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Subject: [OFFICIAL] News Release: Council launches second phase of consultation on draft Anti-Poverty Strategy

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Council launches second phase of consultation on draft Anti-Poverty Strategy

Scottish Borders Council has launched the second phase of its consultation on the draft AntiPoverty Strategy which has been developed as part a Borders-wide commitment to supporting individuals, families and communities experiencing hardship, whether that is as a result of economic, fuel, housing, food, digital or any other type of hardship.

The first phase, which remains open until 16 May and is available at www.scotborders.gov.uk/antipovertystategyconsultation, is aimed at getting views on the draft strategy itself as well as what respondents see as the main challenges and opportunities that these issues can present. There is also scope to provide information about what initiatives and ideas are already proving beneficial and also to make suggestions on what else could be done to reduce poverty.

The second phase, launched today, is looking for more in-depth feedback from individuals and communities with direct experience of the challenges of living on a limited income and the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic.

Views are sought on a range of issues including health and wellbeing, income, work and employment, access to family and community, digital connectivity and access to travel and transport. It is open from 30 March until 16 May and can be accessed online at:

www.scotborders.gov.uk/antipovertystategyfeedback

Both consultations are available in alternative formats and languages. One-to-one conversations can also be arranged. For more information, email communityengagement@scotborders.gov.uk

Councillor Robin Tatler, SBC's Executive Member for Community Development and Localities, said: "Thank you to everyone who has already commented on our draft strategy. Your input is extremely helpful and we would encourage anyone who has yet to complete the first questionnaire to do so as soon as they can.

"What we are now looking for is to hear from those individuals and communities who are themselves experiencing the challenges of living on a limited income. There are a number of reasons why people may find themselves in this difficult situation, ranging from low income to unemployment, ill health, an unexpected change in circumstances or some other factor outwith their control. COVID-19 has brought additional challenges and people may find themselves facing hardship for the first time.

"Whatever the reason, we are keen to have their feedback so we can get as detailed a picture as possible to help inform our decision making. This will also help us to develop what is needed to make a positive difference to people's lives."

Feedback from both consultations will be incorporated into a final strategy and action plan which will be presented to elected members for approval in June 2021.

Councillor Tatler added: "We would also remind people that there is already a great deal of advice, information and support available and people who are experiencing hardship shouldn't hesitate to get in touch to see how we, and our partner agencies, may be able to help."

The Council's Customer Advice and Support Service team can be contacted on 0300 100 1800.

They are also available to advise on support that can be accessed through our Community Assistance Hubs:
www.scotborders.gov.uk/cahs

Additional information about the support available to those affected by COVID-19 is available at:
www.scotborders.gov.uk/coronavirus and more general advice on benefits and grants is available at:
www.scotborders.gov.uk/benefits

Notes to editors

- The draft Strategy and covering report was presented at the [Council meeting held on 25 February 2021](#)
- Agreement to the development of an Anti-Poverty Strategy was approved at the [Council meeting held on 25 September 2020](#)
- Information about the work being done to support child poverty is available in the [Local Child Poverty Action Report – Annual Progress Report 2019/20](#)

For more information, contact the Communications and Marketing team on 01835 826632 or communications@scotborders.gov.uk