

Integrated Impact Assessment (IIA)

Stage 1 Scoping and Assessing for Relevance

Section 1 Details of the Proposal

A. Title of Proposal:	Anti-Poverty Strategy 2024-29
B. What is it?	A revised Policy/Strategy/Practice
C. Description of the proposal: (Set out a clear understanding of the purpose of the proposal being developed or reviewed (what are the aims, objectives and intended outcomes, including the context within which it will operate))	This is a strategy which aims to reduce poverty experienced by people who live in the Scottish Borders.
D. Service Area: Department:	Resilient Communities
E. Lead Officer: (Name and job title)	Janice Robertson, Strategic Planning & Policy Manager
F. Other Officers/Partners involved: (List names, job titles and organisations)	Multiple – these are cross-partnership Reports incorporating partners from Scottish Borders Council, NHS Borders and the third sector.
G. Date(s) IIA completed:	May 2024 September 2024 October 2024

Section 2 Will there be any impacts as a result of the relationship between this proposal and other policies?**Yes****If yes, - please state here:**

Council Plan 2024
Scottish Borders Council Anti-Poverty Strategy (2021)
Scottish Borders Council Anti-Poverty Strategy (2021) - Progress Report
Local Child Poverty Report 2024/25, including progress in 2023/24
Best Start Bright Futures: Scottish Government Child Poverty Delivery Plan 2022-26
Children and Young People's Services Plan 2023-26
The Promise Plan 2021-24
Community Plan
T.H.I.S Borders (Tackling Health Inequalities in the Scottish Borders 2024-2030)
Children's Rights Report 2023-26
Equity Strategy 2021-26
Local Housing Strategy (LHS) 2023-28
Borderlands Inclusive Growth Deal
City Region Deal Edinburgh & South East Scotland
Community Food Growing Strategy
South of Scotland Regional Economic Partnership - Regional Economic Strategy Delivery Plan (2022-2025)

Section 3 Legislative Requirements

3.1 Relevance to the Equality Duty:

Do you believe your proposal has any relevance under the Equality Act 2010?

(If you believe that your proposal may have some relevance – however small please indicate yes. If there is no effect, please enter “No” and go to Section 3.2.)

Yes

Equality Duty	Reasoning:
<p>A. Elimination of discrimination (both direct & indirect), victimisation and harassment. <i>(Will the proposal discriminate? Or help eliminate discrimination?)</i></p>	<p>The proposals will help to eliminate direct and indirect discrimination, as all proposals are inclusive.</p> <p>All activity and actions relate to positive outcomes for residents of the Scottish Borders.</p>
<p>B. Promotion of equality of opportunity? <i>(Will your proposal help or hinder the Council with this)</i></p>	<p>All actions detailed confirm that agencies involved are working collaboratively to promote equality and reduce exclusion.</p>
<p>C. Foster good relations? <i>(Will your proposal help to foster or encourage good relations between those who have different equality characteristics?)</i></p>	<p>Relationships have been established between all partner agencies. Under the Equality Act there are nine protected characteristics. The actions indicate positive impacts on many of these as outlined below.</p>

3.2 Which groups of people do you think will be or potentially could be, impacted by the implementation of this proposal? (You should consider employees, clients, customers / service users, and any other relevant groups)				
Please tick below as appropriate, outlining any potential impacts on the undernoted equality groups this proposal may have and how you know this.				
	Impact			Please explain the potential impacts and how you know this
	No Impact	Positive Impact	Negative Impact	
Age Older or younger people or a specific age grouping		x		The reports are inclusive to all regardless of age.
Disability A physical or mental impairment that has a substantial and long term adverse effect on a person's ability to carry out normal day to day activities. This may be visible or invisible, progressive or recurring.		x		The reports are inclusive to all irrespective of disability.
Gender Reassignment anybody who is proposing to undergo, is undergoing, or has undergone a process (or part of a process) for the purpose of reassigning the person's sex by changing physiological or other attributes of sex.		x		The reports are inclusive to all irrespective of gender reassignment/gender identity. A good relationship is in place with Scottish Borders LGBT Equality sub-group TransGen, and a service is commissioned to support LGBT children and young people in the Scottish Borders. A good relationship is in place with Scottish Borders LGBT Equality, and a service is commissioned to support LGBT children and young people in the Scottish Borders.
Marriage or Civil Partnership people who are married or in a civil partnership	x			N/A
Pregnancy and Maternity (refers to the period after the birth and is linked to maternity leave in the employment context. In the non-work context, protection against maternity discrimination is for 26 weeks after giving birth),		x		Informal engagement is in place with young parent groups. These groups provide feedback and input into projects and plans. Parent Voice Group is facilitated by CLD.

Race: including colour, nationality, ethnic origins, including minorities (e.g. gypsy travellers, refugees, migrants and asylum seekers)		x		The reports are inclusive to all irrespective of race.
Religion or Belief: different religious or philosophical beliefs, customs (including atheists and those with no aligned belief) e.g. Christianity, Islam, Hindu, pacifism, vegetarianism, gender critical.	x			The reports are inclusive to all irrespective of religion.
Sex women and men (girls and boys)	x			The reports are inclusive to all irrespective of sex.
Sexual Orientation , e.g. Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Heterosexual	x			The reports are inclusive to all irrespective of sexual orientation. A good relationship is in place with Scottish Borders LGBT Equality, and a service is commissioned to support LGBT children and young people in the Scottish Borders.
<p>3.3 Fairer Scotland Duty</p> <p>This duty places a legal responsibility on Scottish Borders Council (SBC) to actively consider (give due regard) to how we can reduce inequalities of outcome caused by socioeconomic disadvantage when making <u>strategic</u> decisions.</p> <p>The duty is set at a strategic level - these are the key, high level decisions that SBC will take. This would normally include strategy documents, decisions about setting priorities, allocating resources and commissioning services.</p>				
<p>Is the proposal strategic?</p> <p>Yes</p> <p>If No go to Section 4</p>				

If yes, please indicate any potential impact on the undernoted groups this proposal may have and how you know this:				
	Impact			State here how you know this
	No Impact	Positive Impact	Negative Impact	
<p>Low and/or No Wealth – enough money to meet basic living costs and pay bills but have no savings to deal with any unexpected spends and no provision for the future.</p>		x		<p>The strategy details the financial challenges that are being faced by individuals, such as the cost-of-living crisis, increasing inflation and interest rates, increased rents, and removal of the universal pension age Winter Heating Payment.</p> <p>The strategy includes initiatives aimed at improving income for low-income households, such as access to benefits advice, financial inclusion programs, and schemes to reduce energy debt. These efforts directly address the needs of the 'Low and/or No Wealth' group by helping them increase their disposable income and better manage essential costs.</p> <p>Schemes like the Parental Employability Support Fund and support for positive destinations for school leavers from deprived areas, will enhance opportunities to access better job prospects, reducing income inequality.</p> <p>Collaborative work with Citizens Advice Bureau (CAB) and other partners on fuel debt and housing support is highlighted in the strategy.</p>
<p>Material Deprivation – being unable to access basic goods and services i.e. financial products like life insurance, repair/replace broken electrical goods, warm home, leisure and hobbies</p>		x		<p>The strategy highlights the region's significant fuel poverty rate (around 35%) and outlines collaborative efforts with partners like CAB, Changeworks, and Home Energy Scotland to provide support, advice, and financial assistance to alleviate energy costs. This will help low-income households manage energy debt, reduce their energy usage, and improve their ability to afford a warm home.</p>

			<p>The strategy supports financial inclusion initiatives, which have already resulted in over £1 million in financial gains for families in 2023/24. These gains enable families to afford necessary household repairs or replacements, such as electrical goods.</p> <p>The strategy promotes the availability of Warm Welcome Spaces, which provide community-based services and activities such as arts and crafts, games, and youth activities. These spaces, which are free to access, offer recreational and social opportunities for those who may otherwise be unable to afford leisure activities.</p> <p>The strategy includes efforts to ensure that people in the 'Material Deprivation' group have access to financial advice and benefits they may be entitled to but are not claiming. For instance, unclaimed pension credits in the region amount to £3.6 million.</p>
<p>Area Deprivation – where you live (e.g. rural areas), where you work (e.g. accessibility of transport), see rural proofing guidance</p>		<p>x</p>	<p>The strategy specifically identifies the challenges of rurality and geography, noting that these factors exacerbate poverty due to issues like income deprivation, fuel poverty, and digital access. People in rural areas often face difficulties in accessing basic services, jobs, and social opportunities, contributing to area-based deprivation.</p> <p>The strategy aims to alleviate these issues by promoting improvements in digital connectivity and acknowledges the need for enhanced transport solutions to reduce the isolation people face from employment, education, health care and other services from poor transport connectivity.</p> <p>As mentioned above, the strategy also highlights the collaborative work between multiple organisations to tackle fuel poverty, including managing energy debt and target interventions.</p>

				For those living in deprived rural areas, Warm Welcome Spaces and other community initiatives are highlighted as ways to combat isolation and provide access to social activities, leisure, and essential services.
Socio-economic Background – social class i.e. parents' education, employment and income		x		<p>The strategy emphasises improving employment opportunities for people from low-income backgrounds. For example, targeted employability support, especially for parents, is a priority, helping families break the cycle of low income by enhancing their job prospects through training and support. Programmes like the Parental Employability Support Fund and collaboration with partners such as Skills Development Scotland aim to assist individuals from disadvantaged backgrounds in gaining sustainable employment.</p> <p>The strategy highlights the importance of ensuring young people from socio-economically disadvantaged backgrounds have access to education and training opportunities.</p> <p>Health inequalities are often linked to socio-economic background, with poorer families experiencing worse health outcomes. The strategy recognises this and aims to improve health and wellbeing for low-income families through a range of initiatives, including access to health services and mental health support.</p>
Care experienced people		x		<p>The Promise 24-30 Plan is a key policy driver for all children and young people including those who are looked after and accommodated. A local plan is in development to support children and young people in the Scottish Borders. The actions described in the strategy apply to them.</p> <p>The strategy highlights the importance of health and wellbeing for disadvantaged young people. Initiatives such as providing mental health support and addressing the overall wellbeing of</p>

				vulnerable children are integral parts of the strategy, ensuring that LACYP have access to the support they need to thrive.
Carers paid and unpaid including family members		x		<p>The Health and Wellbeing census is to ensure an increased number of children and young people with caring responsibilities are given the necessary support if required.</p> <p>The strategy includes efforts to improve financial inclusion by helping individuals access the benefits they are entitled to, such as carer's allowance and other relevant supports. This can alleviate financial stress for unpaid carers, allowing them to better manage the costs associated with their caring role.</p>
Homelessness		x		The strategy places a strong emphasis on housing as a core component of tackling poverty. It highlights efforts to address fuel poverty and improve housing conditions, both of which are key concerns for those at risk of or experiencing homelessness.
Addictions and substance use		x		Partnership working and financial investment have been executed with local community groups and national organisations working within this sector, e.g. Recovery Coaching Scotland, supported via SBC Neighbourhood Support Fund and the Community-led Local Development Fund to deliver breakfast clubs during the weekends where there is significant unmet need, particularly from a lived experience perspective, and to establish and manage a dedicated support group for families with loved ones facing substance use challenges.
Those involved within the criminal justice system		x		JHIT work with SBC's Community Justice Team to grow a range of seasonal produce at a greenhouse site in Galashiels. Links have been established with the Community Food Growing Network, as part of the Scottish Borders Food Growing Strategy.

3.4 Armed Forces Covenant Duty (*Education and Housing/ Homelessness proposals only*)

This duty places a legal responsibility on Scottish Borders Council (SBC) to actively consider (give due regard) to the three matters listed below in Education and Housing/ Homelessness matters.
This relates to current and former armed forces personnel (regular or reserve) and their families.

Is the Armed Forces Covenant Duty applicable?

No

If “Yes”, please complete below

Covenant Duty	How this has been considered and any specific provision made:
<p>The unique obligations of, and sacrifices made by, the armed forces;</p> <p>The <u>MOD Statutory Guidance</u> gives the following examples:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Danger • Geographical Mobility • Separation from Family • Service Law • Unfamiliarity with Civilian Life • Hours of Work • Stress 	

<p>The principle that it is desirable to remove disadvantages arising for Service people from membership, or former membership, of the armed forces;</p>	
<p>The principle that special provision for Service people may be justified by the effects on such people of membership, or former membership, of the armed forces.</p>	

Section 4 Full Integrated Impact Assessment Required

Select No if you have answered “No” to all of Sections 3.1 – 3.3.

Yes

If yes, please proceed to Stage 2 and complete a full Integrated Impact Assessment

If a full impact assessment is not required briefly explain why there are no effects and provide justification for the decision.

n/a

Signed by Lead Officer:	Janice Robertson
Designation:	Strategic Planning & Policy Manager
Date:	October 2024
Counter Signature Director:	Jenni Craig, Director Resilient Communities
Date:	October 2024