

SUBJECT: Quarterly Monitoring Report for SOA Outcome: 6 - Fewer people experience poverty in East Lothian

1. Purpose

This is the Quarterly Monitoring Report for the SOA Outcome 6, which are the responsibility of the Tackling Poverty SOA Theme Group. An update and analysis of progress on the SOA Outcome is provided in the appendices to this report.

The remainder of this report focuses on proposed actions for the Working Group.

2. Actions proposed

The Working Group is asked to:

2.1. Note the Quarterly Update

3. Background to actions

3.1. See section 1 of the Quarterly update

4. Resource Implications (in relation to actions)

4.1. Financial: ELC has re-instated projected cut of £130,000 to the Welfare Rights Service budget and maintained the FELF and CABx gant funding at 2011/12 levels

4.2. Organisations: None

4.3. Personnel: ELC Welfare Rights Service will continue into 2012/13

4.4. Other: None

5. Community Consultation and Engagement (in relation to actions)

5.1. The following activity has taken place, or is planned: Plans to be considered for some form of 'roadshow' on the impact of changes to welfare/ benefits system and a conference on this and the Tackling Poverty strategy

6. Early Intervention/Prevention (in relation to actions)

6.1 The following activity has taken place or is planned: The Tackling Poverty Strategy will encompass a strong focus on early intervention/ prevention

7. Sustainability (in relation to actions)

7.1. The following activity has taken place or is planned: The Tackling Poverty Strategy will address social and economic sustainability, but there is little, if any, reference to environmental sustainability

8. Effective and Efficient Services (in relation to actions)

8.1. The following activity has taken place or is planned: The review of welfare and money advice services aims to increase the effectiveness of ELC's funding for advice services (almost £500,000); the monitoring of FELF projects funding contributes to monitoring of outcomes.

9. Equality and Diversity and Equalities Impact Assessment (in relation to actions)

9.1. The following activity has taken place, or is planned: an EQIA has been carried out on the draft Tackling Poverty Strategy; no negative impacts were found. An EQIA was carried out on the FELF 2011/12; no negative impacts were found.

10. Background Papers and Appendices

10.1. Tackling Poverty Theme Group Quarterly Update, 21st Feb 2012

<i>Report from:</i>	<i>Tackling Poverty SOA Theme Group interim chair and leaf officer – Paolo Vestri, Corporate Policy Manager, East Lothian Council – pvestri@eastlothian.gov.uk – 01620 827320</i>
<i>Report written by:</i>	<i>interim chair and leaf officer – Paolo Vestri, Corporate Policy Manager, East Lothian Council – pvestri@eastlothian.gov.uk – 01620 827320</i>
<i>Date:</i>	<i>21st Feb 2012</i>

APPENDIX

QUARTERLY UPDATE ON SOA ACTION PLANS (QUAP) FOR THE Tackling Poverty SOA THEME GROUP MEETING ONN/A.....

East Lothian Outcome: Fewer people experience poverty in East Lothian

Short Term Outcome(s):

- People are more financially capable and less financially excluded
- People have better access to advice and information services, including debt and money advice
- The life chances of people at risk of falling into poverty, or already living in poverty, are improved

1. Are there any changes/additions to the initiatives in the action table?

- The Tackling Poverty Strategy has not yet been completed due to pressure of work. However, it is my intention to complete the draft of the Strategy before 15th March and to hold a TP Theme Group to consider the final draft before the end of March
- The Tackling Poverty Strategy has been included as a key strategy in ELC's draft Council Plan 2012-17
- Fairer East Lothian Fund projects have submitted mid-year monitoring reports. No significant problems have been reported.
- Interim report from the review of welfare and money advice services was considered by ELC Administration and Opposition Groups prior to budget setting. This recommended that the Welfare Rights Service (WRS) budget should not be cut; FELF funding for the two CABx should be mainstreamed within their SLA, which should be extended for a year; discussions should continue with regard to the future role of the WRS and possible greater collaboration between CABx; establishment of a Rights and Advice Forum
- The 2012/13 budget re-instated a projected cuts to the Welfare Rights Service budget and maintained FELF and CABx funding at the 2011/12 level
- All FELF projects are being asked to submit proposals for continuation of funding for a further year.

2. Are there new opportunities in relation to achieving the outcome or initiatives in the action table or partnership working¹?

- The completion of the Tackling Poverty Strategy will provide an Action Plan to take forward progress in achieving the related outcomes
- The completion of the review of welfare and money advice services will contribute to achieving the short term outcome: People have better access to advice and information services, including debt and money advice
- The re-instatement of funding for the WRS will ensure that the services provided by the WRS are maintained in the short term and provide scope for contributing to the Tackling Poverty Action Plan
- Continued funding for FELF will ensure that the FELF funded projects continue to contribute towards achieving the outcome.

3. Are there new risks/threats in relation to achieving the outcome or to specific initiatives in the action table or partnership working?

- No new risks but the continued uncertainty about the impact of the changes to the welfare/ benefits system continues to put pressure on the various services that support benefits claimants

4. In relation to the five SOA cross-cutting themes:

4.1. What community engagement activity or consultations are taking place or are planned²?

- None are taking place
- Plans to be considered for some form of 'roadshow' on the impact of changes to welfare/ benefits system and a conference on this and the Tackling Poverty strategy

4.2. What Equality and Diversity activity is taking place or planned?

- All the above activities/ initiatives are related to supporting economic and social equality and many FELF projects have a particular equality and diversity focus

4.3. What Early Intervention/Prevention activity is taking place or planned?

¹ When looking at the opportunities / risks / threats / you may want to make use of the PESTELO model as checklist http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/PEST_analysis

² Also include local community planning work with Local Area Forums.

- The Tackling Poverty Strategy will encompass a strong focus on early intervention/ prevention

4.4. What activity Sustainability activity is taking place or planned?

- The Tackling Poverty Strategy will address social and economic sustainability, but there is little, if any, reference to environmental sustainability
- FELF funds a Fuel Poverty project that provides advice on insulation

4.5. What Effective & Efficient Services activity is taking place or planned?

- The review of welfare and money advice services aims to increase the effectiveness of ELC’s funding for advice services (almost £500,000)
- The monitoring of FELF projects funding contributes to monitoring of outcomes.

5. Is there any other relevant information not covered above, including: links with other Theme Groups, Local Area Forums or partnership groups; changes in resources; changes in key indicators?

- No

6. What do we need to take up with others? What action is needed by?

- This SOA Theme Group: A Theme Group meeting will be held in March to discuss the final Draft of the Tackling Poverty Strategy, consider progress with the review of welfare and money advice services and take forward establishment of the East Lothian Advice and Rights Forum
- Other Theme Groups or Partnership Groups: No
- Working Group or Board: No

QUAP from:	<i>Tackling Poverty theme Group; interim chair and leaf officer – Paolo Vestri, Corporate Policy Manager, East Lothian Council – pvestri@eastlothian.gov.uk – 01620 827320</i>
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