

Briefing note for Scottish Parliament Finance and Public Administration Committee

Enquiry into the National Performance Framework

Fife - Examples of Best Practice

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Putting People First

The Putting People First project is a test of change in the Kirkcaldy area. Putting People First prioritises internal referrals from people who face multiple disadvantages or who are newly experiencing hardship in order to prevent crisis and escalation to further disadvantage. The active referral routes into Putting People First are through local Housing Services, CLD (Community Education Workers and Welfare Support Workers) and Community Social Work (where connections do not meet the Social Work threshold).

The desired short-term outcomes of this project are improved relationships with local people & communities; improved knowledge and links between the three services, and; improved information sharing between teams and services. The desired long-term outcomes are:

- Improved living conditions for local people
- Increased numbers sustaining tenancies
- Improved engagement and participation in wellbeing support and social interactions
- Increased pathways for addressing social inequalities
- Increased individual and community resilience
- Increased organisational capacity to reduce poverty

This project is running from July 2021 to June 2022. Action Learning sets will capture team, organisation and system learning to improve performance. Lived experience of poverty and information on how individuals and families access services will be shared to create opportunities for organisational learning.

Intensive Family Support Service

The Intensive Family Support Service (IFSS) in Fife is the “Making it Work for Families” programme, which became fully operational in October 2020. The IFSS is part of the Edinburgh & South East Scotland City Region Deal’s Integrated Regional Employability & Skills programme.

Families engaged with the IFSS receive a mixture of holistic support across the services including whole family support, advice, employability, youth work, family learning and substance use support. Alongside supporting families, during the pandemic operational services also delivered crisis work to ensure that families had access to food, home energy, digital equipment, clothing, and household goods where they were needed.

Outcomes of the programme so far include:

- Young people supported to re-engage in Education
- Young people supported to gain qualifications
- Adults secured employment
- Financial gains for families

Data and Evaluation - Low Income Family Tracker

To support the Tackling Poverty & Preventing Crisis Board's aim of improved use of data relating to poverty and crisis to target spend on the prevention of crisis, the Board provided a mandate to Fife Council to procure a service from Policy in Practice – a social policy software and analytics company - called the Low-Income Family Tracker (LIFT).

LIFT will allow Fife Council to combine its datasets with Policy in Practice's policy engine to make better decisions and track how individual households are impacted by policy changes, now and in the future. This will help the Board identify the most vulnerable families, target support to them and track the change.

This also supports the Board's other priorities around income maximisation, particularly in relation to take-up campaigns, which are even more relevant now during the cost-of-living crisis. A programme of income maximisation activity is being planned, starting with Pension Credit.

Fife Hardship Fund

Fife Council used monies from the Scottish Government Food Fund to deliver a Hardship Fund for people and families who are in crisis and who have already applied to the Scottish Welfare Fund for support. The fund seeks to address crises such as food insecurity and fuel poverty. The fund is not open to self-referrals; applications can only be made by an officer supporting the family.

During 2021, the total number of applications approved across Fife was 541, with a total amount of £268,944 and an average payment of £470. Funding is allocated to households based on the size of their family and is intended to cover a period of 4 weeks.

Fife Council's Policy and Coordination Committee approved additional funding in April 2022 to extend the delivery of the Fife Hardship Fund.

Local People and Place Leadership

The Plan for Fife Recovery and Renewal – 2021-2024 Update emphasises the importance of developing place-based approaches across local neighbourhoods and wider communities. This should involve everyone delivering in a place working together to make sure activities are coordinated so that the sum of their efforts is greater than their parts. Place-based solutions need to start with an understanding of the assets, stakeholders and relationships in a locality.

Learning from local responses to the pandemic suggests that this kind of approach requires changes to the way services operate that go beyond better collaboration. It requires changes in behaviours – with local staff being given greater autonomy – and a redesign of services and systems to support more locally based approaches.

In order to make this change, the following actions are being implemented across Fife's seven local community planning areas:

- a) Expansion of local people and place leadership groups to include key community planning partners, including Health and Social Care, NHS Fife, Fife College, Police Scotland and the voluntary sector;
- b) Using system review processes, identifying the changes that are needed to support local leadership approaches;
- c) Checking the alignment of local activity with the Plan for Fife recovery and renewal priorities and identify what additional support local people and place leadership groups need to support the delivery of these priorities within local areas;
- d) Undertaking 'tests of change' in service areas that have been identified as currently being sub-optimal, anti-poverty spend, kinship care, employability and parent-led childcare;
- e) Developing a performance framework to help ensure that local action is adding value across the renewal and recovery priorities and Plan for Fife ambitions;
- f) Investing in change and improvement support (e.g., coaching, 4DX) to enable the above changes.

Community Wealth Building in Fife

At the heart of the community wealth building approach are five strategies for harnessing existing resources to enable local economies to grow and develop from within. These are called the 5 pillars of CWB:

- Plural Ownership of the Economy,
- Making Financial Power Work for Local People,
- Fair Employment and Just Labour Markets,
- Progressive Procurement of Goods & Services
- Socially Just Use of Land and Property.

The way in which organisations like councils, hospitals, universities, and colleges spend their money, employ people and use their land, property and financials assets can make a huge difference to a local area. Used in the right way, these things can help generate wealth, jobs and opportunity for local people and give as many people as possible a stake in the local economy.

Fife's commitment to embedding a community wealth building approach across the organisation and Fife Partnership is front and centre to the recovery and renewal plan for Fife 2021-02024.

Scottish Government and CLES supported the production of the Community Wealth Building (CWB) diagnostic report and recommendations for Fife.

The report noted that much good work is already underway and there is a sound basis on which to build e.g. leadership for the approach, an existing procurement approach, credit union movement and a CDFI presence in Fife, successful community asset transfers, and many strong, enterprising community projects e.g. Silverburn Park, which is managed by Fife Employment Access Trust.

A delivery plan covering all pillars of CWB is under development as part of the leadership and governance arrangements for the Plan for Fife 2021-24. The delivery plan was presented to the Recovery and Renewal Leadership Board in April.

CWB is at the heart of Fife's recovery and renewal plan; over the next 3 years we have committed to:

- Developing a CWB model of economic recovery and development,
- Developing a CWB approach to the climate emergency,
- Embedding local people and place-based approaches across the Fife Partnership,
- Redesigning systems and processes to deliver wider social benefit through procurement, recruitment, fair employment and the use of land and assets,
- Expanding support for community ownership, social enterprise and community owned businesses through a new business support hub, and
- Further develop the role of credit unions and the CDFI to support financial resilience and wellbeing.

Focus to date has been on developing our understanding of CWB across our anchor organisations and identifying opportunities for collaboration. A CWB anchor charter has been developed to outline our commitments and is being adopted by anchor institutions.

Immediate opportunities identified for Fife Council are in furthering our progressive approach to procurement, to fair work and employment by exploring alternative and creative recruitment approaches to under-represented groups, integrating our offering of community development / third sector support and business support to organisations seeking alternative business and ownership models. Work is also underway to develop opportunities for CWB activity as a demonstrator of a place-based approach e.g. in Kirkcaldy in partnership with Love Oor Langtoun and Greener Kirkcaldy, and, potentially, with the further redevelopment of Lochore Meadows Country Park.