

### Participatory Single Parent Proofing April 2015- March 2017













### Glasgow Lone Parent Development Project Aims

To improve how Glasgow city's mainstream services work for single parents:

- by involving single parents and
- improving collaboration across relevant public, voluntary and private providers.





### **Key Goals**

- Minimise challenges created by welfare reforms for single parents & children
- Minimise identified barriers within lone parents 'employability' journey.
- Identify ways for lone parents to reduce living costs.





# Why Single Parents? Some Facts









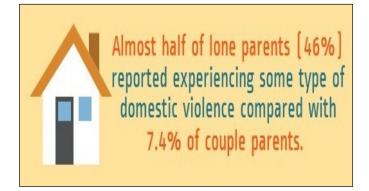




#### Research - Napier Univ/GCPH 2015

40%

of all households with children in Glasgow are lone parent households - the highest percentage of any Scottish local authority.



Lone parent employment rate of 58% in Scotland but only 49.5% in Glasgow.

43% of all children in lone parent families live in poverty after housing costs, compared to 22% of children in couple families.





### Single Parents in Glasgow

- Almost half of lone parents report experiencing domestic violence.
- Most single parents have one child.
- In poorest areas families up to 61% headed by a single parent (Parkhead )







### Single Parents- The Facts

- Fewer than 2% SP's are teenagers
- The median age is 38 yrs
- 92% SP's women gender is a key issue
- Scottish SP HH's projected to increase by 22 %, from 156,100 to 190,800









### Single Parents – the Facts

- 40% SP's have no qualifications
- Higher qualifications better jobs!
- 68% enter the three lowest paid occupational groups poverty





### Single Parents & Welfare Reform

- Predicted Child Poverty Levels by 2021 (IFS)
   All children 26% In LP Families 40%
- Single Parent, 2 children, working f/t on NLW Income dropped by £2,586 since 2015 (JRF)
- Parents with child 3yrs, to look for paid work
- 1 in 5 single parents on benefit been referred for a sanction, 1 in 7 had a sanction (cut) imposed.





## Project Design Single Parent Participation

- Funded by 5 key agencies
- Single Parents Advisory Group 12 parents
- Staff

Lone Parent Development Manager(GCC) Single Parent Advisor (SP with lived experience at OPFS)

Steering Group (5 Partner agencies)





### Single Parent Consultation (295) Policy Priorities

- 1. Stigma/attitudes towards single parents
- 2. Affordable, quality, flexible childcare
- 3. Welfare reform & cuts to social security
- 4. Lone parent friendly employability pathway to sustainable employment
- 5. Health and Wellbeing support
- 6. Money and debt advice





### **Single Parent Proofing**

- Influence employability activity-Scot Govt Work Prog / GCC Employability Standards
- JCP: Reduce barriers and improve interactions with system- Claimant Commitment: Test of Change
- Reduce stigma and challenge attitudes People Make Glasgow Fairer -#ProudSingleParents campaign
- Welfare Reforms: tailored SP response





### **Achievements/Influencing**

- Universal Credit Split Payments
- Cost School Day / School Clothing Grants
- Devolved Benefits Best Start/Healthy
   Start: focus group, testing forms
- GCC FE & Life Long Learning Commission
- GCC Housing Strategy focus groups
- Scottish Govt HIDG LP Working Group





### 'Cross - Pollination'

- Castlemilk "Reduce Cost Of School Day " Participatory Budget project
- Clyde College Adult Achievement Award
   Pilot SQA 6 parents
- GCC ESF LP tailored employability package
- JRF Event with key influencers





### **Learning from Pilot**

- Not about "projects" about influencing mainstream.
- Importance of internal champion at strategic level within targeted public sector organisations
- Single Parents often not seen as "deserving" group
- Gender a key issue 93% SP's women
- Focus on tackling poverty through structural issues
- Small changes can make big impact.
- Real Participation costs staff time & resources!





### **Participatory Approach - Gains**

- Direct evidence of experience highlights new issues and connections
- Ensures policy is grounded in parents realities
- Ensures policy/service makes sense to parents
- Increases trust in policies/services
- Sense of ownership and information can increase take up of services





### **Evaluation**

Partners Commissioned Research to focus on:

- Key service providers: engagement and influence
- Co-production between lone parents and key service providers
- Collaborative working
- Project implementation process
- Understanding of transferability (Published October 2017)





#### **Further Information**

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