

Pathways out of Poverty

An Anti-Poverty Strategy for Fermanagh and Omagh 2024 - 2034



Fermanagh & Omagh
District Council

Comhairle Ceantair
Fhear Manach agus na hÓmaí

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Foreword by Councillor John McClaughry

Chair of Fermanagh and Omagh District Council (2024-25)

Fermanagh and Omagh is a great place to live and as a Council, we are committed to improve the lives and wellbeing of our communities. We recognise, however, that poverty is having a significant impact on many people in our district.

The causes of poverty are wide-ranging, and the consequences can be devastating. The challenging economic consequences of the crippling Cost of Living crisis, the high levels of inflation and budgetary constraints and the recent Covid pandemic have resulted in many of our residents falling into poverty. Some people in our district are particularly susceptible such as those who live in rural areas; or because of increased needs, for example, people with a disability. Unfortunately, children carry the impact of poverty furthest throughout their lives.

Poverty is a cross-cutting issue and cannot be tackled independently by any single organisation or sector. Such collaboration is vital at this time as we seek to take steps to tackle poverty and disadvantage. This strategy demonstrates our long-term commitment to work with our partners to help prevent people from falling into poverty and to provide pathways out of poverty.

The strategy, which has been co-produced with a number of local organisations who provide support to our residents, sets out the areas of priority and the high level actions we will take, in alignment with wider strategic objectives. We will continue to work with those cross-sectoral partners, including Statutory, Community and Voluntary sector representatives, to plan and deliver actions to address key priorities to mitigate, reduce and help prevent poverty in the district.

We know there are no ready-made solutions, however, we will do all we can to address the long-term impact of poverty in our district. This strategy marks an important milestone to achieve this, and to support our residents who are most in need.



18%

of individuals in Northern Ireland were living in relative poverty in 2022/23

24%

of children in Northern Ireland were living in relative poverty in 2022/23

23%

of the population in Fermanagh and Omagh, on average, has been in relative poverty over the last 6 years

Introduction

The most recent Northern Ireland Poverty and Income Inequality Report estimated that across Northern Ireland, 18% of individuals were living in relative poverty in 2022/23, and for children the rate was 24%. The report indicated that 20% of the population in Fermanagh and Omagh were living in relative poverty in that period. Over the last six years, an average of 23% of the Fermanagh and Omagh population has been in relative poverty.

Definitions of Poverty

There are a number of ways in which poverty can be defined. For consistency, when this strategy refers to poverty, it will mean relative poverty as described below.



People are considered to be living in relative poverty if the income of their household is less than 60 per cent of the UK median household income in the year in question. This is a measure of whether those in the lowest income households are keeping pace with the growth of incomes in the population as a whole.

It is important to note that relative poverty is an income based measure and does not take into account increased household costs or inflation.

There are also a number of wider, more qualitative definitions of poverty, for example, the Joseph Rowntree Foundation considers that...



Poverty means not being able to heat your home, pay your rent, or buy the essentials for your children. It means waking up every day facing insecurity, uncertainty, and impossible decisions about money. It means facing marginalisation – and even discrimination – because of your financial circumstances. The constant stress it causes can lead to problems that deprive people of the chance to play a full part in society.

Department for Communities (DfC) is currently considering alternative Measures of Poverty and this strategy will be updated as required to take any changes into consideration.

Causes and Consequences of Poverty

Some of the causes of poverty are known to include

- Unemployment and insecure or under-employment;
- Low levels of skills or education;
- An ineffective benefit system and low take-up of benefits and in-kind support; and
- High costs of housing, essential goods and services such as credit, gas, electricity, telephone or broadband childcare, and
- Some groups face particularly high costs related to where they live (such as those living in rural areas or areas of multiple deprivation); or increased needs (for example, people with a disability) or because they are paying a 'poverty premium' – where people in poverty pay more for the same goods and services, for example, credit.
- Other causes potentially include abuse, trauma, or discrimination against people because of their class, gender, ethnicity, disability, age, sexuality, religion or parental status.



The consequences of living in poverty include

- Physical, emotional or mental health problems;
- lower life expectancy;
- Housing problems or homelessness;
- Lower educational achievement;
- Being a victim or perpetrator of crime;
- Drug or alcohol problems;
- Poverty in childhood increases the risk of unemployment and low pay in adulthood, and lower savings in later life;
- Teenage parenthood; relationship and family problems.

Reframing Misconceptions about Poverty

Contrary to common misconceptions, poverty is an economic risk that affects almost all members of society, and a key element of this strategy will be to tackle the unfair and inaccurate misconceptions held by some about those experiencing poverty.



Poverty in Northern Ireland



The Northern Ireland Poverty and Income Inequality Report 2022/23, published 27th March 2024 reports that in 2022/23, 18% of individuals were estimated to be living in relative poverty; compared to 16% in 2021/22. The report further estimated that the percentage of children living in relative poverty in 2022/23 was 24%; compared to 18% in the previous year; the proportion of working age adults in relative poverty was 17%; a rise from 14% in 2021/22; and the proportion of pensioners in relative poverty in 2022/23 was 12%.



Food insecurity is defined as running out of food and being unable to afford more, and/or reduced meal sizes, eating less, going hungry or losing weight due to lack of money. The Trussell Trust report "Hunger in Northern Ireland" (June 2023) reported 16% of all adults in Northern Ireland having experienced food insecurity in the 12 months to mid-2022, and 7% of households across Northern Ireland accessing support from a food bank or social supermarket. Almost two thirds of people referred to Trussell Trust food banks are disabled. Working-age adults are much more likely to need to turn to a food bank than pensioners, particularly single adults living alone and those not currently in paid work. Families with children are overrepresented in those who turn to food banks.



When people cannot afford the essentials, they are often instead forced to turn to borrowing. A recent survey carried out by the Money and Pensions Service (MaPS) found that one in eight people in Northern Ireland require expert advice to deal with the money they owe. People in this situation have debts such as mortgage, rent, rates and utility arrears. The research also shows that another 26% are now at risk financially, meaning they're struggling to keep up with bills and borrowing commitments, using high-cost credit, or can't afford food or essentials. Combined, this means over a third of Northern Ireland's population either need debt advice or are at risk of needing it soon.



The most recent Family Resources Survey for Northern Ireland (2021/22) reported that 15% of the population have no savings and a further 37% have savings of less than £3000. People with a disability are more likely to live in poverty, and the estimated percentage of all individuals with a disability in Northern Ireland had increased to 22% in 2021/22, at which point 9% of children had a disability. The survey found that the majority of households in Northern Ireland (95%) were food secure, but this was less likely for households with a disability or those living in the social or private rental sector.



A household is said to be in fuel poverty if it needs to spend more than 10 per cent of its income on energy costs. The factors which impact on fuel poverty are household income, the cost of energy, and the domestic energy efficiency of the home. In Northern Ireland almost a quarter of households are deemed to be in fuel poverty.



A recent Northern Ireland Audit Office report on Child Poverty highlighted an 11 - 15 year gap in healthy life expectancy between the most and least deprived areas in Northern Ireland. Poor children are 4 times more likely to develop a mental health problem by age 11. The GCSE attainment gap for children receiving free school meals was 24%.



The Joseph Rowntree Foundation report into Poverty in Northern Ireland 2022 found that certain geographical areas and groups such as people in workless families, disabled people, carers and people in ethnic minority households have higher poverty rates than the mean.

Northern Ireland Anti-Poverty Strategy

Section 28E of the Northern Ireland Act 1998 provides that the NI Executive, “shall adopt a strategy setting out how it proposes to tackle poverty, social exclusion and patterns of deprivation based on objective need.”

As part of the 2020 New Decade, New Approach deal, it was agreed that a restored Executive would develop and implement an Anti-Poverty Strategy. Department for Communities established an Expert Advisory Panel and subsequently a Co-Design Group to take forward the development of the strategy.

Some of the areas explored across these processes included:

- Creating an Anti-Poverty Act and Anti-Poverty Commission;
- Implementing a new child payment, delivering a childcare strategy, making participation in school cost-free, and restoring the value of social security benefits for children;
- Dealing with low pay and precarious work, through measures like a ‘real Living Wage’, collective bargaining, and prohibiting the use of ‘zero-hour’ contracts;
- Strengthening the benefits and social security system to protect against poverty, including via reforming supports for persons with disabilities and removing the bedroom tax, benefit cap, two-child limit, and five-week wait for Universal Credit;
- Tackling poverty amongst pensioners and older people;
- Addressing cross-cutting issues impacting on poverty, such as housing, employment inclusion, and access to services.

Other related Regional Strategies and Commitments

Department for Communities is currently consulting on a new Fuel Poverty Strategy to provide an all-of-government framework for addressing fuel poverty and its impacts in Northern Ireland, and is simultaneously developing a successor to the Affordable Warmth Scheme to ensure that home energy support is available for low-income households for the future.

Work is also ongoing to develop a new Early Learning and Childcare Strategy in Northern Ireland.



Image: Our District at a Glance Fermanagh and Omagh

Fermanagh and Omagh District is located in the southwest of Northern Ireland covering all of County Fermanagh and parts of County Tyrone.

3,000 km² Land covered
116,812 Population
45,715 Households

Economy

£23,155
Average wage in FO

£35.45
GVA per hour worked

Employment

31% (28,735) Full time
12% (10,940) Part time
11% (10,144) Self-employed

Approximately **54,290** Jobs in the district
8,575 VAT or PAYE registered businesses

Top 5 Job Sectors by # Jobs

- 1 8k Retail
- 2 8k Health and Social
- 3 6k Manufacturing
- 4 6k Agriculture
- 5 6k Education

74.8%

Of those aged between 16-64 are economically active

404 Accommodation providers
1,438 Food and drink providers in district

Education and Achievement

86% Of school leavers achieve at least 5 GCSEs A*-C inc. English and Maths
Almost 50% Of school leavers go onto University
60.6% Achieving 2+ A Levels

Satisfaction

91% Population satisfied with local area as a place to live
92% Of residents consider the district is welcoming

People and Communities

58,482 Females (50.1%)
58,330 Males (49.9%)
F: 41 M: 39 Median age
31% Younger than 25
18% Older than 65

Member of WHO's Global Network of Age-friendly Cities and Communities

20% (18,795) Of those living here are retired.

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We Have

104 Council managed play parks
4 Leisure centres
10 Community centres supported by FODC

79% Report very good/good health
377 Staff received JAM Card® training
28% Are actively engaged in community activities

Environment and Place

CO₂
 21.1 tonnes of CO₂e emissions per capita

1/3
 Of all woodland in NI is located in FO

- 1 Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty
- 3 Local Nature Reserves
- 1 UNESCO Global Geopark
- 133 Area of Special Scientific Interest
- 20 Special areas of conservation
- 12 National Nature Reserves
- 8 Ramsar areas

47.5%
 Of household waste is preparing for reuse, recycling, and composting

A4 & A5
 2 of NI's key transport corridors situated within FODC



Boundary Key
 UNESCO Global Geopark
 Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty

Poverty in Fermanagh and Omagh District

The Northern Ireland Poverty and Income Inequality Report 2022/23, reported that for the 3-year period 2019/20 – 2022/23, 20% of the population of Fermanagh and Omagh was living in relative poverty, against the regional (3-year average) rate of 17% relative poverty in Northern Ireland as a whole.

Local Government District (3-year average)	Prevalence (%) of Individuals in Poverty	
	Before Housing Costs	After Housing Costs
Antrim and Newtownabbey	14	16
Ards and North Down	16	14
Armagh City, Banbridge & Craigavon	15	15
Belfast City	14	16
Causeway Coast & Glens	21	19
Derry City & Strabane	21	24
Fermanagh & Omagh	20	21
Lisburn & Castlereagh City	12	12
Mid & East Antrim	18	16
Mid Ulster	18	17
Newry, Mourne & Down	23	22
Northern Ireland Average	17	17

Prevalence of Individuals in Relative Poverty by Local Government District – Data Source: Family Resources Survey 2019/20 - 2022/23

Over the last 6 years, the rate of relative poverty has averaged 23% in Fermanagh and Omagh. Reports from the community and voluntary sector organisations working “on the ground” would suggest the reality is even more stark.

Certain geographical areas within our district, and groups of individuals, are impacted disproportionately by poverty and disadvantage. The cost-of-living crisis continues to affect many, and there is an increasing issue with debt as our residents struggle to deal with rising costs.

Foodbank referrals are continuing to rise in the district, and the profile of those presenting for support is evolving, with more working families seeking help. Recent research carried out by University of Ulster found that Fermanagh and Omagh district had the third highest average risk score for food poverty across NI councils. Fermanagh and Omagh also had the highest variance of all Council areas, suggesting substantial variation in food poverty risk within the Council area. Rural areas were at greatest risk of food poverty. Food items were on average more expensive and less available from rural outlets in Fermanagh and Omagh. Therefore, not all households have the same equal access to food, with food price and availability less advantageous for some areas.

The research further found that Fermanagh and Omagh district has the highest at-risk rate of fuel poverty of all 11 councils in Northern Ireland. Rural areas are at higher risk of fuel poverty within the district. This is particularly true for small areas (SAs) bordering with Leitrim, Cavan and Monaghan.

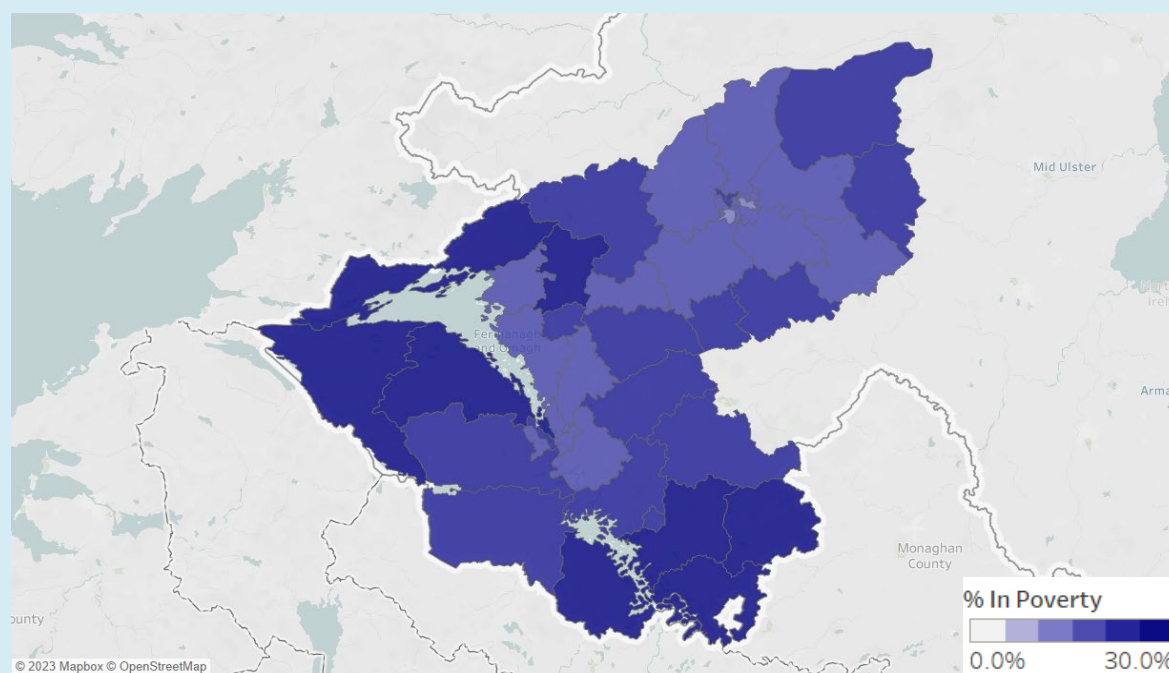
As regards transport, the researchers found that more than one in three of domestic properties in the district are more than a 10-minute walk from an existing bus stop. There are SAs with 25% or more households with no vehicle ownership. A combined transport poverty risk score concluded that intermediate sized settlements and villages have the highest average combined risk score.

Across the board, there were 157 Small Areas in Fermanagh and Omagh classified as high risk clusters for either fuel, transport or food poverty, 52 Small Areas (33%) experience two of the three issues, and 4 Small Areas (containing over 900 domestic properties) had high risk clusters for fuel, transport and food poverty together.

In-keeping with the recent MaPS findings, both of our local advice organisations are reporting unprecedented levels of debt enquiries, including “priority debts” such as mortgage, rent and rates arrears. The value of credit card debt for clients presenting has increased considerably, with another major debt issue being social security deductions from benefits. Both organisations indicated an increase in clients being in a negative budget, where a person cannot meet their living costs, meaning there is no scope for correction; and almost all clients presenting had no savings.

Recent research carried out by Action for Children relating to child poverty, shows that children are approximately 3 percentage points more likely to experience poverty than the population at large. UK-wide and regional research findings, extrapolated for the district, could indicate that as many as 23-27% of children in Fermanagh and Omagh area may be living in relative poverty. Children carry the impact of poverty furthest throughout their lives, with research showing a strong negative impact on mental health, education, and risk of being under the care of the local Health and Social Care Trust.

Department for Communities has recently released administrative data to demonstrate the risk and depth of income poverty for households in Northern Ireland. The DfC data indicates that the proportion of households in poverty within Fermanagh and Omagh ranges **from 13% to 33%**. The map aside demonstrates the differences across the district, with the more urban areas, such as Omagh and Enniskillen, generally having a lower proportion of households in poverty. However, the border areas show a much higher proportion in poverty.



Our Commitment to Tackling Poverty

The commitments outlined in this strategy support those in the Fermanagh and Omagh Community Plan 2030 and the Fermanagh and Omagh District Council Corporate Plan 2024-28, both of which aim to contribute towards the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) set out in the United Nations' 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.

This strategy will be reviewed further to the publication of the Northern Ireland Executive's Programme for Government and the Northern Ireland Anti-Poverty Strategy, to ensure full alignment of priorities.

Demonstrating Our Commitment to Tackling Poverty

Along with other partners, Fermanagh and Omagh District Council has been responding to the cost-of-living crisis to make sure that the most severely affected of our residents are supported.

From late 2022 to early 2024, Fermanagh and Omagh District Council, with the support of funding from Department for Communities, has invested heavily in financial and wellbeing support to residents impacted by the ongoing cost of living crisis. Delivery of much of this support has been in partnership with local Community and Voluntary sector partners.

Whilst this strategy commits us to maintaining this type of support where it is needed, it is anticipated that by working to tackle the underlying causes of poverty within the district, there will be a reduction in the need for short-term crisis supports and an increasing resilience amongst those at greatest risk.

Fermanagh and Omagh District Council has demonstrated a longstanding commitment to addressing socio-economic disadvantage within the district. Significant funding is provided on an annual basis for the provision of independent advice regarding benefits, welfare reform and debt. Across all business areas and functions, and as a responsible employer and in its procurement practices, the Council continues to demonstrate, through its policies and day to day operations, a commitment to those at social and economic disadvantage.

A Labour Market Partnership has been developed in the district, and Fermanagh and Omagh District Council is currently developing an Inclusive & Sustainable Economic Growth Plan, both of which aim to provide the conditions for a vibrant local economy and workforce.

The recently established WRAP Food Poverty Support Programme, funded by DfC, has been co-designed with statutory and community partners to tackle the root causes of food insecurity in the district. This model of wraparound support, delivered by local community and voluntary sector organisations, is a move towards a 'Cash First, Advice First' approach to tackling food insecurity and poverty going forward.

Within the district, there is a strong network of statutory, community and voluntary organisations working tirelessly to support residents impacted by poverty.

Our Mission

Our collective mission is to work in partnership to improve the lives and wellbeing of our communities and provide Pathways out of Poverty.



Scope

We acknowledge that many of the drivers of poverty, for example, the structural deficiencies within the social security system; rising housing costs; or lack of a regional childcare strategy, are outside of the capacity and remit of local organisations to affect. However, this strategy aims to be ambitious in stretching the extent of what is within scope for Fermanagh and Omagh District Council, Community Planning Partners, the wider Community and Voluntary sector and other local stakeholders, and we will work collaboratively to maximise existing resources and budgets.



Timescale

The initial timescale for the implementation of this strategy is a period of 10 years from 2024 to 2034. The strategy is intended to be responsive to prevailing circumstances and as such will be kept under review. The underlying action plan will be fully developed and delivered by the proposed Fermanagh and Omagh Anti-Poverty Network and will be monitored on an ongoing basis and reviewed annually.



What will we do?

With the input and support of the Anti-Poverty Strategy Working Group and through ongoing consultation with the other statutory, community and voluntary sector organisations in the district, a number of themes have emerged and priorities have been identified in order to tackle poverty. We will continue to Mitigate the effects of Poverty, whilst working to Prevent & Reduce Poverty. We will Design and Deliver Services and Supports in a way that will best meet the needs of our residents most at risk of poverty and we will use our influence collectively to affect change at a local, regional and national level.

Theme 1 - Mitigating the Effects for People Experiencing Poverty

In the short to medium term, we will continue to work collectively to mitigate the effects of poverty for those who find themselves struggling. Priorities have been identified around provision of information and advice, effective communication about available support, signposting and referral to existing support, implementation of targeted interventions to ensure basic needs are met, and meaningful support for the Community and Voluntary sector in their work to support those most in need.



Information, advice & communication

We will continue to develop a central source of up to date, reliable information regarding the support available locally and regionally for residents impacted by poverty, incorporating online and other resources developed or endorsed by the Money and Pensions Service Money Helper programme.

We will continue to invest in high quality, impartial and independent advice provision in the district.

We will use a blend of traditional and social media to ensure residents are aware of the sources of support in the district.



Signposting and referrals

We will convene a forum of support providers in the district to share information and best practice, and to develop a simple mechanism to facilitate seamless signposting and referrals among those providers.



Supporting households in meeting their basic needs

We will continue to source and utilise any available hardship funding to support residents in financial crisis.

We will continue to work in partnership with local support providers to develop and deliver a programme of targeted interventions aimed at ensuring those most in need have access to basic needs including food, fuel, housing, health, transport, digital services and a good quality of life; and are empowered to seek support.

Theme 2 - Prevention & Reduction of Poverty

In the medium to longer term, we will work to prevent people falling into poverty and to provide pathways out of poverty. Priorities have been identified around recognising those most at risk of falling into poverty in order to intervene early, maximising household incomes and reducing household expenses, education around financial wellbeing and resilience, and ensuring that how we do our business in the district does not stigmatise or adversely affect those at socio-economic disadvantage.



Identifying people at risk and providing support

We will use all available data and information to identify those most at risk of falling into poverty, and work in partnership with Community Planning partners and other local statutory, community and voluntary partners to provide early intervention support, in a way that best meets the needs of the individual.

We will work with partners, with a focus on early intervention and prevention, to improve outcomes for the wellbeing needs of children and families, recognising the disproportionate impact of poverty on children and young people and its long-term impact on our community.



Income maximisation through better paid and more secure employment

Through the Labour Market Partnership we will seek to address the drivers of economic inactivity.

We will work with partners to develop an Inclusive Economy Action Plan, supporting new and existing businesses to thrive through advancements in innovation, productivity and sustainability, hence creating an environment for better paid and more secure employment.

We will seek to address the barriers to employment, including issues relating to the cost and availability of transport and childcare.

As an employer currently paying the Real Living Wage as a minimum, Council will continue to seek evidence of social value from its contractors and providers: and will encourage other organisations within the district to also adopt best practice in terms of fair remuneration in employment across all sectors.



Income maximisation through benefits and other financial and in kind support

We will work with the Department for Communities, the independent advice sector and all other statutory, community and voluntary sector partners to encourage the uptake of social security benefits and other support, such as Universal Credit (including the Universal Credit Contingency Fund), Discretionary Support Fund, Free School Meal entitlement, existing childcare financial support schemes, Discretionary Housing Payment, Healthy Start initiative, Help to Save etc.



Reducing household costs and other outgoings including debt

We will work in partnership to help households implement changes to reduce key household costs such as fuel, food and utility costs and raise awareness of social tariffs currently available to low income households, for example, reduced broadband fees.

We will work with the Education Authority, schools and others to consider how the cost of the school day can be reduced.

We will undertake an exercise to identify the nature and extent of the debt crisis in the district and work with stakeholders such as the Department for Communities, Credit Unions and independent debt advice providers etc., to develop a plan to address this growing concern.

We will work with Department for Infrastructure and other government departments/statutory bodies to identify gaps in transport provision and consider how the costs of travel to access services, education, employment and social activities can be reduced and whether alternative access options could be developed.



Education

We will work as a corporate partner with the Money and Pensions Service (MaPS) in their implementation of the Northern Ireland Financial Wellbeing Action Plan, including the facilitation of training for our staff and local support partners through the Money Guider Programme.



Consider how we carry out our business within the district

Within Council, we will carry out a review of business areas, including touchpoints where our staff come into contact with the public, to identify if we are doing all we can to identify and support residents impacted by poverty, and to ensure that how we carry out our business impacts positively on those at socio-economic disadvantage.

We will develop and deliver training to strengthen our awareness and ability to identify and address poverty, its causes and potential solutions, in a prioritised and evidence led basis, recognising the centrality and dignity of the individual.

We will consider how decisions made within our organisations impact on inequalities that result from socio-economic disadvantage (poverty proofing).

We will consider how sponsorship and grant programmes, or other funding streams offered by the organisations within the district can include an element of socio-economic duty as part of their criteria.

We will identify anchor organisations in Fermanagh and Omagh and consider how we might collectively develop a culture of Community Wealth Building in the district.

Theme 3 - Design and Delivery of Services and Supports

On an ongoing basis we will reconsider how we design and deliver services and support for those experiencing or at risk of falling into poverty. The priorities that have been identified include reducing the stigma associated with poverty, ensuring communities are part of the decision making process to break the cycle of poverty, sustainable funding and resourcing of services, growing and diversifying the local economy, utilising local data and intelligence more effectively, and importantly using our collective influence to call for local, regional and national change.



Change the narrative around poverty

We will develop and deliver a comprehensive communication campaign to work towards reducing the stigma associated with poverty and empower people to seek support and help when required.



Incorporate lived experience of poverty

We will create the environment and opportunities for those impacted by poverty, including children and young people, to share their experiences and to contribute meaningfully to the development of services and support.



Using data to identify and target those most in need

We will seek to pool and share the relevant local data gathered by the statutory, community and voluntary organisations in the district and regionally, identify the key deficiencies, and embark on a programme of data development to address those gaps. We will use all available information to identify and target those most at risk of poverty, including those with specific vulnerabilities, for example, people with disabilities, children and young people, carers, people with mental health conditions, single private renters; and those living in areas of disadvantage (including rural dwellers and our farming community).



Funding and resourcing of service delivery

We will seek out alternative sources of more sustainable funding to meet the requirement for crisis interventions, and put in place practical partnership arrangements to allow for the delivery of services and supports in response to need.



Using our influence

The Fermanagh and Omagh Anti-Poverty Network will campaign along with the Northern Ireland Anti-Poverty Network (NIAPN) and other groups and organisations calling for the urgent need to implement the Northern Ireland Anti-Poverty Strategy.

We will use our civic, official and political influence to lobby central government to make those changes widely acknowledged as being required within the social security system, for example the “5 week wait” in Universal Credit, the 2 child limit for benefit payments etc.

We will support ongoing national and regional campaigns for changes to policies that perpetrate the cycle of poverty, for example, the joint Trussell Trust and Joseph Rowntree Foundation “Guarantee Our Essentials” campaign.

Through the Community Planning partnership, we will continue to advocate for investment in Childcare Provision through the introduction and delivery of the NI Childcare Strategy.

We will make representation to central government highlighting our concerns regarding housing availability, lack of social housing and increasingly unaffordable rents; and support the revitalisation of the Northern Ireland Housing Executive.

We will continue to work collaboratively with statutory and community and voluntary sector partners, to gather and utilise data to identify and highlight policy issues that may be contributing to poverty in our district.



Developing and Implementing an Action Plan and Measuring the Impact

Using a framework of the themes that have emerged and the priorities that have been identified in order to tackle poverty in the district, a detailed underlying action plan will be fully developed and delivered by the Fermanagh and Omagh Anti-Poverty Network and will be monitored and reviewed on an ongoing basis.

An Outcome Based Accountability approach will be used to identify the specific actions we can take and to measure the difference we make. As we implement and review the effectiveness of our action plan, we will aim to continually learn and improve by regularly asking: How much did we do? How well did we do it? Is anyone better off?

Acknowledgements

This strategy has been co-designed with a number of statutory, community and voluntary sector organisations within the district. The membership of the Anti-Poverty Strategy Working Group is listed below. The involvement and commitment of these individuals and organisations is greatly appreciated.

Helen Hicks – **Northern Ireland Housing Executive**

Pastor Graham McElhinney – **Reach Foodbank, Omagh**

Mary T Conway – **Omagh Forum for Rural Associations**

Paul Kellagher – **Action for Children**

Michael Roddy – **Omagh Independent Advice Services**

Jason Donaghey – **Fermanagh Community Transport**

Allison Forbes – **South West Age Partnership**

Samantha Gallagher – **Community Advice Fermanagh**

Mairead Taggart – **Western Health and Social Care Trust**

Priscilla Magee – **Children and Young People's Strategic Partnership**

Barry Boyle – **Fermanagh Rural Community Network**

Other core members of the Working Group from within Council included officers from Community Services, Economic Development and Investment Unit and Neighbourhood Renewal.

The strategy has also been influenced by input and guidance from a large number of other local and regional stakeholders over the last 18 months through numerous discussions, meetings and interactions, including the Northern Ireland Anti-Poverty Network (NIAPN), the Northern Ireland Equality Coalition, the Northern Ireland Money and Pensions Service and the Fermanagh and Omagh Access and Inclusion Advisory Group, to name but a few.

Many of these individuals and organisations will be involved in the development and delivery of the Anti-Poverty Action Plan going forward and some will be members of the Fermanagh and Omagh Anti-Poverty Network. In the meantime, we thank them for their expertise and commitment to date.



Fermanagh & Omagh
District Council
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