

Dignity in Practice Learning Events

Part 1: Dignity & Choice through
Financial Support

Improving the Cash Offer
11-12:30, 2nd December



Welcome

DIGNITY IN PRACTICE
LEARNING EVENT SERIES
2021-2022

Dignity Peer Network



The MAXwell Centre

MAXimising a community's potential by Feeling Well, Being Well, and Doing Well.



Who is in the room?

Go to www.menti.com

- Type in the code **4412 8050**, or you can also use the chat to answer
- 1st Question – Sector
- 2nd Question – Local authority



Scottish Government

ELLI KONTORRAVDIS
POLICY LEAD, TACKLING FOOD INSECURITY

Improving the Cash Offer

Dignity in Practice Learning Event

Thurs 2 Dec 2021

foodinsecurityteam@gov.scot



Scottish Government
Riaghaltas na h-Alba
gov.scot

Context

Challenge

- Insufficient and insecure incomes drive food insecurity
- A referral to a food bank is often the simplest and quickest route
- Horizon: loss of key income supports & rising cost of living

Opportunity

- Policy: Eradicating poverty, [human rights approach](#)
- Practice: Pandemic momentum & [ways of working](#)



Cash-first in practice

- Scottish Welfare Fund, other discretionary support, [cash-first referral leaflets](#), money advice
- Flexible funding in 2020-21 and [Winter 2021](#)
- Consultation on draft national plan to end the need for food banks as a primary response
 - Closes 25 Jan 2022: [Ending the need for food banks: a draft national plan - Scottish Government - Citizen Space \(consult.gov.scot\)](#)
 - Strategic framework for cash-first
 - Outlines some new commitments, invites further suggestions
 - Listening to direct experience and food banks



Wider considerations

- Person-led: what do people accessing support think of cash-first?
- Where are the best places to locate crisis support?
 - Is it a food bank or community organisation? Advice sector? Health professionals? Education? Other services that support people?
- What will this mean for local service delivery? How do we further support this change in practice?





Context

CHELSEA MARSHALL
SENIOR PROJECT OFFICER AT NOURISH SCOTLAND

WORKING TOGETHER

Dignity and the Right to Food

Dignity and Choice through Financial Support

Embedding Cash First Approaches

- Tools and strategies for strengthening the skills and confidence of frontline staff and volunteers to support people to access financial advice and cash support.

Improving the Cash Offer

- Examples of creating or expanding opportunities for people to access cash grants in a crisis, alongside wider support.

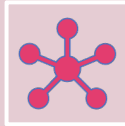
Embedding Cash First Approaches



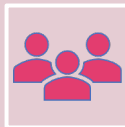
Improving the Cash Offer



Direct financial assistance



Integrated support



Collaboration



Proactive engagement

Improving the Cash Offer

Direct
payments for
free school
meals

Expanding
eligibility for free
school meal
payments

Winter Hardship
Payments

Grants through
energy advice
partners

Self isolation
support

Income
maximisation

Reducing
paperwork for
families

Winter Support Fund 2021-22

- ▶ **£25 million flexible funding to support wellbeing by preventing and responding to financial insecurity**
- ▶ **Flexibility** to adapt interventions to meet emerging needs, e.g.
 - ▶ Supplementing local budgets for the Scottish Welfare Fund
 - ▶ Boosting local funding for Discretionary Housing Payments
 - ▶ Proactive assistance for those likely to experience hardship
 - ▶ Build on existing supports, like Scottish Child Payment Bridging Payments
 - ▶ Financial assistance to access food, fuel and other essentials, including for people with no recourse to public funds

Working together



- ▶ Fuel poverty a key priority for the Dundee Fighting for Fairness Commission

Dundee City Council and Commissioners:

- ▶ Payment amount
- ▶ Website – wording, application questions, process
- ▶ Review of last year to improve design

<https://www.dundee.gov.uk/service-area/corporate-services/customer-services-and-it/fuel-well-dundee-202122>

Today's event

- ▶ Improving the Cash Offer

*How are local authorities **already taking steps** to provide greater financial support to people facing food insecurity?*

- ▶ Ending the Need for Food Banks – consultation on draft national plan

*What **further action** is needed to ensure that everyone in Scotland has the money they need to buy the food that meets their needs and choice?*



Panel Discussion

MODERATED BY
ANNIE McCORMACK, BROKE NOT BROKEN

Panel Discussion

Flexible Food Funds

- Norma Matheson, Benefits Manager for Moray Council
- Jayne Jones, Commercial Manager for Argyll & Bute Council
- Julie Semple, Manager of Bute Advice Centre

Moderator:

- Annie McCormack, Broke Not Broken

Questions:

What 'ingredients' were needed to make this successful?

What similar or different ingredients exist in your local area?

Someone in each room will take notes, and everyone will be asked to share key points in the chat and Menti afterward.

Breakout Rooms

**What are you taking away
from this discussion?**

*Please share an example, action or idea
in the chat or Menti.*

Reflection

CONSULTATION ON
NATIONAL PLAN

Ending the Need for Food Banks

Aim of the National Plan

Explain the Scottish Government's current and future plans for how they are working to end the need for food banks as a primary response to food insecurity.

Key Challenges

**Low or insecure
incomes**



**Household food
insecurity**



**People have to
compromise on
food and other
essentials.**

Key Challenges

Food bank referrals are often the simplest and quickest route to supporting someone who is experiencing financial hardship

But, food parcels...

are rarely able to meet dietary, social and cultural needs and preferences.



are not an appropriate or long term response to poverty.



can miss opportunities to strengthen income and prevent future hardship.

Vision

Everyone has enough money (through work or benefits) to buy the food that meets their needs and choice.

Services work together to help people to access cash first options, money advice and other supports.

If those options aren't available or working, food aid is provided in a way that maximises dignity and reduces future need.

Scottish
Government's
Approach

Prevention

Response

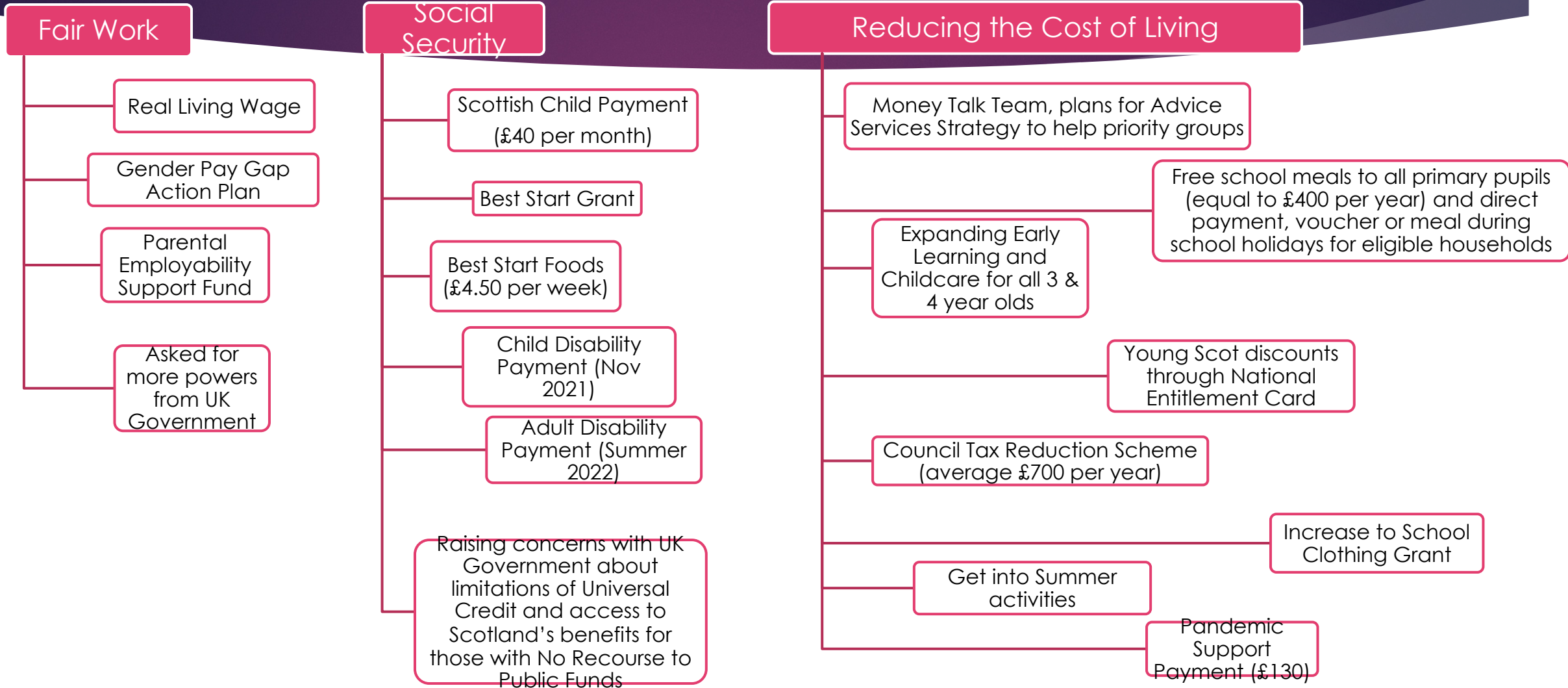
Scottish Government's Approach

Strengthening
Incomes

Reducing
Cost of Living

Prevention

Prevention - Examples



Scottish Government's Approach

Local
collaboration

- Cash and Money Advice First
- Wider support

Food aid, when
needed,
promotes dignity
and prevents
future need

Response

Response - Examples

Cash support

Scottish Welfare
Fund Crisis Grants

Discretionary Housing
Payments
(support to tenants)

Additional ££ to local
authorities to distribute
during pandemic

Support for those at
risk of destitution
(British Red Cross &
partners)

Welfare & Debt advice

Citizens Advice
Bureaux

Support to frontline
advisors for complex
cases

£7m for free debt
advice

Exploring new advice
strategy for Scotland

Cash-first referral leaflets

Worrying
About Money
leaflets in 25
local authorities
(IFAN and
partners)

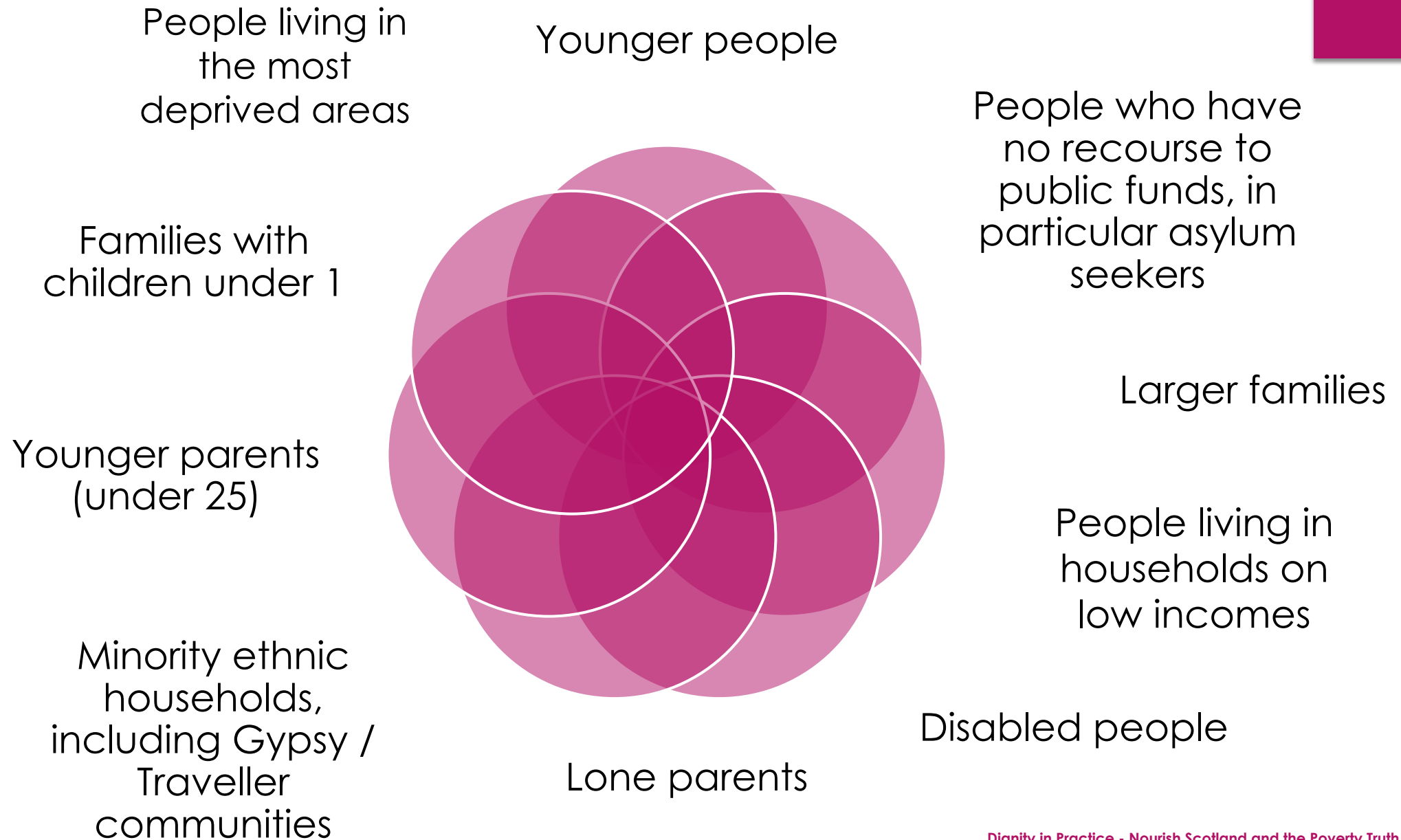
Dignified food access

Dignity in Practice
(Nourish Scotland &
Poverty Truth
Community)

Surplus food
(FareShare Scotland)

Investing in Communities
Fund

COVID Response and
Recovery funds



Current Actions

Prevention:

- Fair Work
- Social Security
- Cost of living

Response:

- Scottish Welfare Fund and other discretionary supports
- Money advice
- Cash-first referral leaflets
- Dignified food access

Next Steps

Prevention:

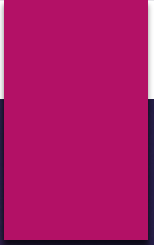

- Explore Minimum Income Guarantee
- Explore Universal Basic Services
- Actions in Tackling Child Poverty Delivery Plan

Response:

- Invest in cash first partnership work
- Pilot shopping cards in place of food bank referrals
- Work with food bank networks to support their exit strategies
- Work with other funders on cash first and holistic support

Key questions

- ▶ Is the approach consistent with the vision?
- ▶ Will current and planned actions help reduce the need for food banks as a primary response to food insecurity?
 - ▶ *Recognising that ending the need for charitable food aid will require much wider activity and change*
- ▶ What else is needed at local and national level?



What is the future we want?

Next steps

- Share your ideas:

Scottish Government consultation:
Ending the Need for Food Banks
draft national plan

- Find out more:

www.nourishscotland.org/dignity-in-practice-learning-events

- Get in touch:

dignity@nourishscotland.org.uk

Thank you!

