network
- Helped West Lothian businesses/households by buying fresh meat, fish, vegetables, fruit, bread
- Started CAP Debt Centre to bring 50 households per year out of debt; teach money skills and budgeting
- Distributed 2,000 boxes of a weeks food for 2 people through track & trace, and emergency provision
- Expanded our food parcels from 3-5 days of food to 5-7 days of food
- West Lothian Food Network has achieved provision of 3,000,000 meals in 24 months (average of 7 meals for 4,092 people per week)

BEFORE



AFTER





- ▶ 357 raised beds for potatoes, carrots, onion, garlic, broccoli and salad leaves
- ▶ Full disabled access
- ▶ Eco friendly



- ▶ Geogrid and gravel paths to stop mud and improve drainage
- ▶ Full disabled access
- ▶ Eco friendly



- ▶ 80 fruit trees in pots
- ▶ Everything grown above ground and existing ground sealed to avoid any potential contamination from past soil use, gas or ground water
- ▶ Input from local experts, businesses and groups



- ▶ Three polly tunnels for growing tomatoes and strawberries in the summer, and salad leaves in the winter
- ▶ Full disabled access
- ▶ Our target overall is to grow 10T of food per year



- ▶ We employ some staff and engage corporate groups
- ▶ We also need an army of volunteers
- ▶ We provide shelter from the rain
- ▶ And some nice places to sit, rest and enjoy your handiwork



West Lothian Community Planning Partnership

YOU have an opportunity to make a positive difference in the lives of thousands of people.

Together, WE will make sure no-one in West Lothian goes hungry and people experience a healthier, better and more equitable life.

Thank you for the opportunity to speak.

THE IMPACT OF THE RISING COST OF LIVING

1. Purpose of Report

The purpose of the report is to inform the Community Planning Partnership Board of the impact of the rising cost of living on poverty in West Lothian.

2. Recommendations

The CPP Board is asked to consider the impact of the cost of living crisis and measures that can be implemented locally to support residents most at risk of poverty and deprivation.

The CPP Board is asked to note the development of a Cost of Living Crisis Conference to be open to partners, the third sector and members of the public with an interest in this area of work to consider how we can best work together to support those households experiencing poverty.

3. Discussion

Background

The impact of the cost of living increase has been felt by large numbers in our society, across many different aspects of life. In August 2022, inflation rose to 10.1%, the highest rate observed in the last 40 years. Communities and services are in a phase of recovery after the COVID-19 pandemic, and real term cuts in earned and benefit income, have all combined to create a precarious financial situation for many households across the UK.

Latest Bank of England forecasts estimate that inflation will continue to rise, peaking at an estimated 10.2% around the fourth quarter of 2022, largely driven by the 54% energy price hike forecast for October 2022.

Drivers of the Crisis

According to research and governing bodies including the Office for National Statistics and the Institute for Government, the main drivers behind the rapidly rising cost of living are;

- Rising oil and gas prices leading to higher domestic energy bills and average petrol prices at an all-time high
- Disruption to global supply chains due to industry shut downs during the pandemic having an impact on production of consumer goods
- Both of these issues have been exacerbated by the war in Ukraine
- Wage growth that does not keep pace with the rate of inflation
- Real term cuts to social security benefits as annual uprating falls far below the rate of inflation and policy changes such as the removal of the £20 per week Universal Credit uplift push more people into poverty

The Bank of England has announced its biggest interest rate increase in 27 years and it has been predicted that the UK will enter recession later this year, forecast to last from the fourth quarter of 2022 through to the fourth quarter of 2023.

Recession is likely to have a significant impact on living standards as inflation climbs and real wages fall sharply in comparison, with those with low wages or benefit income at highest risk. As reported by Forbes, recession usually leads to increased unemployment as businesses try to save money. New graduates and school leavers may also find it more difficult to secure first time jobs.

Forbes has also reported that standards for lending tend to tighten during a recession as more people struggle to keep up with bills. This could mean a requirement for a better credit score or higher deposit to secure credit which could have an impact on the housing market in the longer term. This is also likely to further exacerbate the impact of the 'poverty premium' that causes people with lower income to have to pay more for goods and services than their more affluent counterparts.

Disproportionate Impact

The cost of living crisis has created a rapidly growing disparity between the cost of goods and services, and the amount of disposable incomes that households have. Not everyone has been affected equally with socio-economic factors playing a key role in the individual experience of the current rising cost of living.

1. Low income households

Among the worst affected households are those with low incomes. Households with lower disposable income have less, and often no, flexibility in their budgets to allow them to respond effectively to increased costs.

A recent report by the Resolution Foundation highlights the vulnerability of low-income families as the lowest income ten percent are four times less likely to have a savings buffer than the richest tenth. As a result, arrears of essential bills are more prevalent for lower income households; between 2018 and 2020 8.9% of financial liabilities for the ten percent lowest income families were for bill arrears compared to just 0.3% of the top tenth.

Lower income households also spend disproportionately on energy costs. The Institute for Fiscal Studies research indicates that the poorest tenth of households require 4.8% of their budget for gas, and the worst off tenth of this group spend an average of 12%, meaning the increase in energy prices will be affecting the lowest income group substantially more than others.

Low income households will be particularly vulnerable to the impact of the forecast recession and the National Institute of Economic and Social Research has predicted that a further 1.2 million households will face destitution and the number of households with no savings to fall back on could double to 5.3 million.

2. Families

Research carried out by Loughborough University for The Child Poverty Action Group in 2021 showed:

- The average cost of raising a child in Scotland is around £160,000
- This figure is higher for lone parent families, averaging £190,000
- These estimates include the cost of rent and childcare. With these costs removed, the average cost of raising a child still exceeds £75,000
- Lone parents in or out of work and couples not in paid employment are less likely to have enough income to cover the minimum cost of living.

The cost of living crisis is likely to further exacerbate financial strain on families. Research conducted by Loughborough University and funded by the Joseph Rowntree foundation indicates that families are spending an extra 9.3% on food over the past year and spending in the region of an extra £120 on energy bills each month. Childcare costs have also increased by about 6.7%, or an average of £65 per month, and increases in the cost of petrol have resulted in an average additional spend of £90 on transport.

The culmination of these increases, is that the basic costs of a UK family with two children has increased by £400 per month, an annual rate of 13% in comparison to the official 9% increase.

Lone parent families are at particular risk. Analysis of the Office for National Statistics figures shows that families have lower savings pots generally and there is a particular disparity between the overall average households' savings of £8,000 and the £400 of single parent households. Single parents have the lowest average net wealth of all demographic groups, causing more chance for reduced financial resilience in the face of rising living costs.

3. People with a disability or long-term health condition

Disability charity, Scope, estimated in a 2019 report that people with disabilities face extra costs of £538 per month for costs including specialist items, equipment and therapies as well as day to day costs such as increased food costs, higher energy bills, travel and insurance costs.

The Trussell Trust has reported that disabled people are over represented in service user demographics with 60% of foodbank users reporting having a disability or long-term health condition.

On average, the extra costs incurred by a disabled person is the equivalent of half their income and Scope has found that income does not tend to stretch as far for a disabled person with every £100 for a non-disabled person being equivalent to just £68 for someone with a disability.

This disparity in income and affordability is likely to be heightened by the rising cost of living leaving disabled people more vulnerable to financial crisis.

4. Minority Ethnic Groups

The New Economics Foundation thinktank recently cautioned that people from Black, Asian and other ethnic minority households may feel the impact of the rising cost of living more acutely than white households. This may be attributed to the fact that BAME households tend to be larger and with a higher proportion of younger household members, resulting in higher living costs with lower average wages.

Research carried out by Censuswide and reported by networking group People Like Us has revealed that more than one third of workers from minority ethnic backgrounds report that their salary will not cover their essential bills and 35% have reported taking on extra consumer debt as a result.

People Like Us has also recently reported that people from minority ethnic backgrounds report less job security than their white co-workers. Research has indicated that ethnic minority workers are almost twice as likely to have had the promise of a promotion or pay rise rescinded compared to those from white backgrounds (19% vs 10%) and 71% feel that their job is likely to be affected by rising prices compared to 54% of white workers.

Support with Living Costs

1. Meal Payments

The Poverty and Inequality Commission believes and advocates that a cash first approach is the most dignified way of helping those in need or in crisis. A number of payments have been administered in West Lothian to provide financial support to low income households.

In 2021/22, parents/guardians of children in receipt of Free School Meals received the following payments

- £3 meal payments have been made to children in receipt of Free School Meals if they cannot attend school due to self-isolating. A total of £13,515 was paid during the 2021/22 period
- £6 was paid to S1 to S6 children on two additional in-service days 31 May/1 June 2021 totalling £15,489
- Holiday meal payments worth £1,242,999 were made to families in receipt of free school meals during the Easter, summer, October and winter breaks.
- £100/£160/£130 pandemic payments/bridging payments worth a total of £3,006,700 have been paid between summer 2021 and spring 2022 to those children who are eligible for free school meals and on a low income.
- £10 spring family support payment worth a total of £54,860 was made to families in receipt of Free School Meals.

Measures have also been put in place to make school meals more accessible. New automated processes have been developed in collaboration with intelligent automation

provider VKY to support the processing of applications for free school meals and clothing grants. The process automatically carries forward records for those re-applying and makes changes to the record to match the information on the application such as change of address, email address or bank details. This has successfully reduced the time spent on processing, resulting in faster outcomes for applicants.

The council has also committed to reducing the cost of school meals for families. The 2022/23 Revenue Budget agreed in February 2022 includes provision to reduce school meal prices by 10% and to ensure that costs remain frozen until 2023.

2. Feeling the Pinch Fund

The Feeling the Pinch fund was delivered between January and March 2022 and offered a cash grant up to a maximum of £300 to those who do not qualify for support elsewhere to help with the cost of essential items or to cover unexpected costs. The Feeling the Pinch fund will reopen in winter 2022.

In total, 360 grants worth over £79,000 in total with an average award of £219 per grant. Almost half of applications (43%) came from households with children and 16% from large families with three or more children.

3. Fuel Grants

One-off payments of £100 are currently being administered to households experiencing fuel poverty or at risk of disconnection from supply. To date, over 1400 households have been supported with grants totalling £147,975.

A new fuel grant was launched in summer 2022 to households with a disabled family member where they have been disproportionately impacted by rising energy costs due to extra costs such as mains powered equipment or the need to keep heating at a constant level.

4. Covid-19 Economic Recovery and Low Income Fund

A range of measures were agreed by Council Executive in April 2022 to address the cost of living crisis through the economic recovery and low income fund allocated to local authorities by Scottish Government. These measures include:

- Funding provided to West Lothian College to support young people undertaking an access course with costs to help them maintain their attendance and continuing education.
- Funding to help new Universal Credit claimants with the cost of digital connectivity to maintain and manage their new claim. Payments of £30 will be administered by Citizens Advice Bureau West Lothian to successful claimants through the Help to Claim service.
- Extra payments to top up Crisis Grant awards for people in fuel crisis
- £80 payments to households in receipt of School Clothing Grant to help with the cost of winter clothes

5. Surplus Food

West Lothian Food Network aims to support low income households who face persistent food insecurity. Since initial launch in spring 2020, membership has grown to form a strong network of 46 local organisations working together to ensure access to good quality nutritious food. This is achieved through the distribution of emergency food parcels, cooked meals and a wide range of fresh, frozen and ambient foods available through community shops and pantries. The network has formed strong working relationships with local businesses and food producers to ensure that over-stocked items and goods approaching sell by date are diverted to community food outlets to provide quality food to local residents at very low cost whilst simultaneously reducing food waste.

Food Network members are undertaking a programme of poverty awareness training to ensure that they can spot signs of poverty and link people with low income with appropriate services to address underlying causes of food insecurity. Referral pathways are in place between food providers and local advice agencies to ensure that low income households are offered a benefit check and support to maximise their income and address problem debt.

6. Increasing Uptake of Entitlements

A number of campaigns have been undertaken to improve uptake of financial and other support with rising living costs, these include:

- A targeted approach between local housing officers and the Advice Shop to refer tenants with a small arrears balance for a full income maximisation check and help to claim Discretionary Housing Payment
- Working in collaboration with schools to promote the new under 22's travel scheme via Group Call and social media. Arrangements have also been put in place with CIS teams to offer appointments to apply for the pass during school summer break.
- Work between the Anti-Poverty Service and Revenues teams to target contact with households with aged council tax debt to ensure that Council Tax Reduction Scheme is in place and that individuals are aware of their options to address their debt.
- Improved use of the Fast Online Referral Tracking system to facilitate targeted campaigns at a local level. The Tenant Grant Fund was successfully implemented using FORT as a shared system to facilitate applications and support from a range of services.

7. On-line Support

A range of digital tools and self-help guides have been produced to improve access to information and support online. These include:

- Online budget planner and self-help tools embedded on relevant council web pages and promoted regularly through social media channels.

- Availability of advice through video conferencing platform Near Me to facilitate face to face advice without the need to travel.
- The West Lothian debt advice forum, a collaborative group of debt and money advice practitioners in West Lothian have jointly produced an online toolkit to direct residents with money worries to a wide range of support services and resources
- Simple online application forms to apply for support through cash grants including Feeling the Pinch and energy grants
- Regular 'Ask the Adviser' sessions on social media to facilitate a further communication channel with the Anti-Poverty Service and to raise awareness of available support

Potential Other forms of Support

In response to rapidly rising energy costs, it has been suggested that there may be an emerging need for 'warm banks', community spaces freely available for people to spend time in a safe, warm environment when they cannot afford to adequately heat their home. Bristol Council is spearheading one such scheme, setting up 'welcoming places' where residents can access a warm space along with food, education support and financial advice. In the first instance, existing service provision such as libraries could be publicised.

Other innovative community responses include:

- Local car share schemes to save money on travel costs and promotion of green travel options including walking and cycling. In West Lothian, the Bike Library enables residents to borrow a bicycle at no cost to people for whom cost is a barrier.
- The Big Help Project in Liverpool provides kits including energy saving lightbulbs, seeds and reusable shopping bags to people at risk of poverty along with access to financial advice and support.
- Reuse and recycling projects including clothing swap shops and furniture upcycling to help people struggling to afford essential items and divert waste from landfill
- Campaigns to use local and digital media to offer hints, tips and advice on how to save energy, save money and access help and support.

Working Together

Community Planning Partners play a crucial role in supporting residents facing poverty and financial crisis by identifying gaps in current service and opportunities for collaborative work.

Areas that partners can work to address include:

Income maximisation

- It is estimated that £15bn of social security benefits go unclaimed every year and 45% of people have never checked their entitlement.
- Life changes such as moving in or out of work, moving in with a partner, relationship breakdown, having children, dependent children reaching adulthood and reaching retirement age are key points where a benefit check is most beneficial.
- People in work are also affected by poverty and the likelihood of people in employment experiencing poverty has increased steadily over the last 25 years.
- Partners can consider ways to link people with appropriate advice and support to check entitlement to social security, particularly at key life stages. Partners should think about their own employees and how to ensure they are aware of and have access to support with money worries .

Energy Costs

- As winter approaches, people may find it more difficult to heat their home and keep their supply of heating and hot water running.
- Partners can work together to ensure that residents have access to appropriate financial support through grants and vouchers. Consideration could be given to the development of community 'warm spaces' with links to holistic advice and support.

Stronger Referral Pathways

- Lack of awareness of availability of advice and support is the main reason why people in financial crisis do not get the support they need.
- The Fast Online Referral Tracking (FORT) system is a fast growing network of advice and support agencies. Quick and easy referrals can be made through the secure online portal and referrers can track the progress of their referral to ensure that support is in place.
- Partners who have not already joined the FORT network can think about the benefits of this system to service delivery and clients. System demonstrations and full onboarding procedures are in place for all potential new partners to the FORT system.

Training

- There have been many changes to the welfare system since the introduction of the Welfare Reform Act in 2012. The nature of welfare advice is now fast paced with several amendments to legislation over the last ten years.
- Universal Credit represents the biggest change to the welfare system in over 40 years. Rules can be complex and challenging to keep up with the impact of changes over time.
- Free training will be delivered between August and October with opportunities for both face to face and online engagement.
- An ongoing programme of poverty awareness training is also delivered by the Anti-Poverty Service. This can be tailored to suit service need and client demographic and can be delivered online or face to face.

- Partners are asked to consider whether training would be beneficial for employees and contact the Anti-Poverty Service to discuss training requirements.

Strengthen Partnerships

West Lothian is an area rich in resource with strong partnership networks that can be further developed and strengthened through continued co-ordination.

- A cost of living conference will be held on 4 October 2022 as part of Challenge Poverty Week. Attendance at this event will provide an opportunity for networking and identifying opportunities for collaborative work
- Partners can consider opportunities to co-ordinate resources and develop new ways of working by exploring opportunities for joint funding applications
- The current Anti-Poverty Strategy will soon reach the end of its lifetime. A full review and refresh of the strategy will be undertaken this year and partners will have opportunities to contribute to consultation and discussion to shape future strategic plans. From the challenges outlined in this report, all partners are asked to consider how to engage with and support people who are facing poverty and potential destitution as a result of rising costs and low income.

Summary of Implications

Relevant LOIP outcome (s)	
Relevant LOIP performance indicator (s)	(SOA1302_13) Percentage of the population who are income deprived (SOA1303_14) Percentage of employees who earn less than the living wage (P:SOA1301_11) Percentage of children in poverty in West Lothian
Resources	
Link to prevention/community engagement	
Impact on inequalities	
Key risks	

4. Consultations

Feedback from the Anti-Poverty Practitioners Network and Experts by Experience panel has been used to inform to content of this report.

5. Conclusions

It is clear that the direct and lasting impact of the rising cost of living will continue to be a concern for many households throughout 2022. Whilst the impact of this crisis can be felt across the board regardless of socio-economic background, the adverse effects of rising costs is greater on households with low income.

Work undertaken in West Lothian through the Community Planning Partnership's Anti-Poverty Strategy has been designed to support households who experience the greatest need, and will continue to adapt to financial pressures that households and communities face in the coming months as the cost of living continues to rise.

There is a clear need for continued local response, building on the strength of local networks and partnerships to support those worst affected by rising costs.

Report written by/contact details/date

Nahid Hanif, Anti-Poverty Manager, Nahid.hanif@westlothian.gov.uk

22 August 2022

References

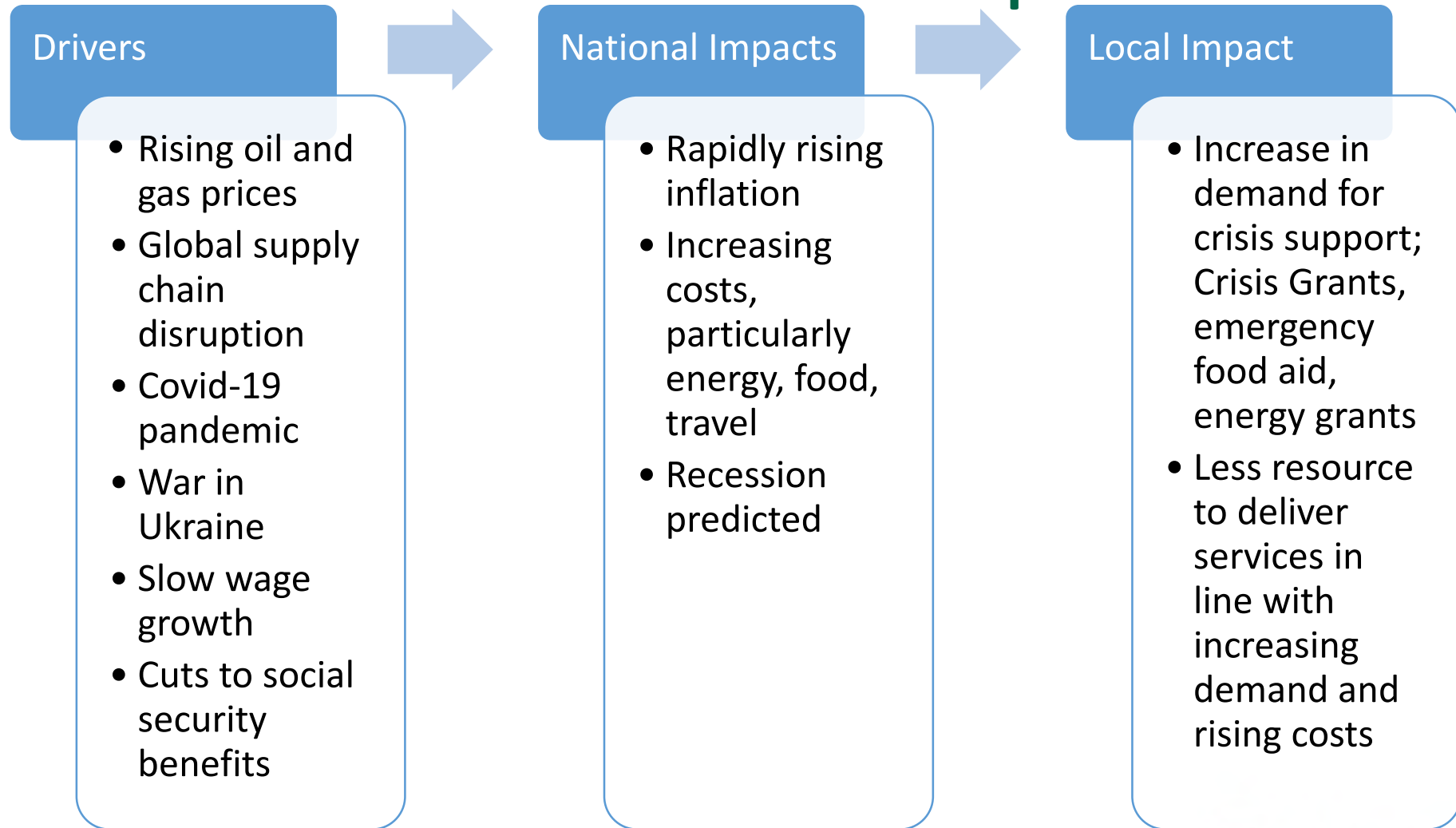
Appendices

Cost of Living Impact

Anti-Poverty Service

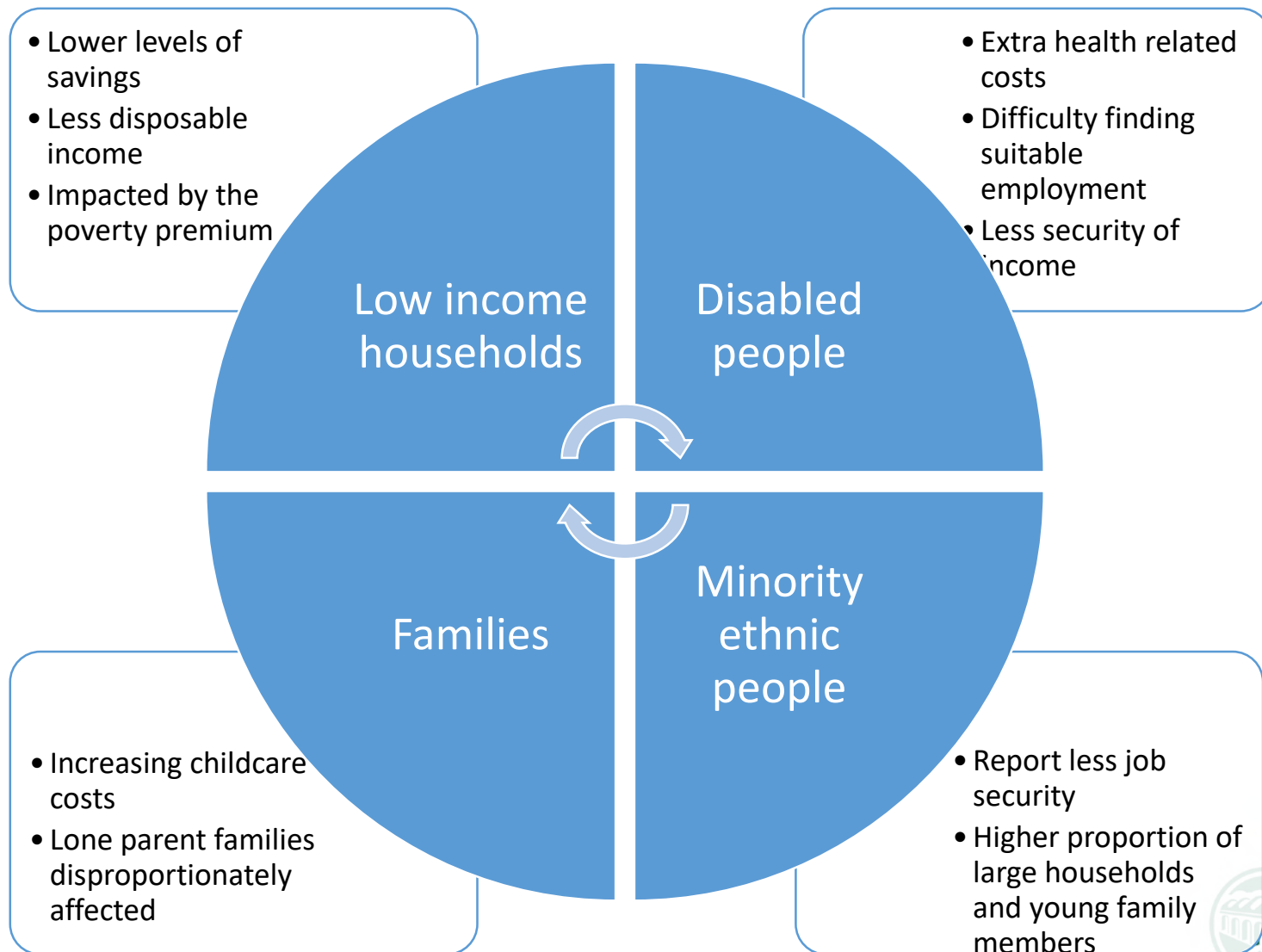
Drivers and Impact

Agenda Item 8



Disproportionate Impact

Agenda Item 8



Local Anti-Poverty Activity

Financial Support Cash first approach

- Feeling the Pinch
- Fuel Grants and crisis grant top up payments
- Holiday meal payments
- Winter clothing grant payment
- Digital connectivity grant in collaboration with CAB West Lothian
- Grants for young students in partnership with West Lothian College

Food Insecurity West Lothian Food Network activity

- Emergency food aid
- Community meals
- Food redistribution through community shops and pantries
- Poverty awareness training
- Clear referral pathways for advice and income maximisation

Digital Support Online tools and resources to improve access to information

- Online self-help budget planner and benefits tool
- Near Me video conferencing platform
- Online applications for financial support and improved automation of processing
- Regular 'Ask the Adviser' sessions through social media

Opportunities

Local Initiatives

- Community 'warm spaces' to address immediate need for people struggling to heat their home during winter
- Build on existing provision such as community hubs or groups to offer added value activity
- How can services work together to achieve this?

Active Referrals

- How can we improve sharing of information and resources to improve awareness of support available?
- Can the Fast Online Referral tracking system support service delivery and help to facilitate active referrals and joined up working?

Strategic Planning

- Cost of Living conference 4th October 2022 - an opportunity to network and consult
- Anti-Poverty Strategy refresh – opportunity for partners to carry out consultation with service users to shape anti-poverty activity going forward
- Service blueprinting – mapping pathways out of poverty and where different services fit in. Which services and organisations have a role to play?

Discussion Points

1. How is your organisation affected by the cost of living crisis?

2. What have you put in place to respond to increasing pressures?

3. How might your service fit in to a joined up local response?

CPP Dataset

1. Purpose of Report

The purpose of the report is to update the CPP Board on the review of the CPP dataset.

2. Recommendations

The Board is asked to;

- Note the proposal to review and update the dataset
- Consider the recommendations for retiring some of the measures
- Discuss how the dataset is used going forward

3. Discussion

The CPP COVID sentinel dataset has been reported on since 2020, primarily to track the impact of COVID-19 on communities. The dataset is updated monthly and provides an early indication of changes to West Lothian society. The current indicators are listed below.

Claimant Count	Council Tax Arrears
Furloughed jobs data	Gender Based Violence
Key business status	Adult/child protection
Food parcel distribution	Homelessness
Scottish Welfare Fund grants	Anti-social behaviour
Education Maintenance Allowance	Fire Crew Resilience
Free School Meals and Free Clothing Grant	Delayed Discharge
Rent Arrears	

It is proposed that the dataset is reviewed and updated in consultation with services and partners. Given that we are now entering a time where COVID restrictions have eased, and many elements of COVID support has come to an end, it is an opportune time to review the measures that are currently included in the dataset to see if they are still fit for purpose, and whether they should still be included. This is to ensure that the dataset is being used in the most appropriate way. The identification of the key measures of performance across the Partnership will also link to the review of the Local Outcomes Improvement Plan so that measuring of performance is consistent.

The Team will work in consultation with key officers and partners to identify the key measures of performance and to consider how the partnership can work to improve performance.

It is important that the information included in the dataset is relevant, has meaning, and allows the partnership to understand and measure the impact on our communities. It is also important that the right measurements are used and the dataset provides a rounded picture of the current situation. Therefore, any refresh of measures should identify, where available, more locally focused performance information as well as overall across the partnership.

At the February Steering Group, it was suggested and agreed that it would be useful to explore what local data was available for each of the measures in order to provide a more detailed picture. Where local data is available, this has been included in the dataset.

The process for gathering performance information from partners and services is also being considered, improving and standardising this will make data easier to work with and actions easier to identify. This is currently being investigated to identify where and how improvements can be made once a new dataset is finalised.

The review will help to create a more consistent and robust way of gathering and presenting analysis of data, allowing for data providers to deliver narrative around any data updates that can then be highlighted to the Steering Group to inform discussion and subsequent actions.

Reviewing the dataset also provides an opportunity to consider how the CPP can maximise the use of data to inform and influence the actions of the CPP more generally, and how this is used in conjunction with other relevant data sources. Taking a more data-driven approach would enable more analysis of the data itself - using the data to shape discussions at CPP meetings and address key issues at a partnership level.

Appendix 1 provides an overview of the current measures included in the dataset, and recommendations on their relevance. Appendix 2 provides an update on the dataset and Appendix 3 provides the supporting narrative.

Summary of Implications

Relevant LOIP outcome (s)	ALL
Relevant LOIP performance indicator (s)	ALL

Resources	N/A
Link to prevention/community engagement	The dataset will help the CPP to shape future activity which will have a focus on prevention
Impact on inequalities	The dataset will help the CPP identify areas of inequality in relation to the indicators that are included.
Key risks	N/A

4. Consultations

The CPP Board were consulted in the development of the dataset. Partners have been involved in discussions around potential additional indicators for inclusion.

5. Conclusions

The Board are asked to note the plan to review and update the dataset as well as improve the process for gathering data intelligence.

Report written by/contact details/date

Michael Davis, Performance Officer, August 2022

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References N/A

Appendices

Appendix 1 – CPP Dataset Overview

Appendix 2 – CPP Dataset

Appendix 3 – Dataset Narrative

Indicator	Description	Ward/Locality Level Data Available	Remove from Dataset	New to Dataset
Claimant Count	General and youth claimant count rates in West Lothian	No	No	No
UC Claimant Count	By region and by in-work and out-of-work claimants	Yes	No	No
Claimant Count Ward	Claimant count by electoral ward/regeneration localities.	Yes	No	No
C Count Dzone Gender Breakdown	No. of claimants in each datazone broken down by gender	Yes	No	Yes
Claimant Count Ward YP Female	Claimant count by regeneration localities broken down by young person (18-24) and gender counts	Yes		No
Job Retention Furloughed	Count of jobs furloughed in West Lothian.	No	Yes	No
Furlough	Count of jobs furloughed in West Lothian broken down by age, sector and gender.	No	Yes	No
SEISS	Count of self-employed supported by the grant in West Lothian	No	Yes	No
Total Employment	RAG status of key businesses in West Lothian	No	No	
PACE Data	Number of redundancies	No	No	Yes
Food Support	Number of emergency food parcels, meal packs, chilled and frozen meals delivered in West Lothian.	No	No	No
Ukrainian Payment	Number of payments and amount paid to Ukrainian refugees and hosts	No	No	Yes
Scottish Welfare Fund	Number of self-isolation applications and amount awarded in Crisis Grant and Community Care Grants.	No	Remove Self-Isolation Grant?	No
Education Maintenance Allowance	Number of EMA payments	No	No	No
Free School Meals/Clothing Grants	Number of FSM and Clothing Grants awarded	No	No	No
Council Tax Arrears	Cumulative percentage collection rates of the total amount due for the year at the end of each month and caseload for Council Tax reduction.	No	No	No
Rent Arrears	Data provided at West Lothian and ward level	Yes	Yes	No

Gender Based Violence	Number of referrals, number of police incidents and % of incidents becoming a crime.		No	No
Adult Protection	Adult protection referrals and outcomes		Yes	No
Child Protection	West Lothian level child protection data		Yes	No
Homelessness	West Lothian level homelessness presentations and length of stay at temporary accommodation	Potentially length of stay data	No	No
Anti-Social Behaviour	ASB incidents reported to WLC Safer Neighbourhood Network broken down by ward.	Yes	No	No
Delayed Discharge	Reason for and total delays in discharge in West Lothian	No	No	No
Crew Resilience	Measuring the impact on local resource availability within West Lothian and the SFRS's ability to maintain service delivery to the communities across West Lothian from both a prevention/protection and response perspective	No	Change indicator?	No

COVID-19 Sentinel Data Set

May 2022

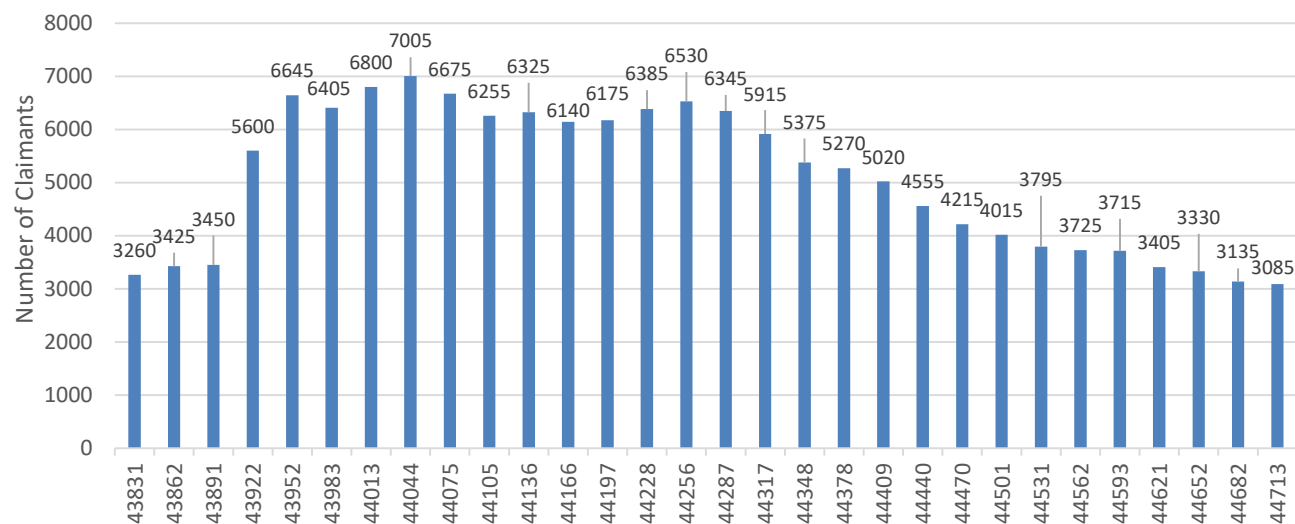


West Lothian
COMMUNITY PLANNING PARTNERSHIP

Claimant Count

	West Lothian claimant count	West Lothian Claimant Rate	Scotland claimant rate
Jun-20	6,405	5.5	6.1
Jul-20	6,800	5.8	6.3
Aug-20	7,005	6.0	6.4
Sep-20	6,675	5.7	6.2
Oct-20	6,255	5.3	5.9
Nov-20	6,325	5.4	6.0
Dec-20	6,200	5.3	5.9
Jan-21	6,175	5.3	5.9
Feb-21	6,385	5.4	6.1
Mar-21	6,530	5.6	6.1
Apr-21	6,345	5.4	5.9
May-21	5,915	5.0	5.5
Jun-21	5,490	4.7	5.2
Jul-21	5,270	4.5	5.0
Aug-21	5,135	4.4	4.9
Sep-21	4,555	3.9	4.5
Oct-21	4,215	3.6	4.2
Nov-21	4,015	3.4	4.1
Dec-21	3,865	3.3	4.0
Jan-22	3,725	3.2	3.9
Feb-22	3,715	3.2	3.9
Mar-22	3,495	3.0	3.8
Apr-22	3,330	2.8	3.5
May-22	3,135	2.7	3.3
Jun-22	3,085	2.6	3.2

West Lothian Claimant Count, January 20 - June 22

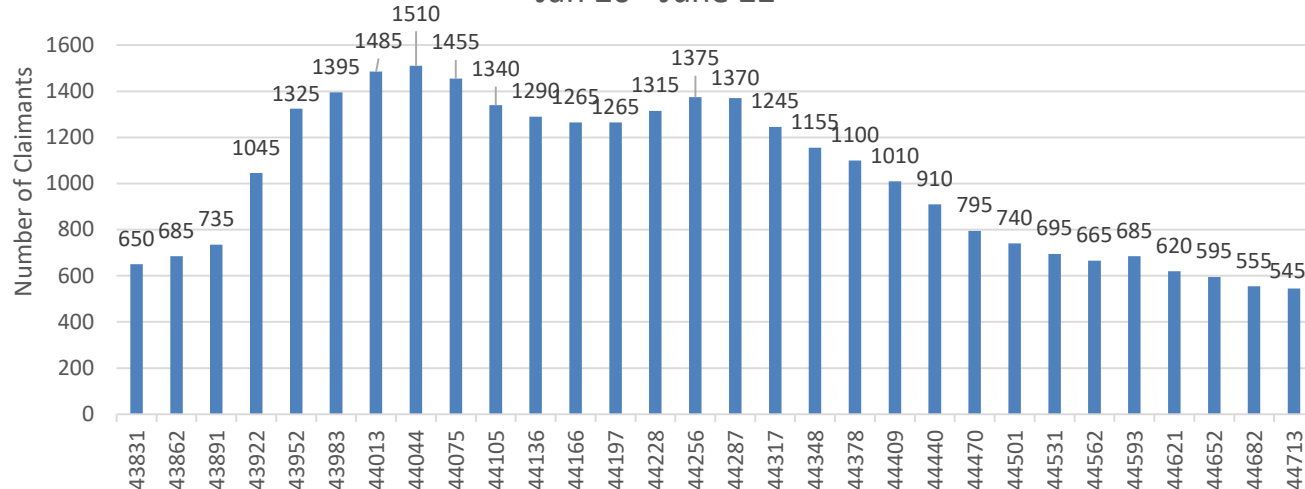


Youth Unemployment

Number of claimants aged 18 -24 in West Lothian

Youth Claimant Count (18-24)	West Lothian claimant count	West Lothian claimant rate	Scotland
Jun-20	1,395	9.9	9.1
Jul-20	1,485	10.6	9.7
Aug-20	1,510	10.7	9.6
Sep-20	1,455	10.3	9.1
Oct-20	1,340	9.5	8.6
Nov-20	1,290	9.2	8.4
Dec-20	1,265	9.0	8.3
Jan-21	1,265	9.0	8.2
Feb-21	1,315	9.4	8.4
Mar-21	1,375	9.9	8.7
Apr-21	1,370	9.9	8.5
May-21	1,245	9.0	7.9
Jun-21	1,170	8.4	7.4
Jul-21	1,100	7.9	7.1
Aug-21	1,040	7.5	6.9
Sep-21	910	6.6	5.8
Oct-21	795	5.7	5.3
Nov-21	740	5.3	5.0
Dec-21	705	5.1	4.8
Jan-22	665	4.8	4.5
Feb-22	685	4.9	4.6
Mar-22	635	4.6	4.5
Apr-22	595	4.3	4.1
May-22	555	4.0	3.9
Jun-22	545	3.9	3.9

West Lothian Youth Claimant Count (18-24yrs),
Jan 20 - June 22



Claimant Count Ward Level

Claimant Count	Armadale and Blackridge		Bathgate		Broxburn, Uphall and Winchburgh		East Livingston and East Calder		Fauldhouse and the Breich Valley		Linlithgow		Livingston North		Livingston South		Whitburn and Blackburn		West Lothian	
	Claimant count	Rate %	Claimant count	Rate %	Claimant count	Rate %	Claimant count	Rate %	Claimant count	Rate %	Claimant count	Rate %	Claimant count	Rate %	Claimant count	Rate %	Claimant count	Rate %	Claimant count	Rate %
Jan-20	280	2.9	445	3.7	345	2.8	380	2.8	385	3.6	125	1.2	295	2.1	455	2.7	555	3.5	3,260	2.8
Feb-20	310	3.2	470	3.9	365	3.0	380	2.8	405	3.8	135	1.3	325	2.3	450	2.6	585	3.7	3,425	2.9
Mar-20	315	3.2	450	3.7	365	3.0	390	2.8	425	3.9	140	1.4	315	2.2	445	2.6	605	3.9	3,450	2.9
Apr-20	505	5.2	770	6.4	630	5.2	660	4.8	640	5.9	245	2.4	545	3.8	690	4.1	915	5.8	5,600	4.8
May-20	580	6.0	915	7.6	760	6.2	800	5.9	730	6.8	305	3.0	685	4.8	835	4.9	1,030	6.5	6,645	5.6
Jun-20	555	5.7	860	7.1	710	5.8	760	5.6	715	6.7	300	3.0	665	4.6	825	4.9	1,015	6.4	6,405	5.4
Jul-20	580	6.0	925	7.6	755	6.2	825	6.0	755	7.0	300	3.0	720	5.0	860	5.1	1,080	6.9	6,800	5.8
Aug-20	610	6.3	945	7.8	760	6.2	835	6.1	765	7.1	335	3.3	760	5.3	900	5.3	1,095	6.9	7,005	6.0
Sep-20	575	5.9	895	7.4	730	6.0	810	5.9	755	7.0	315	3.1	715	5.0	860	5.1	1,025	6.5	6,675	5.7
Oct-20	545	5.6	830	6.9	695	5.7	750	5.5	715	6.7	290	2.8	655	4.6	820	4.8	955	6.1	6,255	5.3
Nov-20	540	5.6	860	7.1	710	5.8	750	5.5	690	6.4	290	2.8	685	4.8	835	4.9	965	6.1	6,325	5.4
Dec-20	535	5.5	835	6.9	685	5.6	725	5.3	685	6.4	275	2.7	650	4.6	810	4.8	935	5.9	6,140	5.2
Jan-21	540	5.5	860	7.1	695	5.7	705	5.2	685	6.4	280	2.8	655	4.6	815	4.8	945	6.0	6,175	5.2
Feb-21	545	5.6	895	7.4	705	5.8	745	5.5	705	6.6	280	2.8	680	4.7	845	5.0	985	6.2	6,385	5.4
Mar-21	570	5.9	905	7.5	740	6.1	755	5.5	725	6.8	280	2.7	710	5.0	855	5.1	980	6.2	6,530	5.5
Apr-21	540	5.5	865	7.1	725	5.9	745	5.5	695	6.5	270	2.7	690	4.8	835	4.9	980	6.2	6,345	5.4
May-21	495	5.1	815	6.8	680	5.6	700	5.1	650	6.0	250	2.5	650	4.5	765	4.5	905	5.8	5,915	5.0
Jun-21	460	4.7	715	5.9	585	4.8	615	4.5	625	5.8	230	2.3	585	4.1	725	4.3	840	5.3	5,375	4.6
Jul-21	460	4.7	700	5.8	575	4.7	610	4.4	580	5.4	220	2.1	565	4.0	710	4.2	855	5.4	5,270	4.5
Aug-21	440	4.5	680	5.6	530	4.4	575	4.2	550	5.1	215	2.1	535	3.7	665	3.9	835	5.3	5,020	4.3
Sep-21	375	3.9	615	5.1	475	3.9	530	3.9	535	5.0	195	1.9	485	3.4	585	3.5	755	4.8	4,555	3.9
Oct-21	365	3.8	575	4.8	455	3.7	470	3.4	500	4.6	180	1.8	420	2.9	540	3.2	710	4.5	4,215	3.6
Nov-21	330	3.4	540	4.5	450	3.7	465	3.4	480	4.5	175	1.7	385	2.7	520	3.1	675	4.3	4,015	3.4
Dec-21	320	3.3	490	4.1	430	3.5	445	3.3	465	4.3	160	1.6	365	2.6	480	2.8	635	4.0	3,795	3.2
Jan-22	310	3.2	485	4.0	420	3.5	445	3.3	460	4.3	160	1.6	365	2.5	455	2.7	625	4.0	3,725	3.2
Feb-22	310	3.2	500	4.1	410	3.4	440	3.2	435	4.1	150	1.5	375	2.6	480	2.8	610	3.9	3,715	3.2
Mar-22	285	2.9	475	3.9	385	3.1	405	3.0	415	3.9	145	1.4	370	2.6	420	2.5	600	3.8	3,495	3.0
Apr-22	280	2.9	440	3.6	365	3.0	380	2.8	385	3.6	150	1.5	325	2.3	415	2.5	595	3.8	3,330	2.8
May-22	265	2.7	420	3.5	350	2.9	380	2.8	375	3.5	125	1.2	300	2.1	385	2.3	555	3.5	3,150	2.7
Jun-22	265	2.7	420	3.5	350	2.9	380	2.8	375	3.5	125	1.2	300	2.1	385	2.3	555	3.5	3,150	2.7



Food Support

Month	No. Food Support Provided
May	3,830
June	4,137
July	4,097
August	3,516
September	3,021
October	3,759
November	4,044
December	4,828
January	4,620
February	4,553
March	4,374
April	4,218
May	3,951
June	3,939
July	3,533
August	3,793
September	3,875
October	4,021
November	4,104
December	4,664
January	4,156
February	4,215
March	4,266

Month	No. Food Support Provided
April	4,332
May	4,378
June	4,450

Food support provided weekly

Ukrainian Payment

Individual £200 Payments

Month	Number of Payments	Amount
April	16	£5,200.00
May	20	£7,550.00
June	3	£800.00
July	82	£13,200.00
Total		£26,750.00

Host Payments £350

Month	Number of Requests	Number Awarded	Payment Amount
April	13	13	£1,791.00
May	25	25	£7,740.00
June	28	28	£9,291.00
July	28	28	£9,823.00
Total			£28,645.00

Scottish Welfare Fund

Scottish Welfare Fund

	Crisis Grants		Community Care Grants	
01 April -30 June 2020	3211	£185,815.15	626	£149,028.61
01 July - 30 September 2020	2827	£197,154.39	726	£259,512.97
01 October - 31 December 2020	3148	£267,750.24	790	£368,634.79
01 January-31 March 2021	3605	£371,431.43	732	£312,963.81
01 April – 30 June 2021	3091	£282,452.71	738	£327,264.13
01 July - 30 September 2021	2842	£250,327.77	652	£305,828.85
01-October 2021 - 31 December 2021	2987	£231,339.61	688	£174,679.83
01 January 2022-31 March 2022	3368	£243,601.57	789	£334,799.88
01 April 2022 - 30 June 2022	3275	£251,363.81	918	£394,418.07

Self Isolation

Self Isolation Support Grant

Date	Apr-21	May-21	Jun-21	Jul-21	Aug-21	Sept-21	Oct-21	Nov-21	Dec-21	Jan-22	Feb-22	Mar-22	Apr-22	May-22	Jun-22
Self Isolation Applications	105	79	382	764	406	508	283	271	704	1075	670	875	465	93	90
Granted	41	27	217	344	137	39	34	170	40	632	403	280	252	51	58
Refused	61	49	160	420	166	73	41	101	35	439	268	142	212	42	31
Outstanding	0	0	0	0	103	396	207	0	629	4	0	453	0	0	0
Reconsideration	3	3	4	18	1	1	1	5	2	38	14	4	15	3	1
Awarded	0	0	0	7	0	0	0	0	0	1	1	0	1	0	0
Refused	3	3	4	11	1	1	1	5	2	37	13	4	14	3	1
Applied for a Crisis Grant	16	16	16	36	23	48	19	25	30	71	44	43	12	3	2
Awarded a Crisis	9	11	9	24	15	35	15	15	22	48	28	26	5	0	2
Refused a crisis	7	5	7	12	8	13	4	10	8	23	16	17	7	3	0
Awaiting Decision	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0

Schools Support

Education Maintenance Allowance

Academic year	EMA payments
2019/20	703
2020/21	747
2021/22	683
2022/23	226 (08/08)

Clothing Grants

Academic year	Children
2019/20	7035
2020/21	7921
2021/22	7468
2022/23	6065 (08/08)

Free School Meals

Academic year	Children
2019/20	5637
2020/21	6373 (FSM only)
2021/22	5659
2022/23	3918 (08/08)



West Lothian
COMMUNITY PLANNING PARTNERSHIP

Council Tax

Comparative cumulative percentage collection rates of the total amount due for the year at the end of each month.

	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sept	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul
2019/20 Cumulative Collection Rate	88.51 %	92.91 %	95.90 %	11 %	19.35 %	27.83 %	36.35 %	44.84 %	53.87 %	62.51 %	71.13 %	79.59 %	87.36 %	92.07 %	95.26 %	11.55 %	20.22 %	28.83 %	37.39 %
2020/21 Cumulative Collection Rate	87.36 %	92.07 %	95.26 %	11.55 %	20.22 %	28.83 %	37.39 %	45.99 %	54.82 %	63.45 %	72.51 %	81.03 %	88.59 %	93.22 %	96.20 %	18.51 %	26.61 %	34.41 %	42.34 %
Movement in 2020/21 to 2019/20	-1.15 %	-0.84 %	-0.64 %	0.55 %	0.87 %	1 %	1.04 %	1.15 %	0.95 %	0.94 %	1.38 %	1.44 %	1.23 %	1.15 %	0.94 %	6.96 %	6.39 %	5.58 %	4.95 %

Council Tax Reduction Caseload

	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sept	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul
2019/20 Council Tax Reduction Caseload	14,493	14,566	14,499	15,497	15,645	15,433	15,533	15,496	15,411	15,416	15,420	15,321	15,199	15,173	15,117	15,104	14,998	15,000	14,748
2020/21 Council Tax Reduction Caseload	15,199	15,173	15,117	15,104	14,998	15,000	14,748	14,570	14,387	14,387	14,260	14,215	13,973	13,906	13,884	13,948	13,913	13,873	13,897
Movement in caseload	706	607	618	-393	-647	-433	-785	-843	-1006	-1029	-1160	-1106	-1226	-1267	-1233	-1,156	-1,085	-1,127	-851

Rent Arrears

Current Arrears Overall (Mainstream + Temporary Accommodation)

	Total
November	£3,988,322
December	£3,300,988
January	£3,516,718
February	£3,677,837
March	£2,978,530
April	£3,156,370
May	£3,306,635
June	£3,488,182
July	£3,730,450
August	£3,917,470
September	£4,150,768
October	£4,252,776
November	£4,371,137
December	£3,833,032
January	£4,155,825
February	£4,146,209
March	£3,496,679
April	£3,780,062
May	£4,051,193
June	£4,206,734

Gender Based Violence

Measure	Q4 18/19	Q1 19/20	Q2 19/20	Q3 19/20	Q4 19/20	Q1 20/21	Q2 20/21	Q3 20/21	Q4 20/21	Q1 21/22	Q2 21/22	Q3 21/22	Q4 21/22
Number of DASAT referrals	381	373	443	400	383	403	488	401	481	535	537	438	545
Number of Police Incidents		593	568	558	571	738	768	551	578	662	667	621	602
Percentage of incidents becoming a crime							42% (323)	45% (247)	45% (261)	47% (311)	51% (342)	47% (291)	42% (250)



Adult Protection

Adults at risk

	Adult Protection Referrals and Outcomes															
	Jan-21	Feb-21	Mar-21	Apr-21	May-21	Jun-21	Jul-21	Aug-21	Sept-21	Oct-21	Nov-21	Dec-21	Jan-22	Feb-22	Mar-22	Total
Further AP Action	75	60	77	67	101	83	55	90	91	128	113	92	111	144	123	1,531
Further Non-AP Action	23	18	20	31	29	21	26	29	31	10	10	12	8	7	7	427
No Further Action	3	3	2	1	1	4	3	0	1	3	2	1	5	9	2	72
Not Known	0	0	1	2	0	2	0	9	0	3	3	2	0	6	4	27



Child Protection

	Q1 2020/21	Q2 2020/21	Q3 2020/21	Q4 2020/21	Q1 2021/22	Q2 2021/22	Q3 2021/22	Q4 2021/22
Number on CP register at end of quarter	89	105	94	108	94	113	96	96
Number added to CP register in the quarter	30	42	27	51	37	50	27	47
Number added to CP Register where Domestic Abuse was a concern	15	26	15	37	24	41	15	27
Number deregistered from CP register in the quarter	30	26	38	37	51	31	46	47
Number of Looked after children at end of quarter	428	410	391	378	377	381	382	380
Number becoming looked after during quarter	13	17	20	25	31	28	27	31
Number ceasing to be looked after during quarter	10	35	39	38	32	24	22	33
Number in receipt of aftercare at end of quarter	148	125	110	105	116	133	121	123

Homelessness

Number of homeless applications

	Q1 20/21	Q2 20/21	Q3 20/21	Q4 20/21	Q1 21/22	Q2 21/22	Q3 21/22	Q4 21/22	Q1 22/23	Total 20/21	Total 21/22	Total 22/23
Homeless Presentations	362	383	294	425	330	317	263	279	317	1464	1189	317

Average length of stay in temporary accommodation which has ended

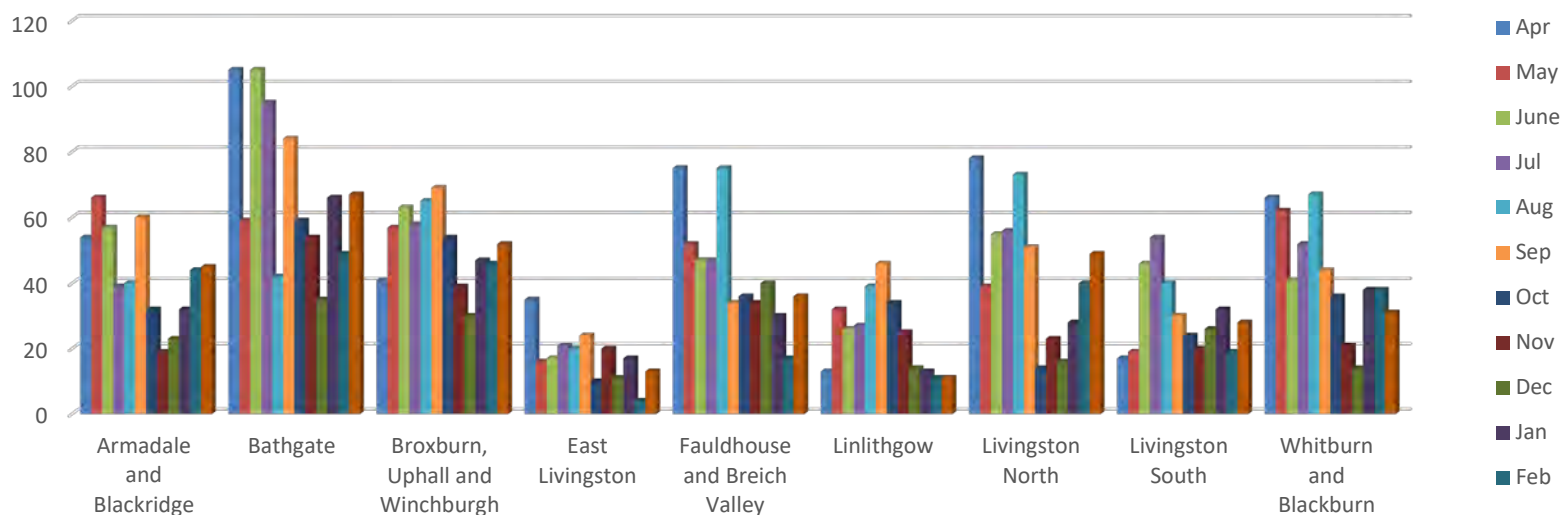
Temporary accommodation average length of stay (days)	Q1 20/21	Q2 20/21	Q3 20/21	Q4 20/21	Q1 21/22	Q2 21/22	Q3 21/22	Q4 21/22	Total 20/21	Total 21/22
Total (ALL)	75.6	97.9	104.2	95.1	111.1	108.3	131.7	139	93	122.5

Anti-Social Behaviour

No. of ASB Incidents Reported to WLC, Safer Neighbourhood Team

2021/22

Count of Incident Ref	Month												
Area	Apr	May	June	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	Mar	Grand Total
Armadale and Blackridge	54	66	57	39	40	60	32	19	23	32	44	45	511
Bathgate	105	59	105	95	42	84	59	54	35	66	49	67	820
Broxburn, Uphall and Winchburgh	41	57	63	58	65	69	54	39	30	47	46	52	621
East Livingston	35	16	17	21	20	24	10	20	11	17	4	13	208
Fauldhouse and Breich Valley	75	52	47	47	75	34	36	34	40	30	17	36	523
Linlithgow	13	32	26	27	39	46	34	25	14	13	11	11	291
Livingston North	78	39	55	56	73	51	14	23	16	28	40	49	522
Livingston South	17	19	46	54	40	30	24	20	26	32	19	28	355
Whitburn and Blackburn	66	62	41	52	67	44	36	21	14	38	38	31	510
Grand Total	484	402	457	449	461	442	299	255	209	303	268	332	4361



Crew Resilience

SFRS Crewing Resilience

Period Measured	Q4 19/20	Q1 20/21	Q2 20/21	Q3 20/21	Q4 20/21	Q1 21/22	Q2 21/22	Q3 21/22
Anticipated Crewing Levels	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%
Actual Crewing Levels	100%	98%	96%	97%	97%	96%	96%+	96%+

Delayed Discharge

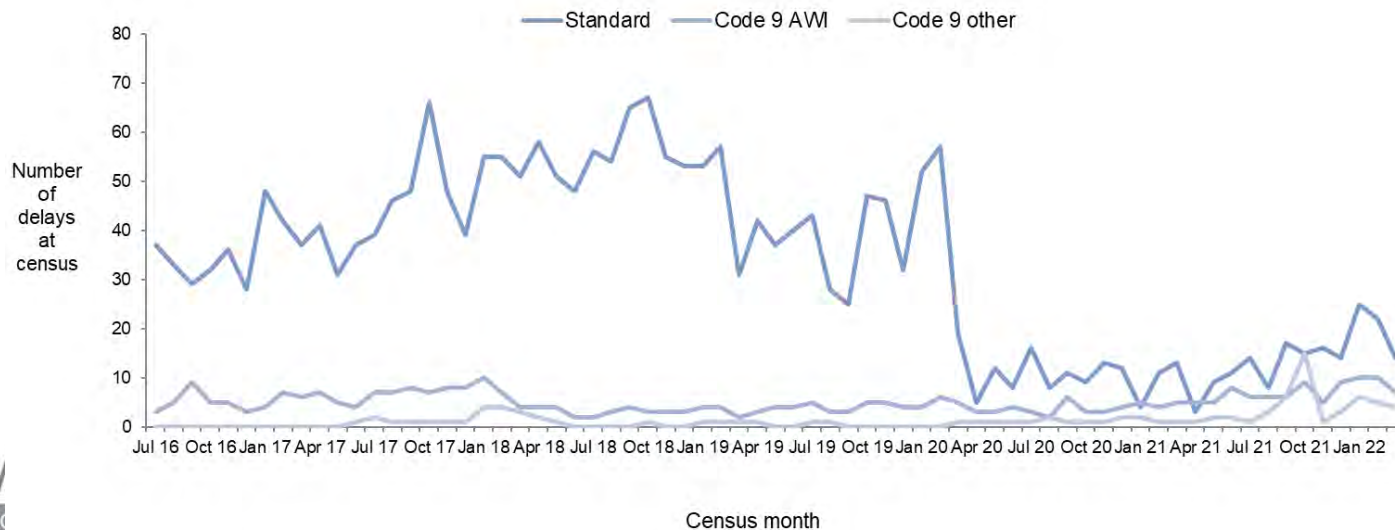
Type of Delay	Reason for delay	Apr-21	May-21	Jun-21	Jul-21	Aug-21	Sep-21	Oct-21	Nov-21	Dec-21	Jan-22	Feb-22	Mar-22
Delays for Standard Reasons	Number of delays at census point	3	9	11	14	8	17	15	16	14	25	22	14

Chart 2 - Delayed Discharge Census by Delay Reason

July 2016 to March 2022

West Lothian

18+



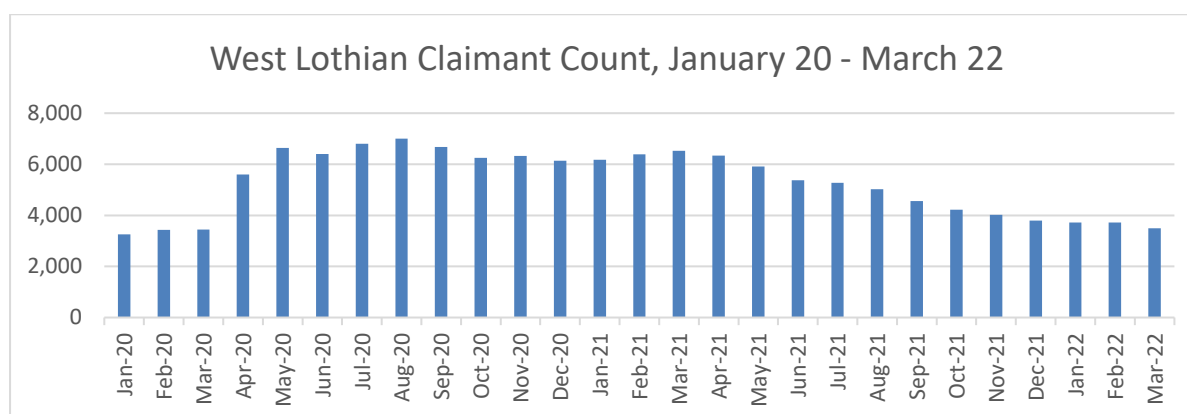
West Lothian COVID-19 sentinel dataset commentary

May 2022

Key Messages

- Claimant count has decreased to 3.0% and remains at a lower rate than both Scotland and UK.
- Youth unemployment remains slightly higher than the Scottish average.
- Latest out-of-work claimant figures continue to show little impact of the end of the furlough scheme in September.
- There is concern about the proposed withdrawal of increased Universal Credit payments on the most vulnerable citizens in West Lothian.
- There have been changes implemented to the criteria for COVID self-isolation support grants. This will potentially reduce the numbers able to apply.
- Scottish Welfare Fund made payments to 10,696 people in 2020/21 up from 6,635 in 2019/20. To date, there has been no reduction in applications to the fund.

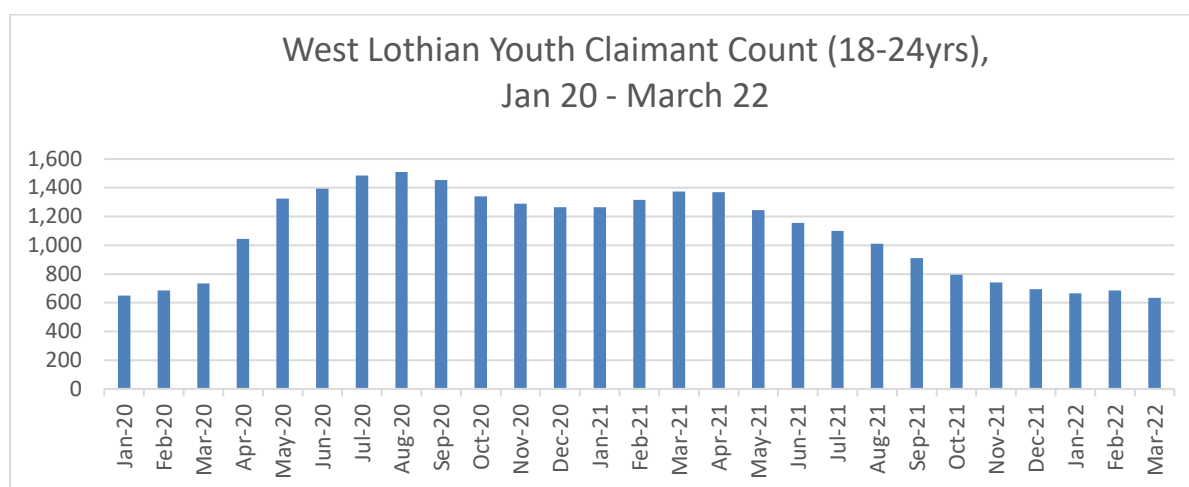
Claimant Count



Claimant count for West Lothian is 3,495 at 3.0% for March 2022, which is lower than the Scottish rate (3.8%) and the British rate (4.2%). The latest rate is lower than February (3.2%) which was 3,715 count (revised). While the general trend for unemployment has been a continued decrease towards pre-pandemic levels, there was a small increase in claimants in January, however this can be attributed to the ending of the seasonal work period. In this latest month, the out of work claimant count has continued to drop, and is now approaching levels seen before the start of the pandemic (0.2 percentage points above the level for Dec 2019 / Jan 2020).

It is worth noting that West Lothian, comparative to the national situation, is also seeing an increase in the number of people becoming economically inactive – those aged 16 – 64 who are not available for work. ONS suggests a legacy of the pandemic appears to be a rise in individuals with long term sickness, particularly pronounced in those over the age of 50. In West Lothian we have seen a rise in this particular group of economically inactive UC claimants rising from 2,207 in January 2020, to the latest estimate of 5,014 for Dec 2021.

The jobs market continues to be buoyant, contributing to the longer term continued recovery in the labour market. The current economic climate may still impact on employment levels through factors such as higher inflation, increasing competition to fill skilled vacancies, or potential pandemic related lockdowns.



Youth unemployment figures for West Lothian in March were 635 (4.6%), higher than Scotland (4.5%) but lower than Britain (5.0%). The latest rate is lower than February (4.9%) and has now reached pre-pandemic levels last seen around January 2020.

While young people were affected most by large-scale job losses in sectors such as hospitality, retail and administration during the pandemic, these sectors have returned back to work and are undertaking large recruitment drives. Employment positions have also opened up with full time, part time and gig economy contracts. This supports the continued trend of reducing youth unemployment figures.

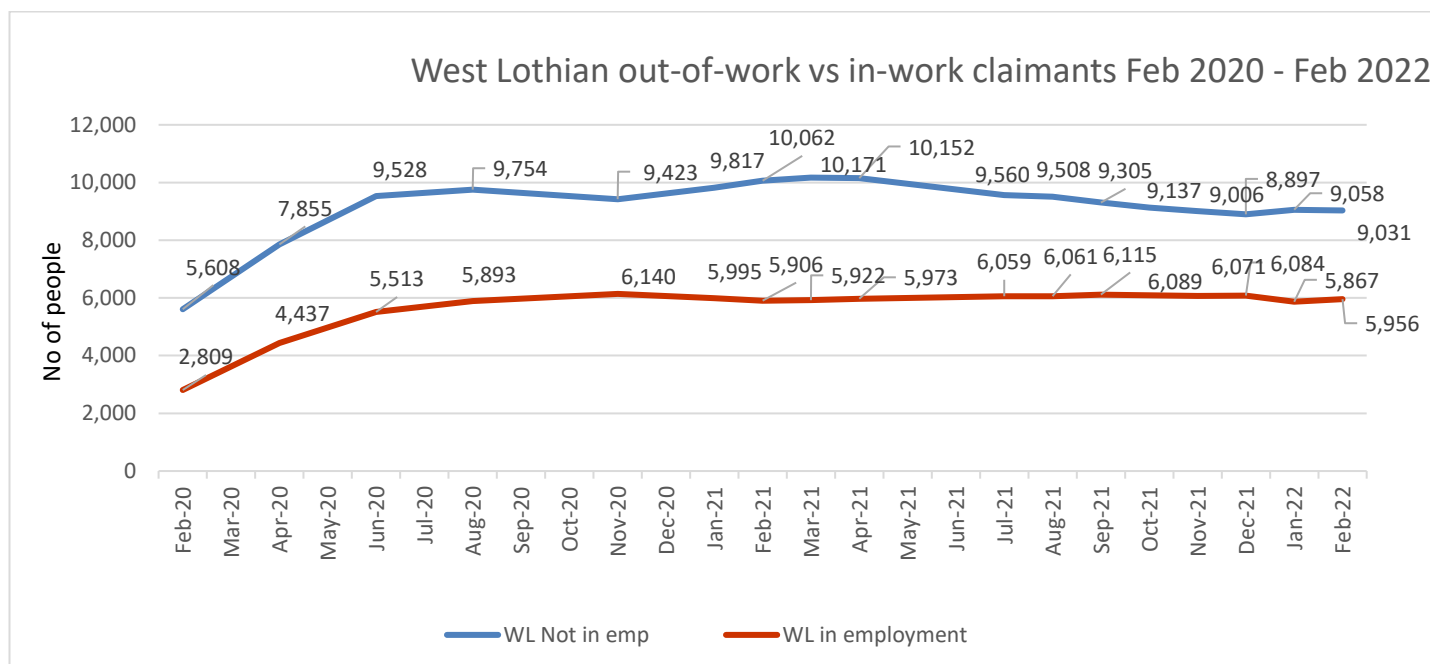
Claimant Count Breakdown by Region and by out-of-work / in-work claims

In the last 12 months (March 2021 – February 2022), the Covid outlook has changed significantly. As Covid restrictions eased in Spring 2021, the number of job vacancies increased to record levels and the number of unemployed claimants in West Lothian decreased by 11.2%. This decrease is slightly less than overall City Region, where the number of out-of-work claimants dropped by 13.5%. On the other hand, in West Lothian the number of in-work claimants has actually increased in the last 12 months, by 0.6%. In comparison, there has been a decrease of 3.6% in the average number of in-work claimants in the City Region over the last 12 months.

In the most recent figures reported, for the month between January and February 2022, the rate of unemployed claimants has continued to drop in West Lothian (-0.3%), which is the same change as the City Region in the last month. The number of in-work claimants increased by 1.5% in West Lothian last month, whereas, the number of in-work claimants increased in the City Region by 0.2%.

Overall, as the number of job vacancies continue to reach record levels the number of out-of-work claimants continues to drop in West Lothian. While the jobs market continues to be buoyant, there is still a proportion of individuals who are still experiencing difficulties in finding a job - the number of out-of-work claimants is still 61% higher in the most recent data (March 2022) compared to pre-Covid

(February 2020). Unlike the out-of-work claimants, which has gradually decreased throughout 2021, the number of in-work claimants has remained stubbornly high – with the latest figures in March 2022 representing a 112% increase from February 2020. It is likely that this increase in in-work claimants has resulted from a variety of different factors including the high cost of living, reduced working hours, revised contracts, and reduced wages as a direct result of the pandemic's multiple lockdowns on employer's capacity to retain employees on full-time employment / wages. West Lothian Advice Shop has also noted increased numbers of individuals seeking advice and support related on money issues and budgeting. These figures should continue to be carefully monitored given the anticipated squeeze on household income through inflation, increased prices, and upcoming changes in tax and NIC.



Total Employment

The economic development team has been monitoring key employers in West Lothian. These 207 businesses employ almost 21,000 people in the area. 103 companies provide no cause for concern; 66 businesses are at amber status and 28 businesses are showing cause for concern. There is no information on the other 10 companies. There has not been much change in the status of these companies over the last few months.

There are signs of business growth in the pharmaceuticals and life sciences sector.

PACE data

The PACE scheme means that Skills Development Scotland works with local economic development teams to support employees who face redundancy in companies with any number of employees. It is, however, difficult to monitor the economic wellbeing of smaller businesses as there is no system to identify their difficulties. It is possible that companies make redundancies below a level that instigates support so therefore not visible within PACE statistics. The West Lothian Business Gateway support team has identified some smaller companies that have made redundancies and is providing support to staff in these organisations. In addition, a local employability helpline via West Lothian Council's contact centre has been introduced.

Recent developments in 2022 include formal PACE HR21 notifications on:

January 2022 - Proclad International Forging (Manufacturing)

10 staff received PACE support, with a further 10 staff due support in second round.

February 2022 - Eurofins Biopharma (Life Sciences)

20 people receiving PACE support following HR1 notification.

March 2022 - Capital Cooling (Manufacturing)

17 staff (Livingston site) PACE engagement with employer

March / April 2022 - Energy Assets (Construction)

25 jobs were due for redundancy, but the employer reported to PACE that most employees have found new jobs.

We are not seeing as many redundancies as other areas; however as noted above, job losses in surrounding areas may impact on job losses in West Lothian. There is now a local PACE contact in place and work is being carried out to review relevant redundancies in surrounding areas to report to the weekly economic recovery group.

Total Person on the Claimant Count by Electoral Ward Area / Regeneration Localities

Analysis was undertaken to examine how UC claimant count changed over time within areas across West Lothian. Initially this was reviewed at Council Ward level, beginning at a pre-Covid baseline of January 2020 and following the trend over the pandemic two-year period with latest data for March 2022. In examining the different ward areas we can see that three particular Wards saw the highest increases in claimants, particularly during the first year of the pandemic. Bathgate, Fauldhouse and the Breich Valley, and Whitburn and Blackburn. It is also interesting to note that these three wards in particular already had above average claimant rates in the pre-Covid period at January 2020. Compared to the West Lothian average of 2.8% - Bathgate was at 3.7%, Fauldhouse and the Breich Valley at 3.6%, and Whitburn and Blackburn at 3.5%. While for most areas there has been a return to almost pre-Pandemic levels in the last month, these three ward areas still remain above the West Lothian average: Bathgate was at 3.9%, Fauldhouse and the Breich Valley at 3.9%, and Whitburn and Blackburn at 3.8% - compared to West Lothian 3.0% in March 2022.

Claimant count breakdown by Electoral Ward Areas

Claimant Count	Armadale and Blackridge		Bathgate		Broxburn, Uphall and Winchburgh		East Livingston and East Calder		Fauldhouse and the Breich Valley		Linlithgow		Livingston North		Livingston South		Whitburn and Blackburn		West Lothian	
	Claimant count	Rate %	Claimant count	Rate %	Claimant count	Rate %	Claimant count	Rate %	Claimant count	Rate %	Claimant count	Rate %	Claimant count	Rate %	Claimant count	Rate %	Claimant count	Rate %	Claimant count	Rate %
Jan-20	280	2.9	445	3.7	345	2.8	380	2.8	385	3.6	125	1.2	295	2.1	455	2.7	555	3.5	3,260	2.8
Feb-20	310	3.2	470	3.9	365	3.0	380	2.8	405	3.8	135	1.3	325	2.3	450	2.6	585	3.7	3,425	2.9
Mar-20	315	3.2	450	3.7	365	3.0	390	2.8	425	3.9	140	1.4	315	2.2	445	2.6	605	3.9	3,450	2.9
Apr-20	505	5.2	770	6.4	630	5.2	660	4.8	640	5.9	245	2.4	545	3.8	690	4.1	915	5.8	5,600	4.8
May-20	580	6.0	915	7.6	760	6.2	800	5.9	730	6.8	305	3.0	685	4.8	835	4.9	1,030	6.5	6,645	5.6
Jun-20	555	5.7	860	7.1	710	5.8	760	5.6	715	6.7	300	3.0	665	4.6	825	4.9	1,015	6.4	6,405	5.4
Jul-20	580	6.0	925	7.6	755	6.2	825	6.0	755	7.0	300	3.0	720	5.0	860	5.1	1,080	6.9	6,800	5.8
Aug-20	610	6.3	945	7.8	760	6.2	835	6.1	765	7.1	335	3.3	760	5.3	900	5.3	1,095	6.9	7,005	6.0
Sep-20	575	5.9	895	7.4	730	6.0	810	5.9	755	7.0	315	3.1	715	5.0	860	5.1	1,025	6.5	6,675	5.7
Oct-20	545	5.6	830	6.9	695	5.7	750	5.5	715	6.7	290	2.8	655	4.6	820	4.8	955	6.1	6,255	5.3
Nov-20	540	5.6	860	7.1	710	5.8	750	5.5	690	6.4	290	2.8	685	4.8	835	4.9	965	6.1	6,325	5.4
Dec-20	535	5.5	835	6.9	685	5.6	725	5.3	685	6.4	275	2.7	650	4.6	810	4.8	935	5.9	6,140	5.2
Jan-21	540	5.5	860	7.1	695	5.7	705	5.2	685	6.4	280	2.8	655	4.6	815	4.8	945	6.0	6,175	5.2
Feb-21	545	5.6	895	7.4	705	5.8	745	5.5	705	6.6	280	2.8	680	4.7	845	5.0	985	6.2	6,385	5.4
Mar-21	570	5.9	905	7.5	740	6.1	755	5.5	725	6.8	280	2.7	710	5.0	855	5.1	980	6.2	6,530	5.5
Apr-21	540	5.5	865	7.1	725	5.9	745	5.5	695	6.5	270	2.7	690	4.8	835	4.9	980	6.2	6,345	5.4
May-21	495	5.1	815	6.8	680	5.6	700	5.1	650	6.0	250	2.5	650	4.5	765	4.5	905	5.8	5,915	5.0
Jun-21	460	4.7	715	5.9	585	4.8	615	4.5	625	5.8	230	2.3	585	4.1	725	4.3	840	5.3	5,375	4.6
Jul-21	460	4.7	700	5.8	575	4.7	610	4.4	580	5.4	220	2.1	565	4.0	710	4.2	855	5.4	5,270	4.5
Aug-21	440	4.5	680	5.6	530	4.4	575	4.2	550	5.1	215	2.1	535	3.7	665	3.9	835	5.3	5,020	4.3
Sep-21	375	3.9	615	5.1	475	3.9	530	3.9	535	5.0	195	1.9	485	3.4	585	3.5	755	4.8	4,555	3.9
Oct-21	365	3.8	575	4.8	455	3.7	470	3.4	500	4.6	180	1.8	420	2.9	540	3.2	710	4.5	4,215	3.6
Nov-21	330	3.4	540	4.5	450	3.7	465	3.4	480	4.5	175	1.7	385	2.7	520	3.1	675	4.3	4,015	3.4
Dec-21	320	3.3	490	4.1	430	3.5	445	3.3	465	4.3	160	1.6	365	2.6	480	2.8	635	4.0	3,795	3.2
Jan-22	310	3.2	485	4.0	420	3.5	445	3.3	460	4.3	160	1.6	365	2.5	455	2.7	625	4.0	3,725	3.2
Feb-22	310	3.2	500	4.1	410	3.4	440	3.2	435	4.1	150	1.5	375	2.6	480	2.8	610	3.9	3,715	3.2
Mar-22	285	2.9	475	3.9	385	3.1	405	3.0	415	3.9	145	1.4	370	2.6	420	2.5	600	3.8	3,495	3.0

A further examination of these three ward areas was undertaken to establish whether particular localities were much higher than the West Lothian average which might provide further indication of pockets of higher unemployment with the wards. Those areas highlighted in red show the localities with the highest claimant rates.

Changes in Claimant Count/Rate at Intermediate Zone Level

	Intermediate Zone	March 2022 Rate	Difference between Int Zone and WL (3.0%) (March 22)
Whitburn & Blackburn	Blackburn	4.7%	1.70%
	Whitburn Central	7.0%	4.00%
	Whitburn, Croftmalloch and Greenrigg	2.3%	-0.70%
Bathgate	Bathgate East	4.3%	1.30%
	Bathgate West	2.3%	-0.70%
	Bathgate and Boghall	4.4%	1.40%
	Bathgate, Wester Inch and Inchcross	1.6%	-1.40%
Fauldhouse & Breich Valley	Addiewell	5.9%	2.90%
	Stoneyburn	3.3%	0.30%
	Fauldhouse	4.2%	1.20%
	Polbeth	4.5%	1.50%

Food Support

From May 2020 to the end of April 2022 the West Lothian Food Network has provided a total of 2,960,048 meals. Of those accessing the food network, 82% were financially at risk on low income, unemployed and eligible for free school meals. Over the course of the pandemic and up until now the food network has fed an average of 4,066 people per week. The network has seen an increase in people accessing food support and this is expected to continue to increase as a result of the cost of living crisis. It is worth noting that the 'nature' of the need relating to food has changed, as we are now seeing more people in work accessing food support. The Food Network continues to experience challenges in obtaining food. This reflects what is happening across the whole of the system with due to the cost of living crisis. There has been a reduction in the number of donations to the Food Bank; a social media campaign has been launched to help encourage food donations.

Organisations within the West Lothian Food Network are working near to capacity and anticipate that this increased demand will continue on their services.

Evidence shows that integrating money advice with food helps customers to gain entitlement to benefits and to access other help and support. The co-location of a money advisor within the food bank since April 2022 has resulted in 9 complex referrals so far.

Scottish Welfare Fund

Scottish Welfare Fund made payments to 9737 people in 2021/22 which is 959 less than 2020/21, the payments reduced slightly due to Scottish Government confirming that COVID in itself was no longer an exceptional pressure and applications were to be consider under normal Scottish Government

Welfare Fund guidance. However, due to the level of payments being made the budget given by Scottish Government and West Lothian Council was still overspent.

West Lothian Council has committed £1m to the fund for 2022/23, a further £198,000 was agreed at the Council meeting on 15 February 2022 as part of the 2022/23 budget to further support low income households in crisis by topping up the Scottish Welfare Fund Budget.

There are currently 895 SISG claims outstanding and to date 7158 applications have been processed. The numbers applying have started to reduce with the new Scottish Government guidance coming into force on 01/05/22.

The full impact of this will not be seen for the next few weeks as applicants have 28 days from testing positive to apply for a grant.

Ukrainian Support Payments

Host payment- As all hosts are subject to certain checks before a payment can be released only a number of claims have been received, in the last week, confirming payment can now be paid.

The number of Ukrainian Refugees has started to increase with more and more houses being checked by housing and social work. The full impact of this will not be seen until a few months. The £200.00 payment is being made in cash and being hand delivered to the sponsor direct.

Schools: Education Maintenance Allowance, Free School Meals and Clothing Grants

Applications have been received for Education Maintenance Allowance which is now available as an online application. Payments cannot commence until a learning agreement is in place between the school and pupil and this is usually agreed in the first weeks of the new term with payments backdated to the beginning of the term. As at 16th May 2022, 675 pupils have received at least one payment of Education Maintenance Allowance.

The main reason for the reduced number in the report is because Education Grants are applied for and awarded at the end of the academic year i.e. end of June 22. The previous year's figures are not an 'as at' but reflect the total number of awards for the whole academic years 2019/20 and 2020/21. However, there is an expected decrease in the numbers this year due to the fact that we are starting from scratch in relation to the application process.

In March 2022 a Scottish Government bridging payment of £130 per pupil was made to low income families in receipt of free school meals. At the Council meeting on 15 February 2022 as part of the 2022/23 budget a one-off £10 per pupil spring family support payment was also agreed. Both these payments were made to 3,249 families, that covered 5,486 pupils.

Pupils who are eligible for free school meals due to low income and, who are self-isolating, will be paid £3 per day in lieu of free school meals for the duration of the self-isolation period. There is an online form to apply and this information has been cascaded to all schools and parents. As of 9th May 2022 schools can no longer record Covid related absences but applications will continue to be monitored until the Summer 2022 school holidays for any period before 9th May.

The Scottish Government committed to increase the School Clothing Grant to £120 to commence in this academic year. West Lothian Council further committed to raise the school clothing grant to £150 for primary and £180 for secondary school pupils. Currently 7425 pupils have received a clothing grant for the 2021/2021 academic year. In January 2021 we paid an additional £80 winter clothing grant payment for 7,786 pupils to help parents/carers.

For the 20/21 Academic year, the council took the decision to transfer all cases over from the 19/20 academic year and automatically award both SCG's and FSM's therefore as well as all the new applications, at the equivalent point last year, the whole of the 19/20 case load for FSM's for P4 and above was sitting on SEEMiS records for 20/21 which was around 4000 records.

This year that has not happened and cases are added as they apply. We are still accepting applications for the current 2021/2022 academic year, but as of 16/05/2022 we have 3121 pupils from P6 to S6, and 2384 pupils from P1 to P5 entitled to free school meals through qualifying benefit. As of 06/01/2022 P5s are now included under universal entitlement, previously that was P1 to P4 with P4s added in August 2021. The Scottish Government has not yet confirmed if P6 & P7 pupils will have universal entitlement to free school meals from August 2022 as first thought.

To encourage applications, we have:

- Emailed all parents who received FSM for their children in the 20/21 academic year and requested they apply by giving them the link to the form.
- Facebook and twitter posts were pushed out
- We have run reports from SEEMiS for those that were awarded School Clothing Grant only, provided them with the qualifying conditions for Free School Meals and encouraged them to apply if appropriate
- Sent follow up emails to those we have asked for information from if we don't get it within a short period of time
- We have also sent out a group call to encourage take up of FSM's

Winter Financial Insecurity Funding

The Scottish Government announced a Winter Financial Insecurity Funding for those likely to experience hardship, such as people who may have been impacted by the recent changes to Universal Credit. Analysis of available data of people experiencing hardship has identified the following groups in West Lothian lone parents, disabled pensioners, people with limited capability. Analysis of the caseload has identified 4,691 claimants will be eligible to receive a payment of £125.

At the Council meeting on 15 February 2022 as part of the 2022/23 budget, it was agreed to pay an extra £10 to those customers eligible for the Winter Hardship Payment in total the groups identified above will receive a payment of £135. This payment provides a cash first response to key groups of low-income households, this provides a significant additional payment which will ensure those impacted by the Universal Credit uplift removal and increased living costs have access to additional financial support. From the 4691 eligible applicants so far, we have successfully made 2993 BACS payments. We are now awaiting bank details for those that we have been unable to pay VIA BACS or will issue cheques.

Rent and Council Tax Arrears

HCBS - Financial Summary

For HCBS the collection rate for the YTD as of week 52 remains excellent at 98.3%. HCBS has collected £58,250,600 in revenue vs a charge of £59,236,727. The current position is within forecast and targets for the service

The overall increased arrears in comparison to last year are as a result of Full Service Universal Credit being introduced in West Lothian from May 2018, along with other Welfare Benefit reforms and the current economic climate. In addition to this the recent increases in cost of living and energy are starting to have a negative impact on customer finances

In the same week last year HCBS had 2116 Universal Credit (UC) households. Since then the number of UC households has increased by 13.2%.

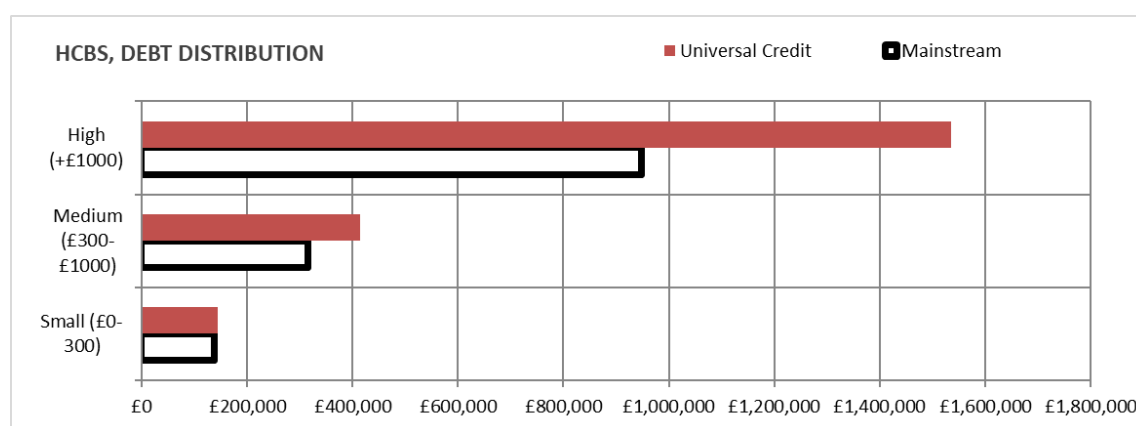
The number of tenancies in arrears has increased by 133 since last year. Small debt cases (£300 or less), account for 49.6% of households. Small debt is likely to be the natural movement of balances for customers on monthly payment cycles

There are 961 serious arrears cases (+£1000 in arrears). These cases are 21.4% of all households in arrears in this area, containing 71.0% of the debt.

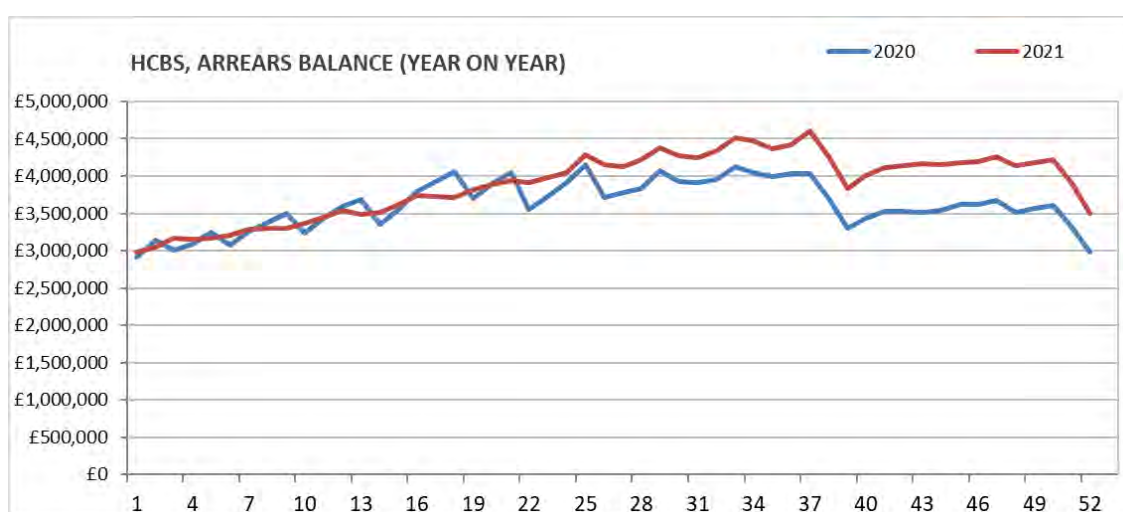
The arrears position for HCBS is £3,496,679. This is an increase of £518,150 on last year's position.

During the course of this year we plan to focus on the following:

- Making best use of resources by considering communicating more with customers through SMS, email and telephone
- Benchmarking with other local authorities to ensure we identify and consider implementing any best practice
- Performance Monitoring and Reporting will be reviewed and where appropriate streamlined to ensure information is meaningful and robust to assist with improving rent arrears due.
- Promote Alternative payment methods, particularly the Tenant's Self-Service Portal



Arrears Banding	2020/21 (WK52)				2021/22 (WK52)			
	Mainstream		UC		Mainstream		UC	
	Balance	#	Balance	#	Balance	#	Balance	#
£0.01 to £99.99	£31,100	707	£17,391	349	£23,658	536	£19,401	413
£100.00 to £299.99	£123,094	660	£105,344	546	£114,499	620	£125,192	656
£300.00 to £499.99	£91,154	232	£110,892	287	£110,651	283	£127,863	326
£500.00 to £749.99	£117,580	195	£147,245	241	£104,538	169	£152,962	248
£750.00 to £999.99	£72,873	84	£120,555	140	£101,160	118	£133,026	155
£1000.00 to £1999.99	£269,586	193	£445,167	322	£279,705	197	£422,622	299
£2000+	£561,581	165	£764,968	231	£668,214	167	£1,113,188	298
Group Total	£1,266,968	2236	£1,711,561	2116	£1,402,425	2090	£2,094,255	2395
Movement					(+) £135,457	(-) 146	(+) £382,693	(+) 279
Overall Total			£2,978,530	4352			£3,496,679	4485
Overall Movement							(+) £518,150	(+) 133



Housing has made no evictions since the start of lockdown, and as any eviction process can take many months there is a low likelihood of any evictions for the rest of the financial year. Maximum debt on accounts has increased largely due to the removal of eviction actions as persistent non-payers who would have been evicted have remained with larger than normal outstanding balances with the largest single balance as of week 39 at £15,143.

The largest real debt driver continues to be the transition of customers from legacy Housing Benefit onto Universal Credit due to the break in benefits during the initial Universal Credit assessment period.

Council Tax - income collection has increased by 0.94% in 2021/22 compared to 2020/21 and is also 0.3% higher than in 2019/20.

Due to a one-off cash posting of Low Income Pandemic Payment (LIPP) in November 2021 Council Tax income collection for this month was positively impacted by 0.49%. The customers who received LIPP to their Council Tax account were issued with a revised Council Tax bill detailing the instalments they still had to pay taking account of the LIPP.

It is difficult to assess the impact of the one-off LIPP in 2021/22 as customers may have paid all of their Council Tax charges by 31 March 2022 even without the LIPP being posted to their account.

Council Tax Reduction Scheme - As we continue to emerge from the pandemic we have seen a gradual and sustained reduction in CTRS caseload to pre-pandemic levels. This reduction in caseload has been assisted by further changes to legislation (e.g. the removal of the £20 uplift to Universal Credit).

GBV

The number of Domestic incidents has remained relatively stable in West Lothian, J Division and across Scotland.

Domestic incidents dropped in January and February before rising in March, this pattern is consistent across all areas.

The conversion rate for West Lothian remains slightly above the Divisional and Force Average.

High levels of referral to DASAT have followed police incidents. 2021-22 saw a 15% increase on the previous year. Quarter 1 of 2021-22 saw the largest ever number of referrals to DASAT. Quarter 2 remained high but there was a reduction in the rate of referral in quarter 3.

The dip in referrals that is reflected in Q3 figures, has increased, and the referrals are at an all-time high. With the ease in restrictions, group work is running as it did pre Covid-19 and a Court Support Group has been introduced to support women going through the court process as there is an increased wait in these cases going to trial due to Covid-19.

Adult Protection

An Adult Support & Protection (ASP) referral is when an adult has been referred to a Council social work office when the adult is known or believed to be at risk of harm as defined in Part 1 section 3(1) of the Adult Support & Protection (Scotland) Act 2007.

An increase in ASP referrals recorded year on year, this can be accounted for in part due to the increased pressures individuals are currently experiencing as a result of the pandemic.

Alongside this there has been a concerted effort by the teams to promote how agencies or members of the public can make a referral where they are concerned about an adult, this includes promotion of our website which contains our revised AP1 form (referral form). We have also worked with teams to improve our recording processes around Adult Support and Protection.

Child Protection

The numbers on the child protection register are subject to small fluctuations, rising some quarters but these are temporary and the trend overall is for a consistent number of children on the register. Domestic abuse remains one of the key reasons why a child may be entered onto the register.

In terms of numbers of looked after children, there has been a gradual overall downward trend during the last two years with numbers stabilising during the last year at a reduced level.

There was a small rise in the number of young people in receipt of aftercare from the last two quarters of 2020/21, which may be a sign of young people taking advantage of support opening up.

Homelessness

The number of homeless applications has declined since the last quarter which is positive however the length of stay in temporary accommodation has increased. The reasons for this are: at the start of lockdown there was significant impacts on the amount of available lets due to restrictions in lettings and trades, lets were therefore significantly reduced meaning homeless applications ended up staying longer periods in temporary accommodation. We are still dealing with the impact of COVID and have significant backlogs of homeless applicants waiting for permanent housing. Prior to COVID we already had significant supply pressures however COVID has now exacerbated that. Mean length of stay in temporary accommodation continues to rise.

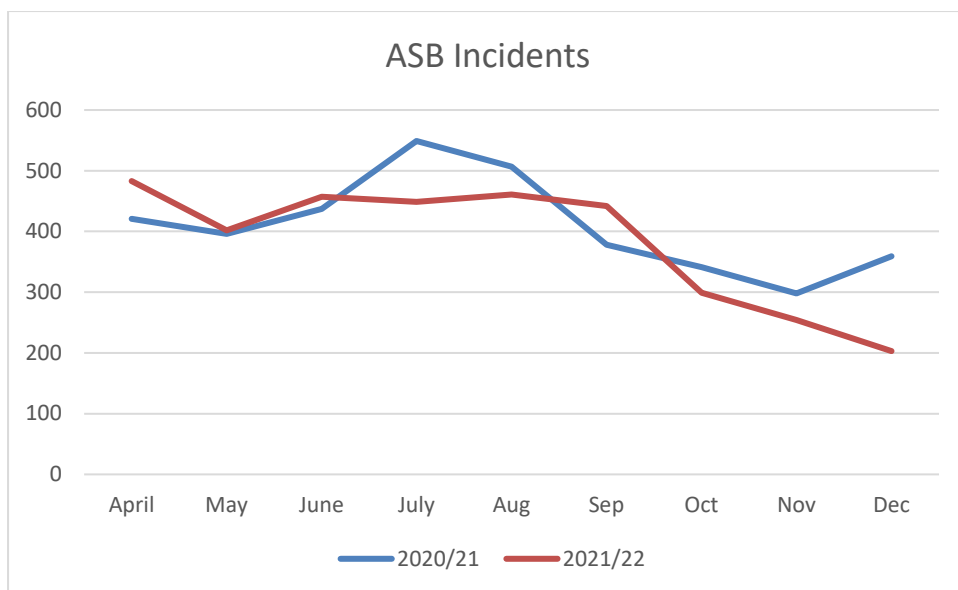
Anti-Social Behaviour Incidents

Safer Neighbourhood Team Officers continue to attend weekly TAC meetings with the Police, Scottish Fire and Rescue Service and other community safety partners sharing information to work together to tackle antisocial behaviour in West Lothian. Where appropriate, joint working with Police has been undertaken. The service also receives a number of calls which do not constitute antisocial behaviour but which require officers to provide advice and assistance. Involvement to provide advice and initial investigation is recorded as an antisocial behaviour incident, and the data reflects the number of enquiries recorded.

For the more serious levels of antisocial behaviour, cases are opened to allow for more in depth investigation and officers have at their disposal, a variety of ways to assist customers with their enquiries. The number of cases is not reflected in this data shown. The trend pattern in the data reflects a 40.7% increase (1393 incidents) in the number of antisocial behaviour incidents recorded in 2020/21 (4813) from the previous year 2019/20, (3420) and then a reduction of 9.4% (452 incidents less) in the year 2021/22 (4361) from 2020/21.

When looking more closely at the causal factors, there has been nothing highlighted in particular for any definitive reason for the difference in the level of numbers being reported from ward to ward. Demographic variations, tenure mix and house type such as communal entrance flats and where there is shared access to gardens such as four in a block are all factors which can contribute to the way in which behaviour from others is tolerated or becomes intolerable to others. The Pandemic also lowered people's tolerance levels to noise in general including household living noise and there was an increase in the less serious incidents, reflected in these figures for 2020/21.

As we recover from the pandemic, the numbers reduce again as communities return to a new 'normal' way of living and are reassured that what is perhaps deemed as antisocial behaviour can often be a tenancy issue for enquiry and the Safer Neighbourhood Team continue to investigate complaints that constitute antisocial behaviour to stop and prevent escalation of incidents in all nine wards across West Lothian.



SFRS Crew Resilience Levels

The SFRS crew resilience levels indicator measures the impact on local resource availability within West Lothian and the SFRS's ability to maintain service delivery to the communities across West Lothian from both a prevention/protection and response perspective.

Our Community Fire stations were risk assessed, adapted and certified as COVID secure and our crews created protected groupings. These measures, along with the use of enhanced protocols and PPE allowed us to provide a normal response. To further support our staff, mental health and employee support strategies are also in place.

All of the measures implemented enhanced our resilience and supported our ability to respond accordingly meeting the demands of the local communities. Analysis over the previous 18-month period highlights the effectiveness of this approach, with a resource availability of 96% and above across the West Lothian area through the highest reported infection periods of the pandemic to date. When required, support from surrounding SFRS resources were allocated into the area to maintain our service delivery.

Delayed Discharge

Since June 2021, the number of people delayed in hospital when medically fit to leave has continued to fluctuate. There are ongoing challenges with care at home supply which makes it difficult to meet demand. Service providers have reported difficulties in recruiting and retaining staff as well as the impact of Covid related absences. Similar problems have been experienced across Scotland. A weekly care at home assurance group meets to monitor the care at home situation. Care home admissions have also been impacted by both Covid and staffing challenges. A weekly oversight meeting also takes place for care homes. Data reporting has been further developed and a range of measures are being progressed to maximise opportunities for improvement.

Ongoing Work on the Dataset

Work is being carried out to ensure the dataset captures the wide range of societal harms of the pandemic. Any approved additional indicators will be incorporated into the dataset and will be measured and reported to the CPP going forward.

WEST LOTHIAN ANTI-POVERTY STRATEGY: END OF YEAR REPORT 2021/22 AND PROPOSED ACTION PLAN FOR 2022/23

1. Purpose of Report

The purpose of the report is to inform the Community Planning Partnership Board of:

- Progress made towards the aims of the West Lothian Anti-Poverty Strategy during the 2021/22 period and across the lifetime of the strategy so far.
- Planned activity to address key concerns and recover from the impact of Covid-19 during 2022/23.

2. Recommendations

It is recommended that the CPP Board:

- Notes the range of activity carried out in the 2021/22 period to mitigate the impact of poverty and deprivation in West Lothian.
- Approves the performance indicators and targets for 2022/23.
- Approves the action plan for the 2022/23 period.

3. Discussion

Background

The West Lothian Anti-Poverty Strategy sets out how the Community Planning Partnership will address poverty at a local level over the period 2018 to 2023. The strategy aims to:

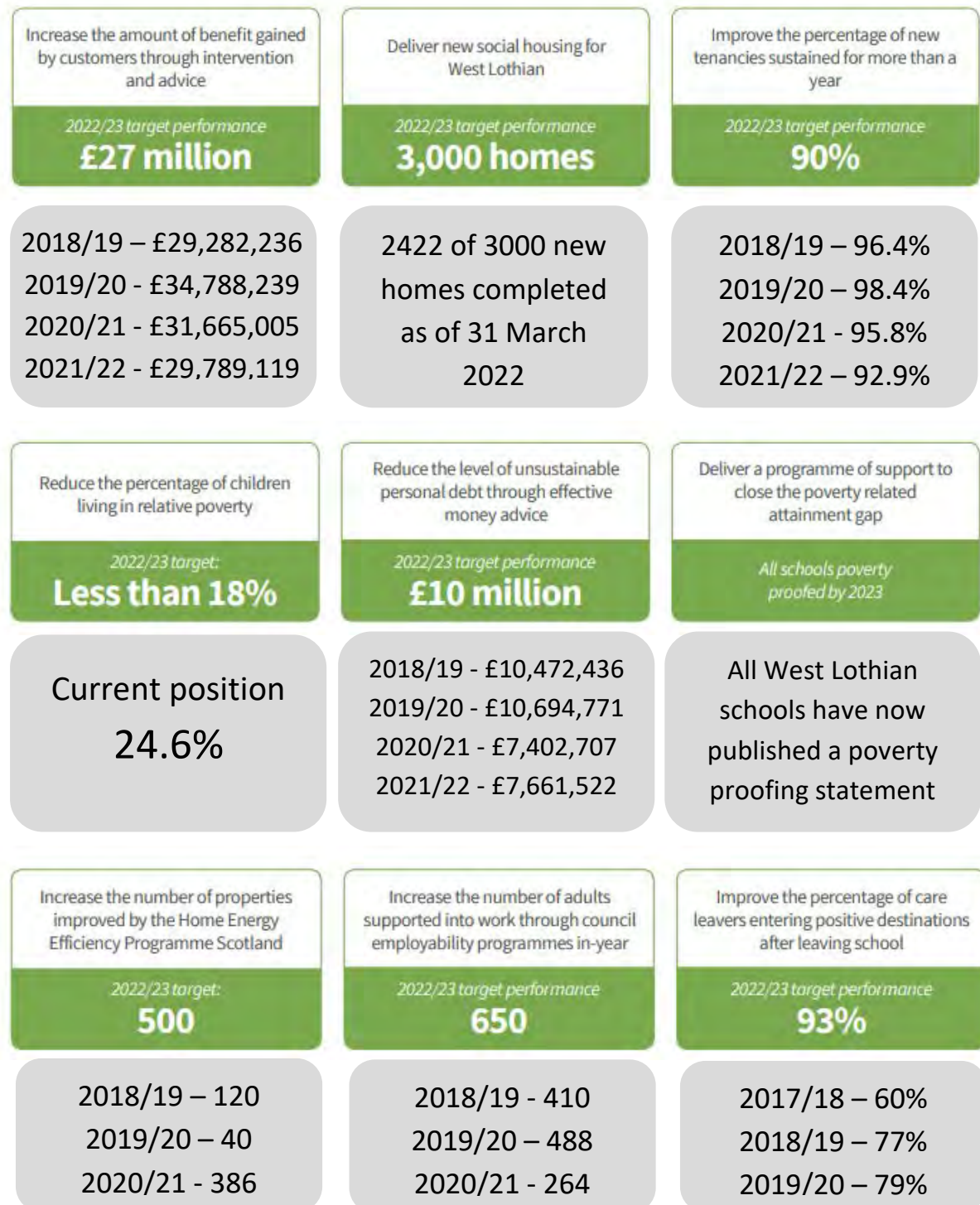
- protect people in West Lothian from the worst extremes of poverty and deprivation
- enable and empower people to access opportunities to become financially resilient
- tell a different story about poverty and increase understanding and reduce the stigma
- work collaboratively with partners, and use our collective voice to lobby the Scottish and UK Government to bring about change

The strategy was approved by the CPP Board in September 2018 and from there, a robust strategy scorecard and action plan have been developed using SMART objectives. At this time, the strategy has reached the end of the fourth year and progress against targets can now be monitored and compared across time.

Headline Figures

Relevant performance indicators associated with the Local Outcomes Improvement Plan and the council's Corporate Plan form the basis of the scorecard, supplemented with new indicators developed exclusively for the anti-poverty strategy which measure the cumulative impact of work undertaken by multiple partners.

This sample of key performance indicators linked to the LOIP and council Corporate Plan provide an overview of the good progress made in the first four years of the strategy:

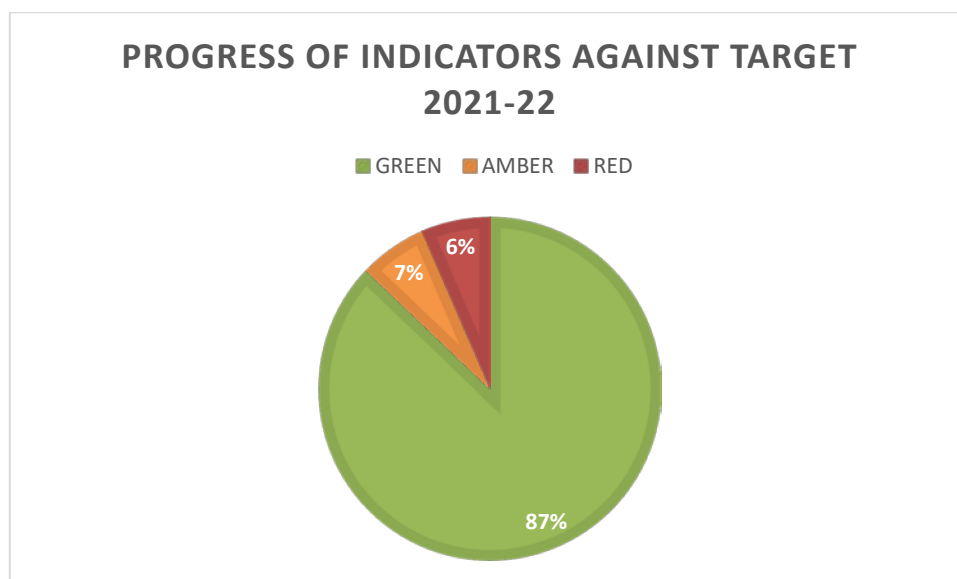


Strategy Scorecard

The scorecard measures performance against eight outcomes:

1. maximise the financial resources of households on low incomes
2. reduce outgoing costs and the impact of the 'poverty premium' on low income households
3. households with low income can manage finances appropriately and become more financially resilient
4. improve opportunities for adults from low income backgrounds to be in good quality, sustained employment
5. households with low income are able to access services and be socially and financially included
6. increase the number of people who live in warm, affordable homes
7. reduce the number of children living in relative poverty
8. increase opportunities for local people to fully participate in their communities and bring about change

Associated indicators will be tracked against targets throughout the lifetime of the strategy to ensure good progress is being made toward outcomes. See Appendix 1 for detail.



Progress against target for a number of indicators has been affected by the ongoing impact of the Covid-19 pandemic. Despite this, the majority of indicators have scored green during the 2021/22 reporting period with many targets met or exceeded:

- The out of work claimant count and availability of jobs in West Lothian indicates ongoing recovery from the pandemic. The claimant count at the end of March 2022 was 3%, down from 5.6% in the same period the previous year. The UK Government's Business Register and Employment Survey dataset indicates an estimated 76,600 jobs in West Lothian in the 2021/22 period.

- Services continue to remobilise and facilitate access to advice and support through a range of channels. Co-location of services between key partners to deliver targeted support has been re-introduced. Outreach advice services in areas including; schools, community food outlets, GP surgeries and community development trusts. This has been successful with over 2500 individuals accessing advice through health settings and schools resulting in extra income of over £3,121,000; an average of £1,220 per person.
- Digital access to advice and information continues to be a popular option for many even as services begin to open a wider range of delivery channels as they remobilise from the pandemic. The Anti-Poverty Service saw a significant increase in web traffic in the 2021/22 period with online forms, calculators and interactive maps being among the most frequently accessed content.
- The FORT system continues to grow with 16 new services and organisations joining the FORT network in the last year including a number of schools. In total, 5,000 referrals were made and tracked through the FORT system during the 2021/22 period and the system was integral to the delivery of targeted work such as the Tenant Grant Fund.

Indicators Performing Below Target for 2021/22

Indicator	Target	Actual	Commentary
Percentage of children in poverty in West Lothian	20%	24.6%	Latest local estimates based on 2019/20 data place West Lothian's level of child poverty at 24.6% after housing costs. A child poverty reference group has been formed and a two year action plan implemented to drive forward activity to address child poverty at a local level.
Percentage of residents who feel they can influence decisions	46%	40%	A review of the Citizens Panel was due to be carried out in 2020 but this was put on hold due to Covid-19 restrictions. This is being considered and will form part of the new LOIP.
Number of individuals who access affordable credit options	1500	562	Credit unions have been significantly impacted by Covid restrictions. Local offices had to close at the beginning of the first lockdown, which impacted on new member numbers as engagement with members who prefer to join in person and use face to face cash collection points have been severely limited. In the 2021/22 period, local offices started to reopen and new membership numbers are slowly starting to increase.
Total value of loans from affordable lenders	£1,700,000	£1,087,000	
Number of new credit	600	178	

union members			Amongst existing members, there has been a trend toward reduced borrowing but member saving has increased.
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Action Plan 2021/22

The anti-poverty action plan sets out aims for targeted activity and one-off pieces of work throughout the lifetime of the strategy. Key actions achieved in the 2021-22 to address the drivers of poverty include:

Income from Social Security

Individuals who have been financially impacted by the pandemic have been supported to maximise income:

- During the reporting period CAB West Lothian Help to Claim service managed 512 contacts for clients residing within West Lothian and 277 clients residing in other parts of Scotland through the national help line. In addition, 204 West Lothian client contacts were managed by other Bureaus throughout Scotland. Arrangements are in place with Access2employment to offer onward referrals for clients progressing toward the labour market.
- The Advice Shop supported 424 individuals facing unemployment or reduction of income due to Covid-19. Of this group, income was successfully managed for 168 individuals to the value of £822,799 which represents an average financial gain of £4,897 per person per year.

Targeted income maximisation advice has been taken forward with key partners:

- The Anti-Poverty Service has recruited a new team of advisors to work directly with schools to embed advice and support for families through school settings, resulting in financial gains of £27,000 between project launch in January 2022 to end of March 2022.
- Between April 2021 and March 2022, the Advice Shop has worked with 168 young people between the ages of 16-24 who are experiencing homelessness and secured extra income worth £308,963. A dedicated worker was recruited in January 2022 and is working with a range of partners through the youth homelessness intervention pathway to explore options for early intervention to reduce the number of young people leaving their tenancy.

Income from employment

Employability support has been in place for anyone whose work has been affected during the pandemic:

- The parental employment advisers within the Access2employment team have registered and supported 64 employed and unemployed eligible parents. Advisors working alongside the Families Together team have registered 12 clients during this period. This activity provides long term intensive support to families that are furthest removed from the labour market into a positive destination.

- Many parents have taken part in employability workshops with seven completing accredited training and six have gained full time employment.
- An employability award for parents is in the development stage and is hoped to be ready to deliver when the service returns to face to face delivery.

The West Lothian Jobs Task Force has continued to support economic growth:

- In 2021/22 the Jobs Task Force has supported the development of new jobs, retraining and upskilling. The council agreed a further £1 million to help create an extra 300 jobs and this funding has helped to provide local businesses with an incentive to recruit an unemployed resident. Each grant averages £3,500 per job for 300 new jobs, with each job paying at least the real living wage of £9.50 per hour/£18,500+ per annum.
- In addition, the Jobs Task Force continues to support higher-value new jobs. Local firms in key sectors can apply for £7,500 per new job. This will help create a further 500 new jobs and safeguard 1,750 jobs.
- In June 2021, the Jobs Task Force approved £512,500 funding support for the skills themes contained in the council's bid to the Community Renewal Fund. This funding is now being deployed and will continue through 2022/23 on higher-value job creation in key sectors, upskilling and retraining, and targeted prevention work to help young people at risk find a positive pathway in to work.

Cost of Living

A range of financial support has been introduced to help with the rising cost of essential items and household bills:

- A Fuel Grant: the council approved a £100 payment to support low income households with rising energy costs has been introduced. To date, payments worth £55,100 have been made to 551 households experiencing fuel poverty or at risk of disconnection.
- A new 'Feeling the Pinch' fund was delivered between January and March 2022 to help low income households who cannot access financial support elsewhere. One off payments of up to £300 were awarded to help with the cost of essential items or unexpected costs. In total, payments of £79,988 were made to 367 individuals living with low income.
- The Tenant Grant Fund was delivered to enable local authorities to prevent homelessness and help sustain tenancies by directly reducing, alleviating or paying off rent arrears altogether. A total of £326,000 was paid to 302 applicants.

The Digital Inclusion Working Group has co-ordinated access to digital devices to enable households with low income to continue to access services digitally:

- The Connecting Scotland programme has been successfully delivered, awarding 1,864 devices to West Lothian residents to date. Chromebooks and iPads along with associated data packages for a fixed period of between six and 24 months, as well as digital support where needed, have been distributed through local charities and council services. Impact surveys carried out three to six months after allocation of devices has generated overwhelmingly positive feedback from

recipients who have commented that receiving a device has helped their mental health and ability to cope during lockdowns.

West Lothian Food Network continues to support community food outlets to promote access to food with dignity:

- Pantries and community fridges are generating income however, more work is required to achieve sustainability out with ongoing grant support.
- West Lothian Food Network partners now have four venues providing services in the evening and three venues providing services at the weekends to improve access for those facing in-work poverty. The food network has provided almost three million meals since May 2020 to people facing food insecurity. There has also been an increased focus on providing fresh vegetables, fruit, meat, fish, dairy and bakery products in the 2021/22 period.
- There has been increased use of FORT to make active referrals for service users. Council benefit officers will be based at food network venues several times per week.

Forward Planning – 2022/23

The rising cost of living has been identified by local anti-poverty practitioners as a major cause for concern and a priority for the 2022/23 period.

Recent surveys show that more households are worried about the cost of essentials including food, gas and electricity, rent and travel costs than at the height of the pandemic and both advice agencies and crisis support organisations have reported a significant increase in referrals due to rising costs.

The draft anti-poverty action plan for the 2022/23 period will therefore focus on cost of living crisis response and will take forward and build on a number of actions completed in 2021-22 to address the ongoing impact of rising costs:

- Continued delivery of the Fuel Grant for households experiencing fuel poverty and the introduction of a new energy fund which aims to support those with a disability who are disproportionately impacted by increased energy costs.
- Delivery of the Feeling the Pinch fund during winter 2022/23 to provide support with essential items and unexpected costs.
- Development of pilot schemes to support low income households with the cost of furniture and household goods.
- Promotion and delivery of the under 22s free bus travel scheme.
- Provide additional financial support for new Universal Credit claimants to purchase sufficient mobile data to manage their online claim and explore other options for access to internet enabled devices and connectivity.

Targeted income maximisation and financial capability support will also be prioritised to ensure that those most at risk of poverty are able to cope with rising costs, including:

- Young people facing homelessness and/or those seeking sustainable employment.
- Refugees and asylum seekers arriving in West Lothian.

- Older people with low income .
- Students with little or no financial support.
- People with physical and/or mental health concerns.
- Those in the BAME community who may face barriers with access to advice and support.
- Parents of dependent children who live with low income.

Activities continue to be structured according to the five strategic priorities; pockets, prospects, places, people and partnership and are linked to the eight strategic outcomes.

The finalised 2022/23 action plan will be built on the council's performance management system and progress of actions will be tracked and reported to the Anti-Poverty Task Force on a quarterly basis.

4. Summary of Implications

Relevant SOA outcome (s)	
Relevant SOA performance indicator (s)	(SOA1302_13) Percentage of the population who are income deprived (SOA1303_14) Percentage of employees who earn less than the living wage (SOA1302_02) Percentage of adults in receipt of key out of work benefits (SOA1302_12) Number of West Lothian residents supported into work through council employability programmes (CP:SOA1302_09) Percentage of school leavers who enter a positive destination (SOA1305_07) Percentage of care leavers entering a positive destination (SOA1302_01) Percentage of working age adults in work (SOA1303_06) Total number of jobs in West Lothian (SOA1303_07) Number of new homes completed annually in West Lothian (P:SOA1301_11) Percentage of children in poverty in West Lothian
Resources	

Link to CPP prevention plan/Community Engagement plan	
Impact on inequalities	
Key risks	

5. Consultations

Consultation has taken place with the Anti-Poverty Practitioners' Network and the Anti-Poverty Task Force.

6. Conclusions

Progress has been made in key areas towards mitigating the effects of poverty in West Lothian. Work undertaken by a wide range of partners working together has resulted in positive outcomes in relation to targeted income maximisation and the development of new activity to address poverty related trends.

Moving into 2022/23, the draft action plan reflects the changing nature of poverty and key issues of concern relating to the rising cost of living. Activity is underway and on target to achieve successful outcomes for the period between April 2022 to March 2023.

Report written by/contact details/date

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References

West Lothian Anti-Poverty Strategy 2018/19 – 2022/23

Appendices

Appendix 1: Anti-Poverty Strategy Scorecard 2021/22 end of year report

Appendix 2: Anti-Poverty Strategy Action Plan 2021/22 end of year report

Appendix 3: Anti-Poverty Strategy Action Plan 2022/23 draft

CPP Anti-Poverty Strategy Scorecard 2018/19 – 2022/23

End of Year Progress Report: April 2021 – March 2022

Outcome 1: Maximise financial resources of households on low incomes

Indicators	Baseline Performance 2017/18	Short Term Target 2018/19	Medium Term Target 2020/21	Long Term Target 2022/23	Position at 31 st March 2022	Status	Commentary
Total value of income maximised following advice each year	£33,928,321	£27,000,000	£34,000,000	£24,000,000	£29,789,119	GREEN	Advice providers supported individuals to maximise income through social security benefit claims and appeals resulting in total financial gains of £29,789,119. This represents average extra income annually of £6571 per household.
Total value of debt managed each year	£11,834,489	£10,000,000	£12,500,000	£4,000,000	£7,661,522	GREEN	Temporary debt relief measures introduced as a result of the pandemic were extended to 31 st March 2022 and debt advice providers have reported a drop in new referrals since the beginning of the pandemic. Targets have therefore been reduced in light of this, however opportunities for early intervention have been explored and debt providers have undertaken work to raise awareness of support available resulting in over £7,000,000 debt managed in the 2021-22 period.
Percentage of the population who are income deprived (SOA1302_13)	12% (2015/16)	12%	11.5%	11%	12%	GREEN	Income deprivation is generally defined through qualification of a range of DWP benefits, including out of work benefits, pension credits and in-work benefits. Latest available SIMD data from January 2020 indicates that income deprivation levels in West Lothian remain static at 12% SIMD 2020 identifies 7 datazones in West Lothian with deprivation levels of 30% or higher. These datazones are within Blackburn (2x datazones), Whitburn, Armadale and the Knightsridge, Ladywell and Craigshill areas of Livingston. It is important to note that the latest available SIMD data is from the pre-pandemic period so the impact of covid on levels of deprivation is not yet fully known. New SIMD data is released on a four year cycle.

CPP Anti-Poverty Strategy Scorecard 2018/19 – 2022/23

End of Year Progress Report: April 2021 – March 2022

Indicators	Baseline Performance 2017/18	Short Term Target 2018/19	Medium Term Target 2020/21	Long Term Target 2022/23	Position at 31 st March 2022	Status	Commentary
Percentage of employees who earn less than the living wage (SOA1303_14)	17%	17%	17%	17%	18%	GREEN	<p>Latest available data from the Annual Survey of Hours and Earnings 2021 showed that the percentage of employees earning less than the Living Wage had increased to 18%, an increase from 13.5% the previous year.</p> <p>It is important to note that this data covers a time period during which many employees were on furlough under the Coronavirus Job Retention Scheme. Estimates are calculated based on actual payments made to employees and the hours upon which this pay was calculated, which in the case of furloughed employees were their usual hours at reduced pay.</p>
Percentage of adults in receipt of key out of work benefits (SOA1302_02)	10.6%	11%	10%	9%		GREEN	<p>The DWP dataset informing this indicator appears to have been discontinued in 2018. Broad economic indicators show the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 76% of the West Lothian population are economically active. This includes people in employment or self-employment and those looking for work. • 24% of the West Lothian population are economically inactive. This includes students, people who are sick, those with caring responsibilities and retired people. Of this group, 18.3% indicate that they want a job. • The claimant count of those in receipt of benefits and looking for work at the end of March 2022 was recorded at 3%. This indicates a downward trend from the same period in March 2021 when the claimant count was 5.6%

CPP Anti-Poverty Strategy Scorecard 2018/19 – 2022/23

End of Year Progress Report: April 2021 – March 2022

Outcome 2: *Reduce out-going costs and the 'poverty premium' on low income households*

Indicators	Baseline Performance 2017/18	Short Term Target 2018/19	Medium Term Target 2020/21	Long Term Target 2022/23	Position at 31 st March 2022	Status	Commentary
Number of individuals who access affordable credit options	1012	1000	1500	2300	562	AMBER	Both Conduit Scotland CDFI and local credit unions have had less demand for loans resulting in reduced lending throughout the pandemic. It is worth noting, however that credit union member savings have increased during the same period.
Total value of loans from affordable lenders	£1,474,055	£1,400,000	£1,600,000	£1,800,000	£1,087,000		
Percentage of tenants receiving a Discretionary Housing Payment to mitigate the impact of the 'bedroom tax' (CP:APS076_9b)	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	GREEN	Performance was 100% against a target of 100%. Reports were produced each month to ensure that all customers impacted by the "bedroom tax" received full mitigation for any period involved. Joint working with social sector landlords also identified any tenant in receipt of Universal Credit who was subject to a bedroom tax reduction. During the year a total of 5070 awards of Discretionary Housing Payment were made to customers impacted by the "bedroom tax". The total amount of Discretionary Housing Payments awarded to mitigate the bedroom tax was £2,918,581.

Outcome 3: *Households on low incomes are managing finances appropriately and becoming financially resilient*

Indicators	Baseline Performance 2017/18	Short Term Target 2018/19	Medium Term Target 2020/21	Long Term Target 2022/23	Position at 31 st March 2022	Status	Commentary
Number of new Credit Union members	470 new adult members	500	600	600	178	AMBER	Membership of local credit unions continues to be impacted by the pandemic. Reopening of local offices and some collection points has, however, contributed to an

CPP Anti-Poverty Strategy Scorecard 2018/19 – 2022/23

End of Year Progress Report: April 2021 – March 2022

Total value of savings with local credit unions	£2,620,114	£2,600,000	£2,800,000	£3,000,000	£3,048,000	GREEN	increase in new members compared to the 2020-21 period when 121 new members joined local credit unions. Member savings continue to exceed annual targets.
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Outcome 4: *Improve the opportunities for adults from low income backgrounds to be in good quality, sustained employment*

Indicators	Baseline Performance 2017/18	Short Term Target 2018/19	Medium Term Target 2020/21	Long Term Target 2022/23	Position at 31 st March 2022	Status	Commentary
Number of West Lothian residents supported into work through council employability programmes (SOA1302_12)	348	370	450	500	392	GREEN	Of the 392 individuals who registered with the Access2Employment service between April and September 2021 (latest available data), 194 outcomes were noted – with the majority of individuals entering into full-time employment (74%). Furthermore, 26 people (13% of all recorded outcomes) entered formal accredited education or training, 19 people (10% of outcomes) started paid part-time employment and 5 other people became self-employed (3% of all recorded outcomes)
Percentage of employability customers who progress to a positive destination (CP:EDR035_9b.1a)	58%	50%	50%	50%	49%	GREEN	
Percentage of school leavers who enter a positive destination (CP:SOA1302_09)	93.3%	94%	94%	96%	91.3%	GREEN	Latest available Summary Statistics for Attainment and Initial Leaver Destinations 2020-21 show 95.3% of 2050 school leavers progressed to a positive destination. Full initial destinations can be broken down as follows: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 44.7% higher education • 21.2% further education • 4% training • 24.5% employment • 0.4% voluntary work • 0.5% personal skills development

CPP Anti-Poverty Strategy Scorecard 2018/19 – 2022/23

End of Year Progress Report: April 2021 – March 2022

							<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 2.3% unemployed seeking work • 2.4% unemployed not seeking work <p>Additional data from the 2021 Annual Participation Measure showed that of the 8,236 16-19-year olds in West Lothian 91.3% were in education, employment or training and personal development</p>
Percentage of care leavers entering a positive destination (SOA1305_07)	56%	85%	85%	93%	79%	GREEN	<p>Latest available data for 2020-21 shows that 79% of care experienced young people leaving school progressed to a positive destination.</p> <p>It should be noted that the number of young people involved in these statistics is small. Numbers have varied between 10 and 37 annually over the last seven years and a change of one young person either way can change the outcome by several percentage points.</p> <p>The target for this performance indicator is to achieve 93% by 2022/23, and this was set in the development of the council's Corporate Plan.</p>
Percentage of working age adults in work (SOA1302_01)	77.8%	75%	77%	78%	73.8%	GREEN	<p>NOMIS figures available at Dec 2021 indicate that 73.8% of West Lothian adults aged 16-64 are in employment, a decrease from 74.6% in 2020.</p>
Total number of jobs in West Lothian (SOA1303_06)	78,000	75,000	78,000	75,000	76,600	GREEN	<p>This performance indicator measures the number of jobs in West Lothian is an indicator of the overall level of economic activity in the area, and underpins other SOA objectives, for example: the proportion of working age adults in work. Increasing the positive destinations for young people, is both dependent on a wide a range of job opportunities locally.</p> <p>It is important to note that this is an economic health check indicator subject to wider economic forces and cannot be</p>

CPP Anti-Poverty Strategy Scorecard 2018/19 – 2022/23

End of Year Progress Report: April 2021 – March 2022

							<p>solely attributed to the intervention efforts of local partners.</p> <p>The long term target in West Lothian is to increase the number and quality of job opportunities located in the area. With a reduction in the public sector and wider economic uncertainty however, supporting jobs growth back to pre-recession levels of 80,000 (2009/10) is a steep challenge particularly given the negative effects of the Covid pandemic on employment levels within some sectors, so an interim target of 75,000 remains in place.</p>
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Outcome 5: *Low income households are able to access services and be socially and financially included*

Indicators	Baseline Performance 2017/18	Short Term Target 2018/19	Medium Term Target 2020/21	Long Term Target 2022/23	Position at 31 st March 2022	Status	Commentary
Number of anti-poverty service web hits	48,760	48,000	52,000	54,000	287,216	GREEN	<p>The Anti-Poverty Service has experienced increased web traffic since the start of the pandemic with 287,216 web hits during the 2021-22 period. The most frequently accessed content includes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Council Tax • Scottish Welfare Fund • Council Tax Reduction Scheme • Advice Shop online referral form • Self-Isolation Support Grant • Discretionary Housing Payment application form • Access to Food online map • Housing Benefit and Council Tax Reduction change of circumstances online form
Number of individuals who access advice	1013	1000	1500	1750	2371	GREEN	In the 2021-22 period, advice agencies supported 2371 individuals through health care settings including GP

CPP Anti-Poverty Strategy Scorecard 2018/19 – 2022/23

End of Year Progress Report: April 2021 – March 2022

through health settings							surgeries, hospitals and community health hubs, resulting in total financial gains of £3,094,119
Number of outreach advice sessions available across all multi-member ward areas	19	19	12	9	16	GREEN	Advice agencies in West Lothian have begun to re-mobilise and co-location of services with key partners has been a focus in the 2021-22 period including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • School settings • West Lothian Foodbank • Some community food outlets • GP surgeries • Some community development trusts
Number of people signposted and referred for support through the FORT system	N/A	200	350	1000	3910	GREEN	In total, 79 services and organisations now use the FORT system to make and track active referrals for advice and support. In the 2021-22 period, 5000 referrals were made through FORT.

Outcome 6: Increase the number of people who live in warm, affordable homes

Indicators	Baseline 2017/18	Short Term Target 2018/19	Medium Term Target 2020/21	Long Term Target 2022/23	Position at 31 st March 2022	Status	Commentary
Number of new homes completed annually in West Lothian (SOA1303_07)	597 2016/17	500		3000	2422	GREEN	Since the start of 2012/13 to the end of 2021/22, 2,422 affordable homes have been built and/or acquired which represents 81% of the 3,000 target. A further 586 are either under construction or committed. The majority of the affordable homes provided in West Lothian since 2012/13 have been provided by the council. However, the approved West Lothian Local Housing Strategy 2017-22 highlights the opportunity for other housing providers to make a greater contribution to affordable housing delivery over its five-year period. During the 2021-22 period, 99 affordable new build houses were completed by RSL partners in West Lothian.

CPP Anti-Poverty Strategy Scorecard 2018/19 – 2022/23

End of Year Progress Report: April 2021 – March 2022

Total value of savings as a result of energy advice	£363,738	£350,000	£350,000	£350,000	£485,048	GREEN	Energy advice providers in West Lothian supported householders to make savings of £485,048 on fuel costs through energy efficiency advice, tariff switch, support to resolve billing and meter issues and access to energy grants.
Number of potential homeless situations prevented with intervention	372	560	120 <i>*reduced target</i>	560	260	GREEN	Advice providers in West Lothian successfully supported 260 tenants and homeowners at risk of homelessness to remain in their homes. This is achieved through income maximisation, negotiation of repayment of arrears and access to funds such Discretionary Housing Payment.
Percentage of new tenancies sustained for over one year (CP:HQSARC20.3_9b)	90%	93%	90%	90%	92.9%	GREEN	In 2021/22 performance increased to 92.9% as 106 tenancies were sustained from 114 created in 2021/22. This remains above target. No benchmarking data will be available until July when target setting for 2022/23 will take place.

Outcome 7: Reduce the number of children living in relative poverty

Indicators	Baseline Performance 2017/18	Short Term Target 2018/19	Medium Term Target 2020/21	Long Term Target 2022/23	Position at 31 st March 2022	Status	Commentary
Percentage of children in poverty in West Lothian (P:SOA1301_11)	21.91%	22%	20%	18%	24.6%	RED	Latest available data for 2019-20 estimates 24.6% of children in West Lothian were estimated to experience relative poverty. This is an increase on the previous year but this trend is broadly in line with Scotland as a whole as all 32 local authorities have seen increased rates for this period. To combat this, a local child poverty reference group has been established and a two-year child poverty action plan developed.
Number of EMA applications processed	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	743	GREEN	This suite of indicators replaces previously reported indicators relating to education benefits. This is a data only performance measure with no set target. The council has no influence on the number of applications received or awarded for Education Maintenance Allowance, Clothing
Number of School Clothing Grant	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	8594	GREEN	

CPP Anti-Poverty Strategy Scorecard 2018/19 – 2022/23

End of Year Progress Report: April 2021 – March 2022

applications processed							Grant or Free School Meals but will carry out take up campaigns to maximise the number of awards made.
Number of pupils in receipt of Free School Meals	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	6778	GREEN	
Number of 2 year old children utilising early learning and childcare (EDPP219_9b.1b)	148	150	200	200	354	GREEN	From August 2020 to 31 October 2021, 571 applications were received for two-year old ELC provision. Of these 206 did not meet the criteria to qualify for a placement. From the 365 eligible applications 354 were successful with placements spread across council establishments (156), playgroups (172) and childminders (26); 11 applications were not granted places.
Number of pregnant women and parents engaged with advice	248	500	1000	500	947	GREEN	Advice agencies engaged with 947 pregnant women and parents during the 2021-22 period securing total financial gains of over £645,640 from sources including; Best Start Grant, Scottish Child Payment, Child Disability Payment, Carers Allowance and Universal Credit.

Outcome 8: Increase opportunities for local people to fully participate in their communities and bring about change

Indicators	Baseline 2017/18	Short Term Target 2018/19	Medium Term Target 2020/21	Long Term Target 2022/23	Position at 31 st March 2020	Status	Commentary
Percentage of residents who feel they can influence decisions	40%	46%	46%	47%	40%	RED	Data for these indicators is gathered through the Quality of Life survey which is carried out every three years. The latest was due to be carried out in 2019 but was put on hold whilst the Citizens Panel was reviewed.
Percentage of residents who feel we have an inclusive society	56%	56%	64%	68%	56%	GREEN	Plans to refresh the panel in early 2020 and then carry out the survey around August 2020 have been put on hold due to the coronavirus crisis. This action will be revisited going forward as part of the new LOIP, consideration will be given to how to measure inclusion and involvement to produce more regular data

PRIORITY: Pockets

1: Maximise financial resources of households on low incomes			
Desired Outcome	Actions	Assigned to	Update
Embed advice, support and advocacy to improve early intervention and prevent poverty and focus on those who have been affected by COVID-19	<p>Provide access to specialist tax advice and support for clients who need to liaise with HMRC on tax issues, Tax Credits and specialist reliefs as a result of COVID19.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Liaise with HMRC on behalf of clients and assist with all tax issues • Ensure tax liability correct and reduced where appropriate. • Check and enquire about Tax Credits on behalf of clients. • Advise on and provide support with the range of temporary relief afforded to individual taxpayers and small business including the impact of furlough, small business reliefs and the interaction of these with other state benefits. • Promote the service locally to ensure continued awareness and take up • Provide advice and updates on tax issues to other advice providers 	CAB West Lothian HMRC project	<p>The HMRC project continued to operate successfully throughout the reporting period and although Face to Face was suspended other than by appointment the project engaged with 187 clients providing a range of service as follows:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Self-Employment Income Support Scheme • Self-Employment • Employment & PAYE • Tax Credit Overpayments • Self-Assessment • Late filing/ late payment penalties • Tax Calculations • Tax Debt • Taxable income • Tax Credits > Universal Credit > Child Benefit, Personnel Independent Payment • Complaints to HMRC • National Insurance • Cross Border Issues • Immigration • Covid 19 Job Retention Scheme • Company Directors •

Desired Outcome	Actions	Assigned to	Update
Increase uptake in entitlement to social security benefits and other sources of financial assistance.	Work in partnership with Social Policy to offer income maximisation advice and support to individuals in mental health supported accommodation required to pay contributions toward non-residential care costs	Anti-Poverty Service	The team supported 307 customers throughout the 2021/22 period which amounted to extra income worth £447,512 for these individuals.
	Provide income maximisation advice and support to access financial assistance to individuals facing unemployment or reduction in income as a result of the economic impact of Covid-19	Anti-Poverty Service	The team supported 424 individuals facing unemployment or reduction of income due to Covid-19. Of this group, income was successfully managed for 168 individuals to the value of £822,799 which represents an average financial gain of £4897 per person per year.
	<p>Provide a specialist service assisting clients to make a claim Universal Credit where entitled.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide access to the service through a range of communication channels including phone, face to face and webchat. • Promote self-help by providing guidance to clients making on line claims • Work closely with local DWP management to effectively manage and promote the service including the ongoing outreach service within the Jobcentres. • Promote the service nationally in association with Citizens Advice Scotland and locally to ensure continued take up. • Develop close links with Access2 Employment to make onward referrals 	CAB West Lothian Help to Claim service	The Help to Claim Service continued to operate and provide Multi Channel access services with the exception of Face to Face services for part of the year. During the reporting period CAB West Lothian managed 512 client contacts for clients residing within West Lothian and 277 clients residing in other parts of Scotland through the National help line. In addition, 204 West Lothian client contacts were managed by other Bureaus throughout Scotland. The outreach service located within the Job Centres in Bathgate and Livingston was suspended for part of the period due to COVID restrictions. Referral arrangements are in place with Access 2 Employment.

2: Reduce out-going costs and the 'poverty premium' on low income households			
Desired Outcome	Actions	Assigned to	Update
Support access to affordable food	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> WLC Food Growing Strategy to be ratified Support establishment of new allotment sites, new community gardens and other growing opportunities Working in partnership to provide learning and information-sharing opportunities about food growing Share locations of local food banks with community food growing groups, to aid redistribution of fresh food surpluses 	NETS, Land and Countryside Community Regeneration Community food providers, garden groups and community councils	The West Lothian Council Food Growing Strategy 2020-25 has been formally adopted and supersedes the previous WLC Allotment Strategy. An interactive map of food growing sites in West Lothian has been published online and links have been made between food growers and community food outlets to redistribute excess produce.
	<p>Develop a 2021/22 food insecurity action plan with a focus to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Improve access and availability of healthy food options in local communities Improve links between food providers and financial advice and support Work toward ongoing sustainability of the Food Network 	West Lothian Food Network	<p>Pantries and community fridges are generating income however, more work is required to achieve sustainability out with ongoing grant support.</p> <p>West Lothian Food Network partners now have 4 venues providing service in the evening and 3 venues providing service at the weekends to improve access for those facing in-work poverty. The food network has provided almost three million meals since May 2020 to people facing food insecurity. There has also been an increased focus on providing fresh vegetables, fruit, meat, fish, dairy and bakery products in the 2021-22 period.</p> <p>There has been increased use of FORT to make active referrals for service users. Council benefits officers will be based at food network venues several times per week.</p>

Desired Outcome	Actions	Assigned to	Update
Ensure that individuals in crisis are able to access appropriate, affordable solutions to meet their essential needs	<p>Review the delivery of the Community Access to Sanitary Products scheme:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Map availability of free sanitary products as Covid restrictions ease to ensure availability of appropriate products in public buildings • Continue to promote reusable products as a sustainable alternative to save money in the longer term • Consider the Free Period Products Scotland Act and the implications on further delivery 	Anti-Poverty Service	<p>West Lothian Council Community Regeneration team will lead on the future development of access to free period products. A steering group has been set up to support the implementation of the Act.</p> <p>The steering group will be responsible for undertaking the consultation and producing a Statement of Exercise. It will build on the current arrangements already in place and will work towards ensuring that a range of period products are available across the county in both schools and public places. The steering group will ensure that appropriate monitoring system including financial and performance are in place to manage the process and to satisfy the monitoring and evaluation requirements</p>
	Administration of Scottish Government Pandemic Support Payments to key groups at risk of financial hardship	Anti-Poverty Service	<p>Low Income Pandemic Payments</p> <p>A Low-Income Pandemic Payment (LIPP) of £130 paid by the end of October 2021, for each household in receipt of Council Tax Reduction (CTR), and other households who are exempt from Council Tax or are accessing Housing Support Services and/or living in temporary accommodation or a refuge.</p> <p>A total of £2.1 million paid to 15,613 households</p>

Desired Outcome	Actions	Assigned to	Update
Ensure that individuals in crisis are able to access appropriate, affordable solutions to meet their essential needs <i>(cont)</i>	Administration of Scottish Government Pandemic Support Payments to key groups at risk of financial hardship <i>(cont)</i>	Anti-Poverty Service	<p>Tenant Grant Fund Payments made to mitigate the short to medium term financial challenges being experienced by tenants adversely impacted by restrictions and regulations introduced since March 2020, to control the spread of COVID-19. This fund enabled local authorities to prevent homelessness and help sustain tenancies by directly reducing, alleviating or paying off rent arrears altogether.</p> <p>A total of £326,000 was paid to 302 applicants.</p> <p>Winter Support Fund On 29 October 2021, the Scottish Government announced a Winter Support Fund to support wellbeing and respond to financial insecurity. West Lothian Council agreed to pay £135 payment to customers in receipt of Council Tax Reduction who have additional vulnerabilities.</p> <p>A total of £621,000 will be paid to 4,600 households</p>

Desired Outcome	Actions	Assigned to	Update
Ensure that individuals in crisis are able to access appropriate, affordable solutions to meet their essential needs (<i>cont</i>)	Development of community financial, employability advice and signposting service in Polbeth and West Calder with an aim to support 60 people at risk of poverty in 2021-22	Polbeth Community HUB, West Calder Community Hub, Anti-Poverty Service	Regular appointments set up fortnightly (appointments every 2 nd Thursday) with the Advice Shop for money maximisation and on-going referrals sent via FORT as part of sign posting service with community development workers. Currently, we have seen an increase either through direct appointment referrals or details passed over to CAB, A2E or Advice Shop with the expectation for this to increase in the coming months. On alternative Thursdays, Social Security Scotland are also providing support and appointments.

PRIORITY: Prospects

3: Households with low income are managing finances appropriately and becoming financially resilient			
Desired Outcome	Actions	Assigned to	Update
Improve financial resilience and wellbeing in response to economic downturn	Pilot a new approach to improving the debt advice journey through increased financial resilience: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Recruit 2 Link Workers to support debt advice clients to improve financial resilience Work with Debt Advice Forum partners to develop a financial wellbeing toolkit Promote a range of self-help options including online benefit calculator and budget planner tools Develop and deliver awareness and take-up campaigns to tie in with key awareness weeks 	Anti-Poverty Service	Financial capability link workers have engaged with 35 individuals since the Improving the Debt Journey project launch in June 2021. Link workers provide one to one support to improve knowledge, confidence and skills with budgeting and money management with the aim to empower clients to become more financially resilient. Clients complete a holistic needs assessment at the start of their case and progress is measured in a number of areas when the case is closed. To date, all clients who

			<p>have graduated from the project indicate improvement in all areas, scoring on average:</p> <p>53% improvement in confidence that they are making the most of their money</p> <p>63% increase in knowledge about how to manage their money well</p> <p>43% increase in ability to cope with unexpected costs.</p>
	<p>Deliver a financial literacy short course to 20 participants. This will help them to better manage their personal finances, create a budget, and understand financial products and terminology.</p>	Adult Learning	<p>One course has been delivered to date (July/Aug 2021) with ten participants.</p>
	<p>Deliver 'Skills for Life' courses to 20 participants focussing on budgeting and mental wellbeing</p>	Bridge Community Project	<p>23 people attended mental health groups, 23 people attended bereavement support groups and 7 people attended skills for life groups</p>
<p>Improve financial resilience and wellbeing in response to economic downturn (<i>cont</i>)</p>	<p>Provide a targeted specialist service to residents in West Lothian on a one to one basis to include a comprehensive financial health check with a view to maximising income and reducing expenditure.</p> <p>Promote the service nationally in association with Scottish Government and locally to ensure continued take up.</p>	CAB West Lothian Money Talks team	<p>The Money Talks Team works in parallel with Help to Claim because of similar client demographics and during the reporting period continued to provide the full range of services through local help line access and email access. Face to Face access was suspended for some time during the reporting period due to Covid restrictions. The locally based Whitburn service continued to operate mainly with a telephone service. During the reporting period the Money Talks Team service engaged with 203 clients.</p>
<p>Improve access to local debt advice and support</p>	<p>Launch CAP Debt Centre with a target of helping 50 households become debt free per year</p>	West Lothian Foodbank Christians Against Poverty	<p>CAP Debt Centre has completed all training and checks. Money courses have been run in the foodbank, churches, schools and other community groups.</p>

			Several households are currently being supported to get out of debt.
	<p>Bring together debt advice practitioners in West Lothian with a view to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Map availability of debt advice and support in local communities • Share information and resources to encourage best practice • Deliver a joint awareness event during Challenge Poverty Week or Talk Money Week 2021 	West Lothian Debt Advice Forum	<p>West Lothian Debt Forum has been established and Terms of Reference agreed.</p> <p>A money toolkit has been produced with details of local debt advice, financial capability support and sources of help with financial and emotional wellbeing.</p> <p>Debt advice forum partners delivered a range of money advice events during Talk Money Week 2021.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 15 participants attended Illegal Money Lending awareness training • 11 partners attended a financial capability project launch event

4: Improve opportunities for adults from low income backgrounds to be in good quality, sustained employment

Desired Outcome	Actions	Assigned to	Update
Employability support is provided to individuals affected by the economic impact of COVID-19	<p>Explore opportunities for the Jobs Task Force to match-fund any successful partnership bids in to the UK Community Renewal Fund. A successful partnership bid will help support:-</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Green and Digital jobs; • A skills pipeline in to the life sciences sector; • Capacity building for higher-value healthcare roles; and • Inclusive opportunities for more of our young people 	West Lothian Jobs Task Force	<p>In 2021-22 the Jobs Task Force has supported the development of new jobs, retraining and upskilling.</p> <p>On 22 June 2021, West Lothian Council Executive agreed a further £1 million to help create an extra 300 jobs. This funding has helped to provide local businesses with an incentive to recruit an unemployed resident. Each grant averages £3,500 per job for 300 new jobs, with each job paying at least the real living wage of £9.50 per hour/£18,500+ per annum.</p>

			<p>In addition, the Jobs Task Force continues to support higher-value new jobs. Local firms in key sectors can apply for £7,500 per new job. This will help create a further 500 new jobs and safeguard 1,750 jobs.</p> <p>Council Executive also approved a funding bid to the UK Government's Community Renewal Fund (CRF). Part of the bid included a recommendation of match funding from the Jobs Task Force of £512,500.</p>
Employability support is provided to individuals affected by the economic impact of COVID-19 (cont)	<p>West Lothian Council employees have access to a range of services to support financial wellbeing:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop and deliver online awareness sessions for employees and managers • Consider ways in which to extend financial wellbeing services to local employers to help reduce in-work poverty 	Anti-Poverty Service	<p>Financial capability workshops for council managers and employees were offered during Healthy Working Lives week in May 2021. Take-up of these open events was low with only 3 participants in the employee workshop. A new campaign officer has now been appointed to take this action forward and has arranged to visit Whitehill Service Centre to offer Toolbox Talks to operatives.</p>
	<p>Parental Employment Support Fund (PESF) will support families who are in or at risk of poverty, to access employment or progress in work:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Parental employment support will support assist and support employed and unemployed parents across West Lothian to ensure fair and sustainable employment. • An employability award to be developed and delivered to the parental support clients • Dedicated advisers will work in partnership with the Families Together Team to offer intensive employability support to families within social policy. 	Access2Employment	<p>Since January 2021 the service has engaged and registered 64 PES eligible parents for long term employability support. To date, seven parents have successfully completed accredited training to move them closer to their chosen career path and six have gained full time employment.</p>

5: Low income households are able to access services and be socially and financially included			
Desired Outcome	Actions	Assigned to	Update
Adapt service delivery to enable residents to access advice, support and assistance with financial issues without the need for face to face contact	Development of community financial, employability advice and signposting service in Polbeth and West Calder with an aim to support 60 people at risk of poverty in 2021-22	Polbeth Community HUB, West Calder Community Hub, Anti-Poverty Service	Regular appointments set up fortnightly (appointments every 2 nd Thursday) with the Advice Shop for money maximisation and on-going referrals sent via FORT as part of sign posting service with community development workers. Currently, we have seen an increase either through direct appointment referrals or details passed over to CAB, A2E or Advice Shop with the expectation for this to increase in the coming months. On alternative Thursdays, Social Security Scotland are also providing support and appointments.
	Encourage active referrals between advice and support services and continue to explore options to embed the Fast Online Referral Tracking (FORT) system as preferred referral channel	Anti-Poverty Service	16 new services and/or organisations joined the FORT network during the 2021/22 period. A regular newsletter has been developed to keep FORT users informed of new referral options and examples of good practice. Newsletters have been sent to a total of 645 users with a 62% open rate (study shows ~20% is considered good). A stakeholder event was delivered in October 2021 during Challenge Poverty Week. This offered FORT users an opportunity for networking and learning about the other services on FORT. In total 28 users attended the stakeholder event and feedback was very positive.

Ensure that low income families have access to necessary technology to navigate digital services and online learning and development opportunities	<p>Receive, refurbish and redistribute 100 devices per year through the Digital Device Refurbishment Programme</p> <p>Provide devices and internet access for those who are particularly isolated due to COVID-19 through the Scottish Government initiative 'Connecting Scotland'</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Award the West Lothian allocation (tbc) of devices in phase 3 of the programme via an application process, open to public sector and third sector organisations to apply to on behalf of their clients who are digitally excluded and unable to afford to purchase their own device. 	Digital Inclusion Working Group	<p>A total of 185 donated devices have been refurbished via Reusing IT and distributed to digitally excluded individuals.</p> <p>The phase 3 allocation was awarded and distributed to individuals via public and third sector organisations. A total of 1864 devices and connectivity have now been distributed over the lifetime of the Connecting Scotland programme.</p>
Individuals with health issues are supported to access services with a view to improving overall wellbeing	<p>Deliver a 'Stepping Stones to Wellbeing' group service aimed at those who are struggling with mental health issues, bereavement and isolation. The service aims to help clients work toward improved mental, emotional and financial wellbeing</p>	Bridge Community Project	23 people attended mental health groups, 23 people attended bereavement support groups and 7 people attended skills for life groups
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Link Workers will work with people affected by cancer to identify non-clinical concerns around a cancer diagnosis through a new Improving the Cancer Journey service co-create a care plan to address these issues in a coordinated way by referring and/or signposting for support 	Anti-Poverty Service Macmillan Cancer Support NHS Lothian	<p>The Improving the Cancer journey project has received 231 referrals between April 2021- March 2022. In total, these referrals have led to 161 initial appointments and 668 onward referrals/signposting to other services to meet wider needs.</p> <p>Customer evaluations have been carried out to analyse the impact of the project and 8 case studies completed to date.</p>

6: Increase the number of people who live in warm, affordable homes			
Desired Outcome	Actions	Assigned to	Update
Households are supported to access a range of energy efficiency measures and financial assistance to reduce fuel poverty	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develop and deliver a campaign to encourage and support households to switch energy tariff or supplier with a view to saving money Support households with fuel debt by providing help to access one off energy grants and hardship funds 	Energy Advice Forum	<p>Options for an online tariff comparison tool were considered, however the imminent energy price rise then removed the urgency for this campaign as most energy suppliers ceased offering value for money fixed deals</p> <p>The WLC Fuel Grant was introduced in November 2021 which offers a £100 payment to those affected by fuel poverty and/or at risk of disconnection. This fund continues into 2023 (money allowing) and can be accessed via telephone, FORT or online referral form. In total, 551 households were supported through this grant between November 2021 and March 2022 with a total spend of £55,100</p> <p>The Advice Shop energy advice team is now registered as a direct partner with the Fuel Bank Foundation allowing referrals to be made for those on pre-payment meters facing disconnection and needing emergency energy voucher help</p>
Support is available for people experiencing homelessness	Consider the development of SQA modules to be delivered in schools and community settings with young people who are vulnerable	Education Services Anti-Poverty Service	<p>5 young people are due to finish the course at the end of May and will complete a course evaluation.</p> <p>Next steps are under discussion and materials for the course will be shared with The Level Up Team, The Trust Project and ISS staff in Skills Stations and hopefully will be available on Teams.</p>

	<p>Develop a pilot project to assist temporary tenants moved into the Polbeth and West Calder area through:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provision of a welcome pack of household essential items, personal dignity kits and store cupboard food as well as essential information about their tenancy and the local area • Offer new temporary tenants an appointment at advice outreach session delivered through Polbeth Community HUB to maximise income and address any housing, debt or energy issues • Promote local amenities such as the community shop, counselling service and local employability support 	Polbeth Anti-Poverty Group	<p>Temporary Housing referrals have been made and welcome packs given to 3 people who have been referred through FORT. Maps provided, support tenants with further information on the local area i.e. shops, chemists etc</p> <p>Local amenities are promoted with referrals and information provided through meeting and also leaflets included within the welcome packs.</p>
	<p>Income maximisation advice and financial capability support is provided for young people facing homelessness to become financially resilient.</p> <p>This will include developing and participating in SQA modules to be delivered in the next academic year to identified young people</p>	Anti-Poverty Service	<p>Between April 2021 and March 2022, the Advice Shop has worked with 168 young people between the ages of 16-24 who are experiencing homelessness and secured extra income worth £308,963.</p> <p>A dedicated worker was recruited in January 2022 and is working with a range of partners through the youth homelessness intervention pathway to explore options for early intervention to reduce the number of young people leaving their tenancy.</p>

PRIORITY: People

7: Reduce the number of children living in poverty			
Desired Outcome	Actions	Assigned to	Update
Families with low income are aware of and are supported to access financial support	<p>Financial support options are available for families:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • £3 meal payments will be made to children in receipt of Free School Meals if they cannot attend 	Anti-Poverty Service	£3 meal payments worth £13,722 have been made between April 2021 – March 2022

	<p>school due to self-isolating up to the end of the end of the academic year</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> £6 will be paid to S1 to S6 children who will not attend school on 2 additional in-service days 31 May/1 June £100 pandemic payments to be paid in summer and winter to those children who are eligible for free school meals and on a low income 		<p>A total of £315,348 was paid in respect of the 2 extra in-service days on 31st May and 1st June 2021</p> <p>Pandemic payments worth a total of £4,296,830 have been made between Winter 2021 and Spring 2022</p> <p>Winter 21: £608,200 Spring 21: £683,100 Summer 21: £683,100 Autumn 21: £808,000 Winter 22: £855,520 Spring 22: £712,010</p> <p>Holiday meal payments worth £1,463,310 have been paid between April</p>
	<p>Parents and carers who self-refer for support with school uniform costs are referred for income maximisation advice and support to access social security benefits.</p>	<p>Schoolbank West Lothian Anti-Poverty Service</p>	<p>Schoolbank West Lothian have joined the FORT network to create a new referral pathway for parents and carers who contact the service directly looking for support with school uniforms. These clients are now referred by the Schoolbank via FORT to the Advice Shop for income maximisation advice. In total, 28 clients were referred through this route in the 2021-22 period resulting in financial gains of £2898 an average of £108 per family.</p>
<p>Families with low income are aware of and are supported to access financial support (cont)</p>	<p>Work with Family Assessment and Support Services screening group to provide income maximisation for at-risk families</p> <p>Explore the feasibility of income maximisation advisors to be located within school clusters and working with education to offer help and support within the school environment</p>	<p>Anti-Poverty Service</p>	<p>A referral mechanism was implemented in June 2020 for at-risk families through the Family Assessment and Support Service resulting in 105 referrals for income maximisation advice and support in the 2021-22 period.</p> <p>3 new Campaign Development Officers are now in post with the Advice Shop to work directly with 6 pilot schools to embed</p>

			advice and support services for families and young people directly through the school setting resulting in financial gains of £27,000 between project launch in January 2022 to end of March 2022.
Families have access to tools and resources to improve their financial wellbeing	<p>Development of a new West Lothian model for school holiday activity clubs to embed support for the most vulnerable children and young people.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • design and implement a programme of summer activity in Summer 2021 as West Lothian Council's contribution to the 'Summer of Play' in line with the Guidance received from the Scottish Government. • Develop a revised model of targeted summer activities to support vulnerable children and young people in West Lothian for introduction in Summer 2022 will complement the direct payments to be made to the families of children and young people entitled to free school meals, and embed support for the most vulnerable 	Education	The service coordinated the planning and delivery of the West Lothian Summer of Play 2021 funded programme, in partnership with community groups, third sector organisations and partner providers. 5,421 young people participated in the activities. Most activities were concentrated within the 20% most disadvantaged SIMD data zones. Partners received referrals from various agencies and council services working with vulnerable children, young people and families.
Schools and early years settings play a key role in identifying and linking families experiencing financial hardship with advice and support	<p>Explore opportunities to work with local schools to improve links to financial advice and support</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • deliver financial capability sessions for senior pupils • Implementation of the FORT referral tracking system in schools and early years settings with a view to increased active referrals for families experiencing financial difficulties • Deliver a specialist income maximisation service embedded in school settings for families who are experiencing financial hardship to help them to become more financially confident. 	Anti-Poverty Service	<p>With support from the Anti-Poverty Service, West Calder High School has developed the role of pupil 'Challenge Poverty Ambassadors' who aim to support the school community to promote inclusion and equality and address barriers and stigma associated with poverty. During Challenge Poverty Week 2021 'Challenge Poverty Ambassadors' delivered poverty awareness training around the cost of the school day to their teachers in the school and created a display board to raise awareness of poverty related issues.</p> <p>Following this successful partnership, joint work with schools has been taken forward</p>

			<p>in the 2021-22 period with the recruitment of 3 new Campaign Development Officers who will work directly with 6 high schools to embed advice and support services for families and young people directly through the school setting resulting in financial gains of £27,000 between project launch in January 2022 to end of March 2022.</p> <p>Poverty Awareness and FORT training has been delivered in 10 schools across West Lothian as well as Headteacher meetings during the 2021-22 period resulting in new schools joining the FORT network to make active referrals for families.</p>
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8: Increase opportunities for local people to fully participate in their communities and bring about change			
Desired Outcome	Actions	Assigned to	Update
Opportunities are available for West Lothian residents to have their say about issues of importance in their communities	<p>Carry out a review of the Experts by Experience panel to improve engagement with those with lived experience of poverty:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Review the role and remit of the panel • Recruit new members to the Experts by Experience panel to ensure diverse membership • Explore options for an anonymous online forum to encourage ongoing discussion and communication between panel members • Explore the potential to work with Poverty Alliance on their Get Heard Scotland project 	Anti-Poverty Service	<p>The Experts by Experience panel has been reviewed and redeveloped to create more opportunities for engagement for people with lived experience. A new online Knowledge Hub group has been created which provides a discussion forum, ideas page and events calendar for volunteer Experts to access at any time.</p> <p>The opportunity to become a volunteer Expert has been promoted through key groups including tenant participation groups and youth groups as well as a general social media campaign. This has resulted in new members joining the panel and links have been identified with existing participation groups.</p>

COVID-19 Response and Recovery

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Revisit poverty awareness activity with young people with a view to hosting a feedback event to participants • Present findings to appropriate Pupil Equity Fund conference • Aid the development of opportunity of anti-poverty champions training for young people. 	Community Learning and Development Youth Services	5 young people are due to finish the course at the end of May and will complete the course evaluation. Next steps are under discussion and materials for the course will be shared with The Level Up Team, The Trust Project and some of our Inclusion and Support Service staff in Skills Stations.
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PRIORITY: Pockets

1: Maximise financial resources of households on low incomes				
Ref	Action	Desired Outcome	Assigned to	Action Stage
APTF22001.01	Provide a range of cash payments to key target groups most at risk of experiencing poverty	<p>Make payments to marginalised groups</p> <p>Provide cash payments to help toward the cost of gas and electricity</p> <p>Deliver the Feeling the Pinch fund to support low income households with the cost of essential items or unexpected payments</p> <p>Access home heating fund for energy support</p> <p>Provide shopping & energy voucher as part of cooking project</p>	<p>Anti-Poverty Service</p> <p>Bridge Community Project</p>	Started
APTF22001.02	Advice agencies explore the feasibility of extended opening hours to improve accessibility for those in work	Feasibility report produced	West Lothian advice agencies	Idea
APTF22001.03	Implement exit strategy for the Self-Isolation Support Grant and embed referral routes for individuals who continue to experience financial hardship	<p>Administer payments to those who continue to qualify following a positive PCR test</p> <p>Process all outstanding applications</p> <p>Onward referrals for further advice and support</p>	Anti-Poverty Service	Started
APTF22001.04	Explore options for targeted work to raise awareness of Council Tax Reduction Scheme	Increase uptake of Council Tax Reduction Scheme	Anti-Poverty Service	Idea

Ref	Action	Desired Outcome	Assigned to	Action Stage
APTF22001.05	Support people with disabilities to access Scottish disability benefits	<p>Improve awareness of Child Disability Payment and Adult Disability Payment</p> <p>Provide support to claim disability benefits through a range of channels</p>	<p>Social Security Scotland</p> <p>Anti-Poverty Service</p>	Started
APTF22001.06	Deliver a programme of Universal Credit training	<p>Anti-poverty practitioners attend training</p> <p>Good feedback on training</p>	Anti-Poverty Service	Approved
APTF22001.07	Develop and deliver a benefit take up campaign to maximise the income of older people.	<p>Increase awareness of help available to older people.</p> <p>Increase incoming referrals from internal and external partners through information sharing and training events.</p> <p>Increase income maximisation for older people through attendance allowance applications and applications for other relevant benefits.</p> <p>Increase appeals in relation to Attendance Allowance.</p>	Anti-Poverty Service	Approved
APTF22001.08	Ensure clients have access to digital services to enable application for and maintenance of Universal Credit claims.	<p>Provision of funding for clients to purchase data.</p> <p>Ensure UC help to claim advisers raise awareness of availability of funding.</p>	CAB West Lothian	Approved

2: Reduce out-going costs and the 'poverty premium' on low income households				
Ref	Action	Desired Outcome	Assigned to	Action Stage
APTF22002.01	Work with community food providers to raise awareness of poverty related issues and encourage active referrals for income maximisation advice	<p>All West Lothian Food Network member organisations undertake poverty awareness training</p> <p>Increase the number of Food Network members using the FORT system to send and/or receive referrals</p> <p>Improve access to advice for those experiencing food insecurity through co-location and active referrals</p>	<p>Anti-Poverty Service</p> <p>West Lothian Food Network</p>	Started
APTF22002.02	West Lothian Food Network will deliver a range of food related events	Community groups can access £250 one off grants to host events involving food, assisting to bring community groups back together following COVID pandemic.	West Lothian Food Network	Started
APTF22002.03	People have access to a choice of reused/ recycled furniture and household items	<p>Young people under 25 are offered opportunity to take part in pilot</p> <p>Reduction in delivery of Community Care Grant fulfilment. Analyse and report on impact of the project.</p> <p>Explore the feasibility of a reuse and recycle network</p>	Anti-Poverty Service	Awaiting Approval
APTF22002.04	Explore options available to help low income households with financial and other barriers to accessing the internet	<p>Local anti-poverty partners assess the feasibility of signing up to the Good Things Foundation National Databank</p> <p>Promote the availability of affordable broadband social tariffs for low income households</p> <p>Explore opportunities to provide refurbished laptops/ internet devices</p>	<p>Anti-Poverty Practitioners Network</p> <p>Digital inclusion working group</p>	Idea

Ref	Action	Desired Outcome	Assigned to	Action Stage
APTF22002.05	Deliver Recipe Bags & cooking project to households experiencing poverty	Households will be made aware of cheaper alternative shopping, cooking and eating practices and will have the opportunity to increase their Life skills to reduce food expenses Households will access one to one cooking practise session	Bridge Community Project	Approved
APTF22002.06	Work with the food network to explore options to increase the sustainability and enhance the accessibility of food provision	Food support offered to low income households has longevity of life Agencies offering food support increase self-sufficiency and sustainability Develop provision of emergency packs made available to those experiencing crisis who cannot get immediate access to food, sanitary products and/ or toiletries.	West Lothian Food Network Anti-poverty service	Approved
APTF22002.07	Work with local communities to ensure that provision of sanitary products meets the needs of individuals in need of support	Gather views on sanitary product provision, through open public consultation, to inform future development. Prepare and publish a 'statement of exercise' in line with duties under the Period Products (Free Provision) (Scotland) Act 2021. Undertake targeted campaigns to raise awareness of provision within target communities.	Community Regeneration	Started
APTF22002.08	Build a garden capable of providing fresh fruit and vegetables on a commercial scale for supply to people in financial crisis facing food insecurity.	Seasonal fruit and vegetables are available to people in financial crisis throughout the year.	West Lothian Foodbank	Started

APTF2202.09	Set up a third sector hub in Armadale to help people in financial crisis facing food insecurity.	<p>Provide access to a full range of clothes, toys, household goods and baby equipment through a charity shop.</p> <p>Provide people in need with access a selection of upcycled furniture.</p> <p>Open and operate a food pantry providing access to more affordable food to people experiencing food insecurity.</p> <p>Run a community engagement programme to provide a range of activities designed to build relationships with households at risk of experiencing poverty.</p> <p>Provide a space for partners to engage with, and offer services to support the community, including delivery of CAP debt advice and budgeting courses.</p>	West Lothian Foodbank	Started
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PRIORITY: Prospects

3: Households with low income are managing finances appropriately and becoming financially resilient				
Ref	Action	Desired Outcome	Assigned to	Action Stage
APTF22003.01	Develop a range of self-help tools that can be accessed online and through self-help guides	<p>Develop a financial capability self help guide</p> <p>Work with the Money Helper service to embed a range of financial tools and resources through local web pages</p> <p>Increase referrals to the Money Advice Scotland Affordability passport to provide easy access to spending and credit reports</p> <p>Create a quick guide detailing support available to low income households to better manage the rising cost of living</p> <p>Offer hard copy of 'Smart Budgeting' Pack to all clients and referrals</p>	<p>Anti-Poverty Service</p> <p>Bridge Community Project</p>	Started
APTF22003.02	Deliver the Improving the Debt Journey project to support people with debt to improve their financial capability and confidence	<p>Work with local partners to establish key touchpoints for active referrals</p> <p>Deliver financial capability workshops to key target groups</p>	Anti-Poverty Service	Started
APTF22003.03	Local debt advice providers will work in partnership to improve awareness of and access to free debt advice	<p>Develop and deliver an awareness event for partners</p> <p>Further develop and promote the local debt and financial support toolkit</p>	West Lothian Debt Forum	Approved

Ref	Action	Desired Outcome	Assigned to	Action Stage
APTF22003.04	Deliver 'Stepping Stones to Wellbeing' courses to 20 participants focussing on budgeting and mental wellbeing	Households will increase their financial & emotional resilience.	Bridge Community Project	Started
APTF22003.05	Work in partnership to ensure that West Lothian College Students with a low income have the financial resources, stability and capability to sustain their studies	<p>Provide cash grants of up to £200 to support students who are undertaking an access course with the cost of studying.</p> <p>Establish referral pathways for further support including income maximisation and budgeting advice for students accessing this financial support.</p> <p>Deliver Poverty Awareness training to key staff within West Lothian College to ensure a stigma free and dignified approach to offering support to students</p> <p>Explore options for co-location of advice staff within the college</p>	<p>West Lothian College</p> <p>Anti-Poverty Service</p>	Approved

4: Improve opportunities for adults from low income backgrounds to be in good quality, sustained employment				
Ref	Action	Desired Outcome	Assigned to	Action Stage
APTF22004.01	Work with local partners to develop an economic recovery hub in the Stoneyburn area	<p>Attendance within Stoneyburn Hub from involved partners to provide support and advice to local residents.</p> <p>Increase referrals between partners using the FORT referral and tracking system.</p> <p>Increase awareness of available support in office through multiple channels i.e. leaflets, facebook etc.</p>	<p>Economic Development</p> <p>Anti-poverty service</p>	Approved
APTF22004.02	Deliver a targeted project to provide income maximisation advice and support for people moving toward the labour market	<p>Provide advice and guidance including income maximisation to individuals within targeted campaigns and locations</p> <p>Increase referrals to local partners to improve choices and chances for individuals.</p>	Anti-Poverty Service	Approved
APTF22004.03	Work with the Voluntary and Third Sector to enhance support available to young people in accessing education, training or employment opportunities.	Administer funding of £200,000 under the Young Persons Guarantee	Planning, Economic Development and Regeneration	Started
APTF22004.04	Use new UK Shared Prosperity funding to help reduce the barriers some people face to employment and support them to move towards employment and education.	<p>Proposed interventions will be set out in an investment plan to be submitted to the UK government for approval.</p> <p>Develop, deliver and report on interventions</p>	Planning, Economic Development and Regeneration	Awaiting Approval

Ref	Action	Desired Outcome	Assigned to	Action Stage
APTF22004.05	Work in partnership to promote opportunities for people to retrain and/or increase skills	<p>People have better access to training and volunteering opportunities</p> <p>Explore options for new volunteering roles and opportunities across West Lothian</p> <p>Assist long-term unemployed people to access volunteer opportunities</p> <p>Develop volunteer recruitment drives in association with West Lothian College.</p> <p>Develop volunteer advice e hub within West Lothian College.</p> <p>Develop principle of advice for students delivered in the college environment by students trained and supported by the bureau.</p>	<p>Anti-poverty Practitioners Network</p> <p>CAB West Lothian</p> <p>CAB West Lothian</p>	Idea
APTF22004.06	Support long-term unemployed towards the labour market	<p>Deliver the Kickstart programme in West Lothian</p> <p>Establish advice presence in local jobcentres to ensure financial stability and improve access to wider support and advice</p>	<p>Access 2 Employment & Jobcentre Plus</p> <p>Anti-Poverty Service & Jobcentre Plus</p>	Started

PRIORITY: Places

5: Low income households are able to access services and be socially and financially included				
Ref	Action	Desired Outcome	Assigned to	Action Stage
APTF22005.01	Remobilisation plans increased face to face delivery	Implement outreach advice in community settings Develop opportunities for engagement through Near Me Explore opportunities for face to face service delivery Work with F&BVCDT to offer local support	West Lothian advice agencies Bridge Community Project	Started
APTF22005.02	Individuals with health issues are supported to access services with a view to improving overall wellbeing	Mental health support and onward referrals are facilitated through a range of channels: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Community health information hubs • WLSen mental wellbeing project • Mental Health Network Explore opportunities for remobilisation of services through St John's Hospital	NHS Lothian West Lothian Social Enterprise Network Anti-Poverty Service CAB WL	Started
APTF22005.03	Promote and increase Credit Union membership	Remove upfront joining fee to enable more people are able to join the credit union and establish a regular saving routine	West Lothian Credit Union	Approved
APTF22005.04	Working in partnership with appropriate community organisations promote develop and improve access to advice services for the BAME community.	Develop a partnership approach with leaders in the BAME community. Address language barriers to delivering advice services where appropriate. Measure level of confidence in accessing advice services through survey work.	CAB West Lothian	Approved

Ref	Action	Desired Outcome	Assigned to	Action Stage
APTF22005.05	Engage with the Business Community located in West Lothian area to promote advice services for their staff, employees and customers.	<p>Promote advice services throughout the Business Community.</p> <p>Promote advantages of welfare to business and their staff, employees and customers.</p> <p>Through targeted campaigns, work with employers to offer support to people experiencing in work poverty.</p>	<p>CAB West Lothian</p> <p>Anti-poverty Service</p>	Approved
APTF22005.06	Offer a programme of support to refugees and asylum seekers to promote access to appropriate streams of income and necessary support.	<p>Administer payments to Ukrainian refugees and local hosts</p> <p>Provide advice and support to claim relevant benefits and access grant payment as appropriate</p> <p>Co-ordinate referrals for support to increase skills and confidence in order to integrate in local community and job market.</p> <p>Explore options and feasibility of providing a one-off 'food starter pack' for Ukrainian refugees.</p> <p>Develop welcome pack suitable for asylum seekers and refugees detailing where to access advice and support.</p>	<p>Anti-poverty service</p> <p>Anti-poverty service (Advice Shop)</p> <p>Anti-poverty service (Advice Shop)</p> <p>Advice Shop & West Lothian Foodbank</p>	Started

Ref	Action	Desired Outcome	Assigned to	Action Stage
APTF22005.07	Increase awareness of the harms of problem gambling caused to individuals and families and develop referral process for partners in West Lothian to refer clients who may need support.	<p>Deliver awareness of gambling harms to community groups throughout West Lothian area.</p> <p>Develop a referral process for clients who need access to support.</p>	CAB West Lothian	Approved
APTF22005.08	Establish and promote easy access savings options for young people.	Seek funding to employ a dedicated co-ordinator to work on building Credit Union presence and within local schools, including financial education input.	West Lothian Credit Union	Awaiting Approval
APTF2205.09	Explore options to improve onward referrals for further support through Adult Carer Support Plans	Increase referrals for carers to support from services including Advice Shop and Carers WL	WLC Social Policy	Idea
APTF2205.10	Deliver Macmillan information and advice hubs for people with a cancer diagnosis and their families/carers	<p>Streamline referral pathways to increase referrals for information and advice</p> <p>Positive outcomes secured for clients</p>	Anti-Poverty Service	Started
APTF2205.11	Strengthen referral pathways with registration services to improve access to advice following major life changes	<p>Explore feasibility of developing a registration hub to look at use of:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Co-location of advice with registration services • Use of Near Me • Implementation of FORT to improve referrals 	Anti-Poverty Service Registration Services	Idea

6: Increase the number of people who live in warm, affordable homes				
Ref	Action	Desired Outcome	Assigned to	Action Stage
APTF22006.01	Support young people facing homelessness through the development of dedicated support	Develop a youth homelessness referral pathway Improve access to advice through co-location and active referrals Work with WLHP to support people moving from block to individual residency with income maximisation advice and support through DHP	WLC Housing Anti-Poverty Service	Started
APTF22006.02	Ensure that young people are equipped with the skills and knowledge required to successfully sustain a tenancy	Rollout the Tenancy and Citizenship SQA modules through the Level Up team and mainstream school settings	WLC Education	Approved
APTF22006.03	Households are supported to access a range of energy efficiency measures and financial assistance to reduce fuel poverty	Communicate information and advice about how to prepare for further energy price increases Facilitate access to fuel vouchers and grants to help people struggling with energy costs	West Lothian Energy Forum	Started
APTF22006.04	Raise awareness of the court advice project and promote opportunities for early intervention	Engage with registered social landlords and private landlords to improve early intervention Review online content and self-help guides to improve access to information and advice for people facing homelessness	Anti-Poverty Service	Started
APTF22006.05	Improve partnership work to improve outcomes for people with council corporate debt	Work with key partners including local area housing offices to raise awareness of support available and improve referrals for early intervention support Explore opportunities for better engagement and earlier intervention with people who have arrears of council tax	Anti-Poverty Service Revenues Unit	Started

PRIORITY: People

7: Reduce the number of children living in poverty				
Ref	Action	Desired Outcome	Assigned to	Action Stage
APTF22007.01	Families have access to financial support to help with the cost of the school day	<p>Provide £3 per day meal payments to children in receipt of Free Meals if they cannot attend school due to self-isolating</p> <p>Bridging Payments to be paid in spring, summer and winter to those families with children who are eligible for free school meals and on a low income</p> <p>Payments will be made to help toward the cost of food during Easter, summer, October and winter school holidays.</p> <p>Work with referrers and schools to identify children who would benefit from a uniform pack or winter warmer pack.</p> <p>Promote our self-referral mechanism ensuring there are no barriers to accessing support.</p>	<p>Anti-Poverty Service</p> <p>School Bank West Lothian</p>	Started
APTF22007.02	Improve access to income maximisation for families of school age children	<p>Develop advice services in schools using dedicated benefits advisors co-located within high schools</p> <p>Work with schools to promote remote access to advice using the Near Me service</p> <p>Work with engaged schools to explore options for identifying and offering support to families with school meal debt with a view to increasing uptake of free school meals and income maximisation advice.</p>	Anti-Poverty Service	Started

Ref	Action	Desired Outcome	Assigned to	Action Stage
APTF22007.03	Enhance equity in holiday activity provision for children and families experiencing poverty who may have barriers to accessing food, childcare and activities during the holidays	Administer funding of up to £10,000 to relevant delivery partners to deliver holiday activities and experiences Integrate access to food and wider family support within holiday activities	Community Learning & Development	Started
APTF22007.04	Raise awareness of Education Maintenance Allowance and other financial support	Promote EMA through work with key partners and a targeted social media campaign Work with schools to promote range of education benefits including EMA Targeted correspondence with previous year applicants to remind applicants to reapply	Anti-Poverty Service	Started
APTF22007.05	Encourage uptake of free travel scheme for under 22s	Deliver promotional activity including group call and social media posts to promote under 22s scheme Work with schools to promote scheme with young people and provide support to apply	Anti-Poverty Service	Started
APTF22007.06	Explore ways to work with education and schools to increase maximum impact of free school meal offering and reduce food waste	Understand if/ why meals offered at school are declined by children, and what changes could be made to ensure the offer better meets children's needs	Anti-Poverty Network	Idea
APTF22007.07	Work with schools to increase awareness of poverty and financial issues among senior pupils	Senior children contribute to the production of a financial self help guide for older children in their local area – pilot in 7 partner schools and assess feasibility of expanding to further high schools Financial capability workshops delivered to senior pupils	Anti-poverty service (Advice Shop) Education	Started
APTF22007.08	Support with winter clothing is provided for as a result of low income to help with the cost of winter clothing	A payment of £80 to households in receipt of School Clothing Grants (as at January 2023) is made by end of March 2023	Anti-Poverty Service	Approved

Ref	Action	Desired Outcome	Assigned to	Action Stage
APTF22007.09	Pilot project providing clothing to pre-school children to ensure they can attend, fully participate in their early year's education, and improve their life chances.	Work with Women's Aid to identify children who would benefit from a pre-school clothing pack. Evaluate impact of this pilot and consider rolling out further.	School Bank West Lothian & Women's Aid	Idea
APTF22007.10	Reduce barriers to accessing support with the cost of the school day.	Provide community hubs and schools with second-hand and limited items of brand-new uniform so children and families can access at the point of need. Target the 10 lowest referring schools to ensure they are aware of our service, know how to make referrals to us and discuss ideas on how we can work together.	School Bank West Lothian	Started
APTF22007.11	Develop initiatives to support children from families suffering financial hardship with the 'cost of fun at school to ensure they can feel included and reduce the feeling of isolation and shame amongst those affected.	Collect and re-distribute one-use items such as Christmas Jumpers, Halloween outfits and party outfits. Collect and re-distribute football boots.	School Bank West Lothian	Started
APTF22007.12	Refresh the Scottish Attainment Challenge to embed greater collaborative work to improve outcomes for young people affected by poverty.	Explore how all service areas can work together to implement new and different ways of working under the SAC refresh West Lothian are to produce annual report each year and a 4-year report ultimately for Scottish Government	SAC Refresh Partnership Strategic Steering Group	Started
APTF22007.13	Support the delivery of a child poverty action plan and report on progress	Contribute to the ongoing development and monitoring of key actions Produce an annual Local Child Poverty Action Report	Child Poverty Reference Group	Started

8: Increase opportunities for local people to fully participate in their communities and bring about change				
Ref	Action	Desired Outcome	Assigned to	Action Stage
APTF22008.01	Develop the Experts by Experience panel to improve engagement with those with lived experience of poverty and low income	Recruit new members to the Experts by Experience panel to ensure diverse membership Explore the potential to work with Poverty Alliance on their Get Heard Scotland project	Anti-Poverty Service	Started
APTF22008.02	Encourage local residents with lived experience to participate in focus groups on poverty related topics	Develop and deliver a food insecurity focus group Consult with young people who have experience of or are at risk of homelessness Engage young people in conversation about their experience of the impact of a cancer diagnosis within their family unit.	Anti-Poverty Practitioners Network Youth CLD	Idea
APTF22008.03	Develop poverty awareness training to reduce stigma and change the conversation about poverty	Review and refresh the poverty awareness training modules to ensure continued relevance post-pandemic Deliver a programme of poverty awareness training targeted toward key partners and community groups	Anti-Poverty Service	Approved
APTF22008.04	Consult with people with lived experience of poverty to inform the direction of the next 5-year anti-poverty strategy	Key priorities are identified Draft strategy produced	Anti-Poverty Practitioners Network	Approved

Ref	Action	Desired Outcome	Assigned to	Action Stage
APTF22008.05	Work with practitioners, community groups and people with lived experience of poverty to produce an anti-poverty roadmap to identify key routes out of poverty based on the 3 drivers; income from employment, social security & cost of living	<p>Identify crisis points gaps in support available</p> <p>Identify barriers and local support service to help overcome these</p> <p>Develop actions to address the issues identified</p>	Anti-Poverty Practitioners Network	Idea
APTF22008.06	Work with other school banks across Scotland, community groups and campaigners to reduce poverty and improve sustainability relating to the cost of the school day.	<p>Develop relationships with other school banks to improve our offering.</p> <p>Raise awareness through our social media platforms of poverty and how we can work together to reduce the stigma faced by those affected by poverty.</p> <p>Work with Aberdeen University to look at ways of making the cost of uniform more affordable and sustainable.</p>	School Bank West Lothian.	Started

APTF22008.07	Work in partnership to raise awareness of Poverty related issues and reduce the stigma of poverty in West Lothian communities.	Engage with wider partners to develop community events that coincide with national awareness raising dates throughout the year, including; Challenge Poverty Week Talk Money Week	Anti-poverty practitioners network	Started
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Anti-Poverty Task Force

1. Purpose of Report

The purpose of the report is to set out for the Community Planning Partnership Board an updated remit for the Anti-Poverty Task Force to provide strategic governance and leadership to mitigate the effects of poverty on vulnerable households in West Lothian.

2. Recommendations

It is recommended that the CPP Board is asked to:

- Agrees the proposed chair of the taskforce and also approve the inclusion of multi-party representatives on the Task Force following the recent local government elections;
- Agrees the updated terms of reference for the Anti-Poverty Taskforce; and,
- Agrees the proposed reporting arrangements to the Community Planning Partnership.

3. Discussion

Background

The West Lothian Anti-Poverty Strategy sets out how the Community Planning Partnership will address poverty at a local level over the period 2018-2023. The strategy was approved by the Council Executive on 12 June 2018 and by the Community Planning Partnership Board. The strategy aims to:

- protect people in West Lothian from the worst extremes of poverty and deprivation
- enable and empower people to access opportunities to become financially resilient
- tell a different story about poverty and increase understanding and reduce the stigma
- work collaboratively with partners, and use our collective voice to lobby the Scottish and UK Government to bring about change

Partners are working towards these aims through a range of actions which will target resources and share best practice. A key focus over the coming months will be a refresh of the Anti-Poverty Strategy for a further five years to March 2028.

Strategic Direction and Governance

The council and its partners face significant challenges over the next few years however focussing on the most vulnerable is key to improving the life chances of West Lothian residents. In order to mitigate the effects of poverty, a more focussed, strategic approach will be needed to ensure that limited resources are used effectively. It is therefore crucial that the Anti-Poverty Task Force continues to provide strategic direction and oversight to inform the Anti-Poverty Strategy. The Taskforce will continue to be responsible for the development, delivery and evaluation of the annual action plan and will ensure that evidence of what is happening at a local level

contributes to decision making at both Scottish and National Government level whilst continuing to report progress to the CPP board. The Task Force will also support NHS Lothian which is taking the lead in co-ordinating the statutory requirement to report annually on child poverty in West Lothian.

It is proposed that the Task Force continues to include representation from the Experts by Experience panel, a group of volunteers with lived experience of poverty who provide insight and feedback on the strategy and action plan along with the chair of the CPP, community planning partners including third sector organisations, council service representation and multi-party councillors from the CPP Board. It is suggested that the chair of the Task Force will be a councillor chosen by the Task Force representatives and the lead officer will be the council's Head of Finance and Property Services. Attached at Appendix 1 is the prepared remit, governance and membership of the Anti-Poverty Task Force.

The Task Force will continue to meet four times per year to:

- undertake horizon scanning activities to set the direction of the annual action plan;
- monitor progress, remove barriers and better understand some of the challenges;
- monitor the strategy scorecard which has an agreed range of key indicators to measure success through the lifetime of the strategy and is linked with the relevant Local Outcomes Improvement Plan performance indicators.
- Create opportunities to pool resources; and,
- Evaluate actions to support progress towards outcomes.

In addition, there will be scope for ad-hoc meetings if any urgent items were to be considered.

4. Consultations

None

5. Conclusions

The Anti-Poverty Task Force alongside the Anti-Poverty Strategy and 2022/23 action plan will provide re-energised impetus and focus on supporting vulnerable people in our communities from the effects and impact of poverty.


Report written by/contact details/date

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References

West Lothian Anti-Poverty Strategy 2018/19 – 2022/23

Appendices

Date: Item No:	Community Planning Partnership Board	
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Appendix 1: Anti-Poverty Task Force Terms of Reference.

Governance: Terms of Reference and Membership

Anti-Poverty Task Force

A. Remit of Task Force

The Task Force will provide strategic guidance and policy oversight to inform the Community Planning Partnership's Anti-Poverty Strategy. The Task Force will be responsible for the co-ordination, implementation, delivery and evaluation of actions to mitigate the effects of poverty in West Lothian taking into account public sector funding constraints, economic uncertainty, cost of living crisis and the welfare reform agenda.

B. Frequency

The Anti-Poverty Task Force will meet on a quarterly basis.

C.1 Chair

The Anti-Poverty Task Force will be chaired by a councillor nominated by the Task Force. Head of Finance and Property Services will be the lead officer.

C.2 Lead Officer

Head of Finance and Property Services will be the lead officer.
The Lead Officer will be supported by Anti-Poverty Manager who is the main contact for any enquiries.

C.3 Contact

The Lead Officer will be supported by Anti-Poverty Manager who is the main contact for any enquiries.

D. Reporting

The Task Force will report to the West Lothian Community Planning Board. This will include regular updates on the progress of defined actions or programmes of work that have been agreed with the Council and the Community Planning Partnership. Reports will also be presented as required to the Community Planning Steering Group.

E.1 Membership Profile

Participants are chosen to provide the relevant knowledge and expertise to fulfil the remit of the Anti-Poverty Task Force. Representation on the Task Force will be drawn from relevant partners in West Lothian who have a remit and interest in alleviating poverty. It will be the responsibility of each organisation to choose their representative.

This will include:

- Department of Work and Pensions
- Voluntary Sector organisations
- Organisations from West Lothian Community Planning Partnership
- Councillor Representation from the Community Planning Board

Representatives from the following council services will also be included in the Task Force:

- Representative of Finance and Property Services
- Representatives from Housing, Customer and Building Services
- Representatives of Education, Planning, Economic Development and Regeneration
- Representative from Social Policy

E.2 Membership

Member	Tier
Head of Finance and Property Services (Lead Officer)	
Housing, Customer and Building Services: Management Committees Housing Services	
Social Policy	
Planning, Economic Development and Regeneration: Regeneration Team Education	
Finance & Property Services: Anti-Poverty Service Anti Poverty Manager	
Department of Work and Pensions	
Social Security Scotland	
West Lothian College	
NHS Lothian (Child Poverty Lead)	
Police Scotland- Community Police	
Member of West Lothian Social Enterprise Network	
Member of West Lothian Food Network	
Member to represent those with lived experience of poverty (Experts by Experience panel and/or other forums)	
Member of Affordable Credit Organisations	
Member from Local Association of Community Councils	
Representation from local voluntary organisations	
Community Planning Partnership: CPP Chair - Three councillors from Community Planning Board	

F Review

The Anti-Poverty Task Force remit, progress and membership will be reviewed in March 2023 as part of the refreshed Anti-Poverty Strategy 2023-28.

COMMUNITY JUSTICE OUTCOME ACTIVITY ACROSS SCOTLAND LOCAL AREA ANNUAL RETURN REPORT 2021-22

1. Purpose of Report

The purpose of this report is to provide the board with an awareness of the annual report and its progression of the Community Justice Strategic Plan 2019-24 which also acts as our Outcome Improvement Plan (CJOIP) - the Annual Report will be submitted to Community Justice Scotland in September 2022.

2. Recommendations

The CPP Board is asked to:

- Note the Annual report for the Community Justice Strategic Plan 2019-24 (includes CJOIP)
- Note that a report will be submitted to the CPP board each year on the annual report submitted to Community Justice Scotland.

3. Discussion

Community Planning Partnerships assumed statutory duties for Community Justice in line with the Community Justice (Scotland) Act 2016 on a transitional basis in April 2016 and in full from April 2017. The Strategic Plan (CJOIP) is the mechanism by which community justice activity is reported to the national body overseeing developments across Scotland, Community Justice Scotland.

The annual report fulfils the CPP's statutory duty to report on progress. Feedback has been received from Community Justice Scotland which was very positive.

During 2021-22 activity was focused on core national outcomes as follows:

National Outcome One- Communities improve their understanding and participation in community justice

The Community Justice Partnership (CJP) has leveraged resources to provide support throughout West Lothian during the pandemic. Examples of community engagement are provided to facilitate inclusivity. Although during the pandemic we had limited ability to consult with communities as part of community justice planning and service provision, or to participate in new co-production and joint delivery projects, there are relevant examples throughout the report where this has occurred either as an ongoing piece of work or as a new development and they are included.

National Outcome Two - Partners plan and deliver services in a more strategic and collaborative way

Services have been planned, delivered and adapted in some cases due to the pandemic and operated across many different boundaries such as organisational and geographical. The CJP has worked collaboratively and some of this work has been outlined including data from the associated performance indicators. Some of our joint working examples have been included here such as joint delivery with the Safer Communities Strategic Planning Group, Social Policy, Education, Police Scotland, and the third sector.

The contribution of the Early and Effective Intervention Service is included here and the analysis of our results demonstrates the strategic planning and delivery of this provision. It has been helpful in forward planning future interventions and to identify those most at risk (need/harm.)

Multi Agency Public Protection Arrangements (MAPPA) continue to be delivered effectively between core statutory partners.

National Outcome Three - People have better access to the services that they require, including welfare, health and wellbeing, housing and employability

The CJP has focused on helping both those who are released from custody and serving sentences in the community to access services. The many barriers that those in conflict with the law can find when trying to access support, include (homelessness, lack of registration with a GP, financial inclusion, mental health needs, social exclusion, employability, training/educational needs, social wellbeing.) Help and support to access the appropriate services at the right time is essential to help people to desist from future offending. By working in partnership with services including NHS Lothian, Financial Inclusion, Housing, HMP Addiewell and Third sector partners, The CJP has improved those pathways.

The positive results from our Almond Project which addresses women's mental health to increase desistance from offending are included here, as well as the widening of their referral criteria.

National Outcome Four - Effective interventions are delivered to prevent and reduce the risk of further offending

Individuals who successfully engage with supervision stand a much greater chance of desisting from offending. Our CJP's Performance Framework, measures a number of community- based orders managed and supervised by our Justice Services to capture the percentage of those that are completed successfully. The indicators are shown here and illustrate how successful the service is at ensuring offender engagement which in turns impacts on offending.

Developed use of technology between all partners allowed opportunities for more targeted communication and a reduction in resource impact.

National Outcome Five - Life chances are improved through needs, including health, financial inclusion, housing and safety, being addressed

Justice Services maintained face to face contact with custody releases throughout the pandemic to ensure that clients received the help they needed to access the services they required including health, safety, housing and financial inclusion. Direct same day referrals and initial assessments were arranged with housing and addictions as appropriate, in compliance with Covid legislation.

The continuation of the operational switchboard and direct face to face client contact availability throughout the pandemic was crucial in improving our outcomes for service users.

Positive data is shown from our performance indicator developed in response to the Scottish Government legislating for a presumption against sentences of 12 months or less. As the needs of many individuals in this situation are much better met within the community, this data is encouraging.

National Outcome six - People develop positive relationships and more opportunities to participate and contribute through education, employment and leisure activities

In addition to working in partnership with our third sector service providers for example Addiction, the Wise Group were commissioned via the Covid recovery monies to provide a holistic online programme of events. This initiative addresses the criteria in outcome six including developing positive relationships and access to education. It can be facilitated via "other activity" along with anyone subject to Bail supervision, Diversion, CPO or any other licence.

Our partners -Skills Development Scotland provided virtual educational support to schools during the pandemic and eventually advisors returned to West Lothian schools to target the cohort of young people who were most in need and at the greatest risk of negative destinations. This SDS service, working with the employability team and careers advisors has developed a good interface through our CJP with C&F, Justice Services and Education in West Lothian.

The Level Up Attainment Project is included here and outlines what The Scottish Government's funding was used to develop for care experienced young people. Social Policy, Education and the Supported Employment Service worked together to provide bespoke packages of support for the senior phase of their education. The project's central focus is outlined.

National Outcome Seven - Individuals' resilience and capacity for change and self-management are enhanced

A case study has been included here from our partners, West Lothian Youth Action Project showing how a successful intervention supported change and self-management with a young person in conflict with the law.

Although it has been challenging to provide as much data as usual from partners due to the pandemic, an example from our CJP member, Families Outside has been included here as the service users are the families of those who have received a custodial sentence. Both they and the family member in prison benefit from the work done here and as it impacts on everyone's wellbeing, and consequently reduces the risk of reoffending.

4. Summary of Implications

Relevant LOIP outcome (s)	We live in resilient, cohesive and safe communities People most at risk are protected and supported to achieve improved life chances
Relevant LOIP performance indicator (s)	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Percentage of Early and Effective Intervention cases 12 to 17 years who do not reoffend within 12 months of initial referral• Number of children/young people in secure or residential schools on offence grounds.• One year reconviction rate
Resources	None
Link to prevention/community engagement	The plan highlights increased focus on community engagement
Impact on inequalities	Reducing inequality experienced by those with criminal convictions
Key risks	None

5. Consultations

Consultation has taken place across the Community Planning Partnership including the Safer Communities Strategic Planning Group, Children and Families Strategic Planning Group and the Community Justice Partnership.

6. Conclusions

The CJOIP represents a positive indication of progress in the CPP's adoption or responsibility in relation to Community Justice. The board are asked to support the recommendations contained in this report.

Report written by/contact details/date

Fiona MacKenzie, EEI/Community Justice Lead

Fiona.Mackenzie2@westlothian.gov.uk

References

Community Justice Strategic Plan 2019-24

Appendices

1.Community Justice Strategic Plan 2019-24

[West Lothian Community Justice Strategic Plan 2019-2024](#)

2. Local Area Annual Return 2021-22

3. CPP Structure

Community Justice Scotland

Ceartas Coimhearsnachd Alba

Community Justice Outcome Activity Across Scotland

Local Area Annual Return Template

2021-22

April 2022



1) Community Justice Partnership / Group Details	
Name of local authority area/s	WEST LOTHIAN COUNCIL
Name and contact detail of the partnership Chair	Name: Pauline Cochrane Email: Pauline.Cochrane@westlothian.gov.uk Telephone: 01506 284713 Mob: 07833482847
Contact for queries about this report	Name: Fiona MacKenzie Email: Fiona.Mackenzie2@westlothian.gov.uk Telephone: 07917 613447

<p>2) Template Sign-off from Community Justice Partnership / Group Chair</p> <p>Date:.....</p> <p>Name:...Pauline Cochrane.....</p>
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3) Governance Arrangements

Describe your current governance structure for community justice arrangements and include links to wider community planning.

Our Community Planning Partnership (CPP) is responsible for developing and driving our Local Outcomes Improvement Plan (LOIP) which runs from 2013-23- updated in September 2017. The LOIP is currently being revised – we started the review in 2019 and this was well advanced but had to be postponed due to COVID. During this reporting period, four focus areas and four “pillars” have been identified and are now due to be considered at the next Board Meeting.

The Partnership is also responsible for providing the Community Justice Strategic Plan. Our current plan runs from 2019-24 and it also acts as our Community Justice Outcome Improvement Plan- CJOIP) closely aligned to our LOIP. The Community Justice Partnership develops an Action Plan which sits alongside the Community Justice Strategic Plan. The current Action Plan expires this year and a new one is in being prepared. This reporting period concluded prior to the recently published Community Justice National Strategy but our new plan will be informed by the current National Strategy and we will report on this in the next Annual Report for 2022-23.

Please see diagram of West Lothian’s governance structure attached- Attachment A

4) Progress From 2020-21 Recommendations

These recommendations were published at the end of the reporting year and concern 3rd sector engagement, futures planning, and compliance with the Community Justice (Scotland) Act 2016. Please detail what work partners have undertaken, or intend to undertake, in response to the following 2020-21 recommendations:

Recommendation 1: Partnerships should build on work undertaken within the reporting period relating to third sector identification and engagement, and apply lessons learned to ensure they have established mechanisms to identify and engage with victim organisations as well.

a) What local strengths or recent progress relates to recommendation 1?

We used money from the Justice Recovery Fund to work with The Wise Group. This work - **West Lothian Included** provided a personal development programme for people on all types of orders. Our ability to engage with third sector agencies however was limited due to the pandemic and the fluctuating business arena for several reasons such as accessing IT equipment, illness, individuals deployed elsewhere and operational issues.

Recommendation 3: Partnerships should undertake (or evidence the work already undertaken) to understand the future need and demand on their services: in particular, but not constrained to, recovery from the pandemic.

b) What gaps or emerging changes in need and demand for services have been identified?

WLC commissioned a Strategic Needs and Strengths Assessment for community justice. Unfortunately this could not be completed due to illness however we were able to proceed with our



4) Progress From 2020-21 Recommendations

Community Justice Strategy based on previous evidence led research which underpinned the Scottish Government's Preventing Offending agenda, National Justice Strategies and the Whole System Approach and so this was not hindered. It is the intention of the CJP however to commission another SNSA.

c) How has this been identified?

Currently and in the absence of a current SNSA, recovery planning has commenced and is well underway. This is focusing on national Justice priorities which include Unpaid Work and "Other Activity," the significant backlog of Court cases and how the impact on Justice Services is managed. Additionally, the increase in the use of community alternatives to prosecution and custody and the knock on impact of this will continue to be monitored.

The associated staff capacity and absences due to ongoing illness has continued to be a factor. While we got extra money for recovery, the problems of recruitment and sourcing equipment remain.

d) How will partners respond?

Partners will work together to help recovery. We are changing the way people can access addiction services in recognition of the impact of Covid and for those involved in substance misuse and addiction, there is Naloxone training, Introduction of Buvidal, Vol throughcare/CGL supporting returns to custody, also taking into consideration the additional challenges of Covid. Additionally, there is the introduction of Electronic Monitoring Orders and increase in community referrals for immediate support.

Our fresh Action Plan will be prepared during the next reporting period and reflect the new National Strategy.

e) What has restricted progress in this recommendation?

Progress in our SNSA is outlined above but planning is underway for a fresh Assessment. Continued staff absence, backlogs caused by the pandemic and increased demands from the service has been restrictions.

The impact of short- term funding makes it difficult to realise the full benefit. The requirement for mid -term planning has recently been acknowledged by the Justice Division.

Recommendation 4: Partners should note their collective statutory responsibilities under the Act to ensure that:

- all partners are aware of the statutory obligations, and that clarity and agreement is sought over partner expectations and contribution to ensuring these are met
- all national partners understand and comply with their individual responsibilities to supporting partnerships achieve their aims (section 35)



4) Progress From 2020-21 Recommendations

f) What work has been undertaken or planned to make improvements against recommendation 4?

In line with the Community Justice (S) A 2016 where there is a duty on the local authority and partners to produce a Community Justice Outcome Improvement Plan (CJOIP) we produced our Community Justice Strategic Plan 2019-24. As outlined in section 3 above, this plan in agreement with Community Justice Scotland, also acts as our Community Justice Outcome Improvement Plan (CJOIP) and was signed off on 25 March 2019.

Similarly, as per our duty in the same legislation, we are submitting this Annual Report for 2021-22. This report will be considered by our CPP in August for approval before submission to CJS for September 2022.

g) What did this achieve?

It is acknowledged, as it has been nationally at many of the CJS and SG national events that while the contribution of partners is prescriptive in the legislation it has been silent on exactly how the roles and responsibilities require to be met. The widely anticipated Community Justice National Strategy (June 2022) has provided some clarification in this regard and the OPIF due later in the year should further assist partnerships here. As our Action Plan expires this year we have prepared the ground for working with our partners on a new plan to involve more collective contributions and provision of performance frameworks aligned to the new National Strategy.

h) In what ways did local partnership compliance to the Community Justice (Scotland) Act 2016 change during 2020/21?

While we completed all the statutory obligations required by provision of all the necessary reports, business as usual was interrupted by many employees having to “fire fight” with increased operational tasks within their areas, other staff being deployed elsewhere to assist in crisis management and many of our third sector workers had to engage in more essential services to keep some members of our communities safe instead of furthering the wider community justice agenda. The business of developing all of our plans and initiatives that had begun was not always possible for the above reasons however a number of very positive changes were made as a result of the adversity which going forward will facilitate the operation of the community justice agenda, such as the increased attendance at digital meetings and the knocking down of geographical boundaries. The progression in digital development during the reporting development was a huge change as many buildings were closed and very often people didn’t have the necessary equipment.



5) Covid-19 Pandemic Impact	<p>The pandemic continued in 2021-22. This section should be used to reflect some of the a) challenges/negative implications and b) opportunities/positive implications from the Covid-19 pandemic on the community justice partnership. This can include impact on the improvement activity, partner collaboration, delivery of services.</p>
Challenges / Negatives	Positives / Opportunities
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Backlogs in Unpaid Work and “other activity” • Court business with major delays and backlogs • Staff deployed in other areas to deal with the demands on some services • Adapting to delivering services in a different way as well as the increased demand in key areas such as NHS, mental health and social care • Some services suspended or reduced as a result of the pandemic • Increased demands on staff with illness or family illness • Delay in taking forward some of the Council’s strategic development work 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✚ The resourcefulness of communities and staff with their adaptability to provide essential services throughout this period of crisis ✚ Increased attendance at many local and national meetings due to the breakdown of geographical boundaries has had a hugely positive effect due to the development of digital technology. These new ways of working have allowed us to adapt and develop how we communicate ✚ The pandemic has provided a period of reflection with regard to how we work and deliver services and has enabled a fresh look at what works in relation to best value and positive outcomes



6) Performance Reporting – National Outcomes	This section is designed to capture the evidence and data that has been used by your partnership over the reporting period to assess progress against the national outcomes.
<p style="text-align: center;">NATIONAL OUTCOME ONE</p> <p>Communities improve their understanding and participation in community justice</p>	<p>With regard to the following indicators:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Activities carried out to engage with 'communities' as well as other relevant constituencies ➤ Consultation with communities as part of community justice planning and service provision ➤ Participation in community justice, such as co-production and joint delivery ➤ Level of community awareness of / satisfaction with work undertaken as part of a CPO ➤ Evidence from questions to be used in local surveys / citizens' panels and so on ➤ Perceptions of the local crime data
<p>New activities: What new activities in 2021-22 were driven / undertaken collectively by the community justice partners/hip in relation to outcome one?</p>	<p>What was the impact of these activities?</p>
<p>Our CJP has continued to engage with communities to ensure that they are included and involved:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Our Community Safety Partners have addressed increased antisocial behaviour which peaked sometimes throughout the pandemic. Where possible and appropriate, direct communication was put in place with all parties concerned and solutions worked out to resolve matters. The increased cases were often generated by lower tolerance levels during the pandemic 	<p>The qualitative data collected here by the Community Safety Partnership showed a high level of resolution of disputes using this method of direct engagement and participation</p>



6) Performance Reporting – National Outcomes	This section is designed to capture the evidence and data that has been used by your partnership over the reporting period to assess progress against the national outcomes.
What ongoing activities took place in relation to outcome one?	What was the impact of these activities?
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Rural Crime Group started a new initiative at the end of the previous reporting year to tackle issues such as increased antisocial behaviour working with Scottish Canals, National farmers Union and the Scottish Fire and Rescue Service. This has continued and been a valuable tool for collaboration for matters such as fly-tipping <p>During the pandemic we had limited ability to consult with communities as part of community justice planning and service provision or to participate in new co-production and joint delivery projects. However, there are relevant examples throughout the report where this has occurred either as an ongoing piece of work or as a new development under different outcomes and they have been included.</p>	Leverage of resources to develop safer communities and better support for those that require it to provide more positive outcomes
NATIONAL OUTCOME TWO Partners plan and deliver services in a more strategic and collaborative way	Where applicable have regard to the following indicators. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Services are planned for and delivered in a strategic and collaborative way ➤ Partners have leveraged resources for community justice ➤ Development of community justice workforce to work effectively across organisational/professional /geographical boundaries Partners illustrate effective engagement and collaborative partnership working with the authorities responsible for the delivery of MAPPA
What new activities in 2021-22 were driven / undertaken collectively by the community justice partners/hip in relation to outcome two?	What was the impact of these activities?



6) Performance Reporting – National Outcomes	This section is designed to capture the evidence and data that has been used by your partnership over the reporting period to assess progress against the national outcomes.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Safer Communities Strategic Planning Group (SCSPG) has worked collaboratively to assist the Community Safety Partnership with writing a fresh Safer Communities Strategic Plan. Social Policy has contributed to this and a notable inclusion is the widening of the Whole System Approach to secure earlier notifications of problematic behaviours in the community and to intervene earlier where this is possible or appropriate. The Early and Effective Intervention Lead is working with Police Scotland to establish a link with community policing to refer these cases to EEI by close collaboration. A new performance indicator is being developed to monitor those that receive an intervention and are not re-referred within the next twelve months The pandemic has meant that we have limited ability to comment on partner activity, however we can confirm that Justice Services reviewed all seven teams within the wider Service to identify synergies of areas of responsibility and expertise to support wider service delivery throughout Covid. This resulted in staff expanding their normal areas of responsibility to accommodate other areas, for example Justice Assistants taking a more pro-active role in community supervision where appropriate to cover deficits in resources. Justice, health and addiction worked closely together and face to face with prisoners released from custody to meet immediate need Social Policy is working with Police Scotland to ensure that due to the increase in the age of criminal responsibility that those children between 8-11 years who require an intervention do not slip through the net. 	<p>Leverage of resources to develop safer communities and better support for those that require it to provide more positive outcomes</p> <p>Widening of the successful Whole System Approach to get earlier positive outcomes and encourage desistance. This activity has been planned and developed during the reporting period but the system and indicator are not yet in place. This however this will be available for the 2022-23 report.</p> <p>The adaptability of our staff to work in a different capacity, upskilled our workforce and impacted on the support available both for individuals and their communities</p> <p>This is working well since the operational date of 17 December 2021 with five cases that would have been sent to EEI being picked up by other services and the EEI group has been able to follow through their progression with Children and Families SW and/or with Police Scotland.</p>
What ongoing activities took place in relation to outcome two?	What was the impact of these activities?
The WLC EEI Service has four years of detailed data following a new recording methodology started in April 2018. Our targeted joint delivery provides effective interventions where required to prevent and reduce the risk	The impact of this service is that for those who have received an intervention, there is a very low re-referral rate for offending but also for wider social, welfare and other causes. We use this data to monitor our offending numbers



6) Performance Reporting – National Outcomes

of further offending. Run by Social Policy and with partners in Education and Police Scotland, referrals are made to agencies including the third sector. We continue to put in place interventions to help support young people who are in conflict with the law which support the reduction in overall offending. Our interventions designed to support the whole young person holistically and address the underlying causes of their behaviours are initiated by Police Scotland by means of advice, warnings and restorative warnings, by schools for educational interventions and diversionary inputs and many of our third Sector colleagues including West Lothian Youth Action Project and West Lothian Drug and Alcohol Service.

MAPPA was maintained throughout the pandemic with meetings initially by teleconferencing and then video conferencing. West Lothian has robust arrangements around MAPPA. The Police, public sector including Housing and Education, Health and the Scottish Prison Service work together to manage the three case levels to ensure that resources are focused on the individuals posing most risk. The West Lothian Public Protection Committee provides an Annual Report and Lothian and

This section is designed to capture the evidence and data that has been used by your partnership over the reporting period to assess progress against the national outcomes.

but also to look at each young person holistically and see what difference/improvements any intervention made in their lives and to inform our work going forward.

Performance indicator: "Percentage of Early and Effective Intervention (EEI) cases 12-17 years who do not become known to the Youth Justice Team within 12 months."

2020-21:	Quarter	%
	1	100
	2	94
	3	95
	4	96
2021-22:	1	100
	2	95
	3	97
	4	100

This ensures that our resources are maximised to reduce the risk of harm that these individuals pose. In addition, all West Lothian partners acknowledge the importance of reducing domestic abuse and our Category 3 implementation allows us a formal forum to manage high risk domestic abuse perpetrators who are subject to licence.



6) Performance Reporting – National Outcomes	This section is designed to capture the evidence and data that has been used by your partnership over the reporting period to assess progress against the national outcomes.
Borders compile a MAPPA report for Edinburgh, the Lothians and Scottish Borders- (link opposite to the most recent published report for 2020-21.)	https://westlothianhscp.org.uk/media/50700/MAPPA-report-2020-2021/pdf/FINAL_MAPPA_Annual_Report_2020-
<p>NATIONAL OUTCOME THREE</p> <p>People have better access to the services that they require, including welfare, health and wellbeing, housing and employability</p>	<p>Where applicable have regard to the following indicators.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Partners have identified and are overcoming structural barriers for people accessing services ➤ Existence of joint-working arrangements such as processes / protocols to ensure access to services to address underlying needs ➤ Initiatives to facilitate access to services ➤ Speed of access to mental health services ➤ % of people released from a custodial sentence: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) registered with a GP b) have suitable accommodation c) have had a benefits eligibility check ➤ Targeted interventions have been tailored for and with an individual and had a successful impact on their risk of further offending
<p>What new activities in 2021-22 were driven collectively by the community justice partnership in relation to outcome three?</p>	<p>What was the impact of these activities?</p>
<p>The Community Justice Partnership is addressing the type and extent of barriers that are faced by those trying to access services following criminal convictions. It is therefore crucial that we work to help these individuals access essential services including Housing, Health/Mental Health, Employment, Financial and Social inclusion, so that individuals released from custody or serving community sentences are given the help they need.</p>	<p>The many barriers that those in conflict with the law can find when trying to access support, include (homelessness, lack of registration with a GP, financial inclusion, mental health needs, social exclusion, employability, training/educational needs, social wellbeing.) Help and support to access the appropriate services at the right time is essential to help people to desist from future offending.</p>



6) Performance Reporting – National Outcomes	This section is designed to capture the evidence and data that has been used by your partnership over the reporting period to assess progress against the national outcomes.																		
<p>During the reporting year and initially started due to the pandemic, WLC employed a community release partnership approach. This successful project operated between Justice Services, Housing and NHS Addictions.</p> <p>Our Almond Project is reported on in the column below, however we have some new data for this reporting period for the Project due to a change in our referral criteria. There has been an 97% increase in referrals over the past three years. This is testimony to the hard work of the Almond Project, additional staffing in post and also an expansion of criteria, supporting women who are currently or have previously been involved with Justice Services and were not known to Almond.</p>	<table><thead><tr><th></th><th>2019/2020</th><th>2020/2021</th><th>2021/2022</th></tr></thead><tbody><tr><td>Number of referrals</td><td>33</td><td>19</td><td>65</td></tr><tr><td>Improved wellbeing</td><td>98%</td><td>100%</td><td>98%</td></tr><tr><td>Reoffended</td><td>0</td><td>3% (1 person)</td><td>0</td></tr></tbody></table> <p>The last three years of data is shown to compare the significant increase in this reporting period.</p>				2019/2020	2020/2021	2021/2022	Number of referrals	33	19	65	Improved wellbeing	98%	100%	98%	Reoffended	0	3% (1 person)	0
	2019/2020	2020/2021	2021/2022																
Number of referrals	33	19	65																
Improved wellbeing	98%	100%	98%																
Reoffended	0	3% (1 person)	0																
What ongoing activities took place in relation to outcome three?	What was the impact of these activities?																		
<p>Our Almond Project for women in conflict with the law continues to produce very good outcomes. As Mental Health is key to many women's offending, an improvement in Health and Well Being is crucial to support desistance. The percentage of women with Mental Health issues receiving Almond Project support who report improvement in Mental Health and Well Being in 2021-22 is shown in the opposite column.</p>	<p>Improved levels of health and wellbeing help women to desist from offending and impacts positively on their communities:</p> <table><tbody><tr><td>Quarter 1</td><td>90%</td></tr><tr><td>Q2</td><td>100</td></tr><tr><td>Q3</td><td>100</td></tr><tr><td>Q4</td><td>100</td></tr></tbody></table> <p>This average of 97.5% is consistently high and is further driven by the high levels of intensive support that is provided. There will always be some women who will not engage however.</p>			Quarter 1	90%	Q2	100	Q3	100	Q4	100								
Quarter 1	90%																		
Q2	100																		
Q3	100																		
Q4	100																		



6) Performance Reporting – National Outcomes	This section is designed to capture the evidence and data that has been used by your partnership over the reporting period to assess progress against the national outcomes.
NATIONAL OUTCOME FOUR Effective interventions are delivered to prevent and reduce the risk of further offending	<p>Where applicable have regard to the following indicators.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Use of ‘other activities requirements’ in CPOs ➤ Effective risk management for public protection ➤ Quality of CPOs and DTTOs ➤ Reduced use of custodial sentences and remand: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) Balance between community sentences relative to short custodial sentences under one year b) Proportion of people appearing from custody who are remanded ➤ The delivery of interventions targeted at problem drug and alcohol use [NHS Local Delivery Plan (LDP) Standard] ➤ Number of Police Recorded Warnings, police diversion, fiscal measures, fiscal diversion, supervised bail, community sentences (including CPOs , DTTOs and RLOs) <p>Number of short-term sentences under one year</p>
What new activities in 2021-22 were driven collectively by the community justice partnership in relation to outcome four?	What was the impact of these activities?
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A range of online opportunities were developed during the pandemic that were made available to those with UPW and Other Activity to explore. This included providing equipment where necessary to do this for example, tablets/data • The Young Peoples Risk Management process, MAPP and PMap continued throughout this period. The key change however was how 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increase in Other Activity hours which allowed individuals to undertake some of their Court order when there were restrictions on capacity to deliver UPW • Developed use of technology between all partners allowed opportunities for more targeted communication and a reduction in resource impact for all partners



6) Performance Reporting – National Outcomes	This section is designed to capture the evidence and data that has been used by your partnership over the reporting period to assess progress against the national outcomes.
<p>the move to online communication allowed a more flexible approach to collective community risk management</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Further development of technology both for operational use and direct client contact ensured that review of all orders continued and was maintained • Serious Incident Review compliance was also maintained 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Justice services were able to maintain strategic oversight via the governance structure within the service to ensure quality was retained
What ongoing activities took place in relation to outcome four?	What was the impact of these activities?
<p><u>Justice Services</u> Our CJP's Performance Framework, measures a number of community-based orders managed and supervised by our Justice Services to capture the percentage of those that are completed successfully. This includes Community Payback Orders, Probation Orders, Community Service Orders, Supervised Attendance Orders, Drug Treatment and Testing Orders and Parole (and other post release) Licenses.</p> <p>During this reporting period our relevant performance indicators are shown in the data column opposite.</p>	<p>Individuals who successfully engage with supervision stand a much greater chance of desisting from offending in the future. These indicators illustrate how successful the service is at ensuring offender engagement which in turn impacts on reoffending.</p> <p>Access to appropriate health care, financial inclusion, training or employment where appropriate and pathways to all supports required achieve better outcomes.</p> <p>“The percentage of Justice Service users who stated that Community Justice Services have assisted them to reduce or stabilise their substance use.” Of the 45 questionnaires completed the results were 100%.</p> <p>Service users reported increased access to health services through Justice Services. “Percentage of service users who stated that Community Justice Services have assisted them to access health services” was 81% during this reporting period.</p> <p>The number of community based orders supervised by Justice Services with a successful termination in 2021-22 was 73%. A decreasing trend in successful completions was increased in Quarter 2 to a success rate of 82%, with the last quarter (4) being 73%. This is being closely monitored with increasing positive trends expected as we recover from the effects of the pandemic.</p>



6) Performance Reporting – National Outcomes	This section is designed to capture the evidence and data that has been used by your partnership over the reporting period to assess progress against the national outcomes.
NATIONAL OUTCOME FIVE Life chances are improved through needs, including health, financial inclusion, housing and safety, being addressed.	Have regard to the following indicator. ➤ Individuals have made progress against the outcome
How do partners measure outcome five for individuals?	If this information has been collated, what does it show?
Our Action Plan 2019-21 addressed a number of the areas within Outcome five and examples below include needs, safety and the whole system approach:	
If available, provide a supporting case study or other information to demonstrate activity and impact relating to outcome five.	
There has been face to face contact with custody releases throughout pandemic: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ The initial screening has been undertaken by the Duty Manager to assess the immediate need ✓ Direct same day referral and initial assessment arranged with housing and addictions as appropriate ✓ Covid health and safety assessment completed with the individual being provided with PPE ✓ Telephone and credit issued to allow benefits claim, housing contact, health contact and other services as required Justice Services continued to maintain an operational switchboard and direct face to face client contact availability throughout the pandemic.	



6) Performance Reporting – National Outcomes	This section is designed to capture the evidence and data that has been used by your partnership over the reporting period to assess progress against the national outcomes.
<p>Justice Services developed a performance indicator in 2018-19 in response to the Scottish Government legislating for a presumption against sentences of 12 months or less. With the needs of many individuals in this situation being better met within the community, data has been gathered over these years with the most recent being shown in the opposite column.</p>	<p>Percentage of Criminal Justice Social Work reports resulting in a custodial sentence of 12 months or less: In quarter 1 of 2021-22 there was an improvement to 3.5% from 5.1% with the number of Criminal Justice Social Work reports starting to increase gradually. Quarter 2 saw a further reduction to 3.2% with 8 custodial sentences from 234 reports submitted. This is continuing evidence of effective reports avoiding custodial sentences where possible. Q3 improved to 2% with Q4 returning to 3%. The increase in Q4 is attributable to back dated sentences due to long periods of remand in Covid.</p>
<p>NATIONAL OUTCOME SIX People develop positive relationships and more opportunities to participate and contribute through education, employment and leisure activities</p>	<p>Have regard to the following indicator. ➤ Individuals have made progress against the outcome</p>
<p>Providing evidence on person centric outcomes has been challenging for most areas. How do partners measure outcome six for individuals?</p>	<p>If this information has been collated, what does it show?</p>
<p>Our partners -Skills Development Scotland provided virtual educational support to schools during the pandemic and eventually advisors returned to West Lothian schools to target the cohort of young people who have chaotic home lives and increased negative destinations. The service has also been working with the employability team and careers advisors to provide some additional supports for school leavers. SDS has developed a good interface through our CJP with C&F, Justice Services and Education in West Lothian.</p> <p>Along with working in partnership with our third sector service providers for example Addiction, the Wise Group were also commissioned via the Covid recovery monies to provide a holistic online programme of events. This can be facilitated via “other activity” along with anyone subject to Bail supervision, Diversion, CPO or any other licence.</p>	<p>More opportunities for education/training and employment are made available through our partners.</p>



6) Performance Reporting – National Outcomes	This section is designed to capture the evidence and data that has been used by your partnership over the reporting period to assess progress against the national outcomes.
Client Surveys also provide soft skill information which is reviewed and outcomes included with team or service wide review of service delivery, Justice services review all statutory orders where personal development, skills enhancement is captured and support.	
If available, provide a supporting case study or other information to demonstrate activity and impact relating to outcome six.	
<p><u>Level Up Attainment Project:</u></p> <p>As part of the Scottish Attainment Challenge Refresh, the Scottish Government's funding was used to develop this service for West Lothian's care experienced young people. Social Policy, Education and the Supported Employment Service worked in collaboration to provide bespoke packages of support to a targeted group of care experienced young people in the senior phase of their education. The project's central focus:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • to improve engagement and attainment and achieve at least the minimum standard of 5 SQA Qualifications/Awards • to help secure and sustain positive destinations after leaving school • to provide a holistic approach to meeting the health and wellbeing needs <p>The further four years of funding will ensure that this project continues.</p>	
NATIONAL OUTCOME SEVEN Individuals' resilience and capacity for change and self-management are enhanced	Have regard to the following indicator. ➤ Individuals have made progress against the outcome



6) Performance Reporting – National Outcomes	This section is designed to capture the evidence and data that has been used by your partnership over the reporting period to assess progress against the national outcomes.
Providing evidence on person centric outcomes has been challenging for most areas. How do partners measure outcome six for individuals?	If this information has been collated, what does it show?
We are not able to comment on partners data at present however this will be reviewed and addressed at the next planned meeting with our new Chair.	
If available, provide a supporting case study or other information to demonstrate activity and impact relating to outcome seven.	
Supporting Case Study from West Lothian Youth Action Project: Profile – Male, Case X, aged 14 at time of referral. Reason for referral Case X was discussed at the Early & Effective Intervention Group, following him being charged for assault and several other minor offences. He was well known to local Police and involved with other young people creating public nuisance and anti-social behaviour in and around a town centre. Child Planning meetings via Education and numerous interventions to engage X were unsuccessful. X's mother was worried about his behaviour. She is a single working mother of 4, with X being the eldest. Her restrictions and boundaries were ignored by X. X was waiting for a CAMHS assessment for possible ASD and EEI partners considered that supportive intervention was required for X to prevent escalation and possible removal from the family home. Intervention	



6) Performance Reporting – National Outcomes	This section is designed to capture the evidence and data that has been used by your partnership over the reporting period to assess progress against the national outcomes.
<p>WLYAP were requested to consider X for 1-1 support, groupwork and liaison with family and partner organisations to prevent further offences being committed, to re-engage with education and to build the skills and confidence to make improved life choices. As expected it took a few weekly sessions between X and his worker formed a relationship, but once trust was established, even with Covid restrictions, the work and contact became regular.</p> <p>Due to the vulnerability of X and other young people, we were able to follow the Youth Work guidelines and still offer protected face to face contact. This helped X and his family through a difficult period. YAP had regular contact with Education, CAMHS, Police and the family to ensure all partners worked together. X utilised the 1-1 support well and re-engaged with a football club and changed his peer group. As the 1-1 support was reducing, X was included in the YAP's Practical Skills Group, a 1 day per week programme supported by X's school. Regular contact with his mother, even helping build young sibling's bikes, helped keep communication positive.</p> <p><u>Challenge</u></p> <p>After a year without any further offences being committed and reaching a discussion point to reduce the support work, X was arrested for possession of a knife at a football match. His mother informed YAP immediately, very upset angry and upset. Discussions took place with X and it became apparent that he was very remorseful, realised the potential consequences of his actions and that he had been wrongly influenced by older peers. X's case was reviewed by The Children's Reporter and he was given the opportunity to continue engagement with current supports but with a heavy warning if anything similar occurred the case would be reviewed very differently.</p> <p><u>Continued support</u></p> <p>The 1-1 work was increased for a short period. X continued his education at school and his YAP Practical Skills course until he started a college</p>	



6) Performance Reporting – National Outcomes	This section is designed to capture the evidence and data that has been used by your partnership over the reporting period to assess progress against the national outcomes.
placement. Both X and his mother are positive about his future. The importance where at all possible for sustained contact with workers/agencies for the young person and family is shown here, with the option to be flexible as to the level of input required.	

7) If you have identified other local community justice activities and outcomes which go beyond the national outcomes, then record them here.	Local outcomes
Please describe the activity	Then describe the impact
<p>In a non-judgemental environment, FO has worked to include and engage families and ensure that they are connected with their family member in prison and kept abreast of their wellbeing. Support has included:</p> <p>non-judgemental environment, FO has worked to include and engage families and ensure that they are connected with their family member in prison and kept abreast of their wellbeing. Support has included:</p> <p>Emotional help Visiting and maintaining contact Information about prison Concerns for children Family relationships Access to community support Income, finance and benefits (Winter Hardship Funding from S Govt- £1200 paid out in WL) Preparing for release Housing</p>	<p>The inclusion of Families Outside in this section is because while the service users are the families of those who have received a custodial sentence, both they and the family member in prison benefit from the work done here and as it impacts on everyone's wellbeing, it consequently has a positive effect on the communities and enhances the chances of desistance.</p> <p>In the reporting period, one of our partners, Families Outside (FO) supported 30 families in West Lothian with 115 separate issues. This can further be broken down into:</p> <p>Helpline – 14 Regional Family Support Coordinator-15 Group Work Peer Support-1</p> <p>Comments from families include: <i>"I am so grateful for your support...you have helped me so much and I cannot thank you enough."</i> <i>"I really appreciate your help on this, didn't know where to turn."</i> <i>"Feel as if you've taken a huge weight off my shoulders."</i></p>



8) What other achievements and challenges happened?	
Achievements	Challenges
<p>The individual contributions by CJP members to the whole community justice picture in WLC has been the greatest achievement during this unusual time. The ability and willingness to adapt and create innovative responses to challenging problems at a time when both financial and human resources are limited has been very noticeable. The virtual meetings of the CJP have facilitated the sharing of this information and allowed all individuals to be involved in the collective picture.</p> <p>As services gradually began to return to a more normal pattern towards the end of this reporting period, the achievements of this time have been capitalised on and we are benefitting from the new hybrid pattern of delivery with its benefits both for staff, partnership meetings and service users. The digital experience has been more inclusive for some service users and we have provided the necessary tools for this where appropriate while the hybrid model has increased time management and attendance for many employees/employers.</p>	<p>Most of the challenges for this reporting period have been caused by the pandemic which has had a huge impact and will continue to do so going forward. Issues now include heavy backlogs in most areas of service and for our partners that we rely on and work closely with. Staff absence continues with illness or family illness although this is gradually improving.</p> <p>In West Lothian, as across the country nationally, we continue to face challenging financial constraints as we try to keep services open, develop commissioning plans and leverage our resources. The cost of the pandemic will undoubtedly exacerbate this situation as we go forward.</p> <p>Data collection-the way that data is collated across different services isn't uniform and can be challenging to interpret and collate. In addition, the quarterly data that is required isn't always reflected in a way that can be easily extracted.</p>
9) Additional Information including, next steps for the partnership	
<p>The next stage for the CJP is to produce a fresh Action Plan. We have a new Chair who has started and her introductory meeting is planned. The timing of this dovetails in with the recent publication of the National Community Justice Strategy 2022 and the new OPIF being published in the Autumn. Our existing WLC Community Justice Strategy (CJOIP) 2019-24 is still the relevant local one and we will ensure that we reflect any necessary changes from the National one here as well.</p> <p>The CJP also plans to undertake a fresh SNSA in the next reporting year to inform us into the next period for the partnership and beyond 2024.</p>	



