

Report of the Glasgow Peer Review: Working for Families Fund

February 2008



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List of Abbreviations

BTPG	Bridging the Policy Gap
CHCP	Community Health and Care Partnerships
DWP	Department for Work and Pensions
ESOL	English for speakers of other languages
FEA	Full Employment Areas Initiative
HNC	Higher National Certificate
NAP	National Action Plan
NEET	Not in employment, education, or training
NGO	Non-Government Organisation
OMC	Open Method of Co-ordination
SPTF	Social Policy Task Force
WFF	Working for Families Fund

1 Overview of Day One

1.1 Introduction

This report is the summary of a two day event held in Glasgow on the 10 & 11 October, 2007. The event brought together around 50 participants from government organisations, non-government organisations and people from the community. It was held in the Satinwood Suite of Glasgow City Chambers. The purpose of the event was to review the Working for Families (WFF) program which is designed to help parents find sustainable employment by offering a range of different services including mentoring, money advice, access to training and advice on finding affordable childcare. The Peer Review set out to understand whether, and how, Working for Families has been successful in meeting one of its overall aims: to reduce child poverty. It was WFF role in tackling child poverty that made it a good subject for this Peer Review process, as reducing child poverty is a key priority for both the Scottish and UK Government.

The event also tried to ascertain what had been successful about the implementation of the policy and whether these lessons could be transferred to other policies attempting to eradicate social exclusion and poverty in the UK. A number of transferable lessons were identified and can be found at the end of this report.

The event was chaired by Professor Alan McGregor of Glasgow University.

1.2 Welcome Address

Councillor Jim Coleman, Depute Leader of Glasgow City Council

Councillor Coleman noted that over the past 20 years Glasgow has changed from an industrial city to a service-led economy. This has been a painful process that has seen thousands of job losses impacting around 100,000 families. Many were left behind; they didn't find new jobs and instead found themselves trapped on benefits and living in poverty. He believed there was a need to encourage these people to engage with the new Glasgow and its new industries: shopping, tourism, financial services, hotels and the commonwealth games.

He noted that there are 98,000 benefit claimants in Glasgow; 56,000 of these claimants receive incapacity benefit. At the same time Glasgow is booming with 15,000 job vacancies. There are a many skilled migrants entering from Eastern Europe to take on these jobs and they are welcome in Glasgow, but some people are being left behind and there is an urgent need to tackle the issues that are preventing these people from moving forward. A priority for Glasgow City Council is to make sure that all people living in the city can benefit from the increased prosperity that is happening, to make sure that people have the right skills and the right support to help them engage in the labour market.

He observed that the families that have been left behind are facing multiple problems which included childcare issues, addictions, and benefit-dependency. The problems are complex and it is not always easy to help people with these complex problems. When whole families are in need of support, it is important that all the different agencies work together to make sure they get that support. The City Strategy brings all of Glasgow's agencies together: Health, Social Care, Police and so on. These services need to be joined up to see if we can deliver better services. Some families will have five agencies dealing with them at one time, and each agency will ignore the other needs of the family. The costs are astronomical. What is needed is for one person to go into that family and set out what help that family needs, and then get them all in to deal with it in a holistic way. There is currently a pilot of this type of approach happening with 20 families in the East End of Glasgow.



Childcare provision is a big barrier preventing people from moving into sustainable employment. One of the reasons for this is that the childcare system never modernized to deal with the new economy which now operates 24/7. The economy and the social side of the city are the same thing; both are about keeping the city moving. There are big gaps in the market: childcare places for 0 – 3 age group, wraparound childcare, and 24 hour child care. We need to deliver this on the ground if we want to change peoples' lives. Cllr Coleman finished by saying he hoped today's event can help find better ways of delivering services in Glasgow and across the country, and making sure that there is a bigger impact on poverty in the city.

1.3 Background to the Project

Sally Mackenzie, Bridging the Policy Gap, National Co-ordinator

The project is funded by the European Commission to raise awareness about the social inclusion and social protection activities of the European Union. Importantly, the funding is designed to engage more people from across Europe in that work.

This was the final of three Peer Reviews. The first was held in Swansea and the second in the London Borough of Newham. In each place we have looked at different policies attempting to reduce poverty and social exclusion, but each in very different ways. In Swansea we looked at the Children's Play Strategy for Swansea and in Newham we examined Access to Employment for Disabled Adults. As well as raise awareness about European processes the Peer Reviews were designed to identify lessons about how to successfully implement policies combating poverty and to use these lessons to help improve policy delivery across the UK.

The majority of people at the Glasgow Peer Review are from Glasgow and were invited to participate because of their personal knowledge and experience of Working for Families. They came from the Scottish Government, the city council and a number of voluntary organisations as well as people with experience of poverty whose lives and those of their family, have been impacted by the Working for Families Policy. This group was joined by the Reference Group: 15 people from the Bridging the Policy Gap Partnership, which includes representatives from local, devolved and central governments as well as voluntary organisations, academics, and people with personal experience of poverty or exclusion from across the country.

In addition to the goals of raising awareness and identifying transferable lessons for policy implementation the project hopes to demonstrate the value that this method of participation can add to the policy processes of local, devolved and central governments.



1.4 Working Together to Tackle Poverty: Introduction to the National Action Plan and the Reference Group

Peter Kelly, Director of the Poverty Alliance

The National Action Plan on Social Inclusion (NAP) ¹ sets out where we should be going in relation to Poverty and Social Inclusion. The need for a plan exists because of the 78 million people living in poverty across Europe. Not only is this terrible for the people living in poverty and the loss of dignity that accompanies this, but it is also a waste of potential and a waste of resources for Europe.

In Glasgow we have 98,000 people reliant on benefit. This is unacceptable. At the European level the NAP co-ordinates actions with the aim of having a decisive impact on poverty by 2010. There has been progress with around 25% fewer children living in poverty but there are still 900,000 people in Scotland living in low-income houses. Fuel poverty impacts 600,000 households in Scotland.

The NAP is an ongoing development. It focuses on four key policy objectives:

- **Policy Objective 1: eliminating child poverty;**
- **Policy Objective 2: increasing labour market participation;**
- **Policy Objective 3: improving access to quality services; and**
- **Policy Objective 4: tackling discrimination.**

The National Action Plan on Social Inclusion (NAP) is part of a the European framework known as the Open Method of Co-ordination (OMC), which enables Europe to share best practice in the area of social inclusion and social protection. This framework was created by the European Commission as a way of co-ordinating member state activity on a range of social policy issues. ² The overall aim of the process is to make a decisive impact on poverty by 2010.

A NAP Inclusion has been produced three times since 2000. The direct experience of people living in poverty feeds in to the development of the Plan in a number of ways. The development of the last NAP Inclusion was supported by the Get Heard project and the next NAP Inclusion, due for publication in the autumn of 2008 will be influenced by a number of activities, including the People Experiencing Poverty Conference which took place in Warwick in July 2007 and well as the outcomes of the Bridging the Policy Gap project. The Social Policy Task Force, a group of anti-poverty voluntary organisations, meets regularly with the Department for Work and Pensions to discuss the NAP and its progress.

It is important to remember that poverty is not inevitable. There would not have been a decrease in child poverty if this was the case. But we need events like these to hold policy makers to account and to ensure that their methods and processes are transparent. Such events are also important to ensure that more progress is made and that action is take to help those most in need. The lessons from 'Bridging the Policy Gap' will be feed into the writing of the next NAP in 2008.

1. See 'Working Together: The UK National Action Plan on Social Inclusion 2006-08 <http://www.dwp.gov.uk/publications/dwp/2006/nap/>

2. For further information regarding the EU Social Inclusion process visit: http://ec.europa.eu/employment_social/spsi/poverty_social_exclusion_en.htm



1.5 The Stories: DVD Presentation of the role of an employee of Working for Families

Following the DVD there was an opportunity to put questions to a panel of staff from Working for Families. The Panel included:

Mary Mcgrory - Senior Vocational Mentoring Officer

Carol Wylie - Guidance Advisor

Jerry Boyle - Money Advisor

Karen McCormack - Childcare Mentor

Christine McLellan - Guidance Advisor

Maisie O'Brien - Development Officer

The first question was what were the barriers to doing the job, or the low points?

Staff felt that they could achieve more with more funding. Shortage of affordable housing, especially on the south side of Glasgow was problematic for them. People can find jobs, but then it becomes very difficult to pay the rent in the private sector.

There is also a fear factor among clients that needed to be tackled. High quality welfare rights information is an important element in overcoming this. The workers were clear that they didn't want clients moving into employment if there was no benefit in them doing so. Clients needed to understand the future financial implications of returning to work, not just what happens immediately but what will happen in a year. Good welfare rights information was therefore important.

Another big challenge was serious gaps in childcare provision in the City. Currently there are large gaps in childcare provision for 0 – 2 year olds and 'out-of-school care' (who take children until the age of 14) are all full. Staff felt that there was a need for after-school provision to be offered in all schools. Twenty-four hour care is also non-existent, even though there are a number of jobs that may require a parent to take a job shift of 2pm – 10pm.

A lack of funded childcare places in further and higher education institutions was cited as another barrier for their clients. Childcare places are generally easy to find in these institutions but often the client will be expected to fund some or all of the cost of that placement which is out of the reach of most clients. The worker can help find the childcare place, but the client cannot fund it, and Working for Families as a 'gap-filling' organisation cannot fund it either. Shona Honeyman explained that they did trial this but the costs were £30,000 to help just 15 students. This would mean that one area's entire childcare budget would be spent to help just 15 clients.

The panelists agreed that there was an urgent need to address the gaps in childcare provision as the city was heading towards chronic shortages in the future as more parents return to work and study.

On the issue of funding, the panel was questioned about what would happen to their current clients if funding was not renewed next year. The Guidance advisors each work with around 55 clients per year and are all based in local regeneration services. The current exit strategy of WFF is that their clients would be moved to mainstream guidance advisors.



When asked whether they could find childcare on a Friday afternoon for a new job due to start on the Monday, the childcare mentor advised that their preferred approach would be to contact the employer on behalf of the client and ask them to consider delaying the start date by one week. This time would allow the child and the parent to get used to childcare and probably improve the chances of the job being a sustainable one for the employee.

1.6 Working for Families – an overview

Shona Honeyman, Glasgow City Council

Shona explained that Working For Families is delivering on the UK and Scottish Government policy agenda that states the best way to reduce child poverty is through parental employment:

“...to tackle poverty and worklessness in selected areas by ensuring that childcare is not a barrier to parents entering education, training or employment”

(Working for Families – Guidelines for Implementation, Scottish Executive December 2003)

Working for Families helps three broad client groups but with the commonality between them that clients should be motivated and able to move towards the labour market in the immediate future:

- Families on low income;
- Families with other stresses in the household; and
- Lone parents.

WFF works with these clients from across the whole of Glasgow. Child poverty is not confined to postcodes, so they argued from the outset that they wanted to work across the whole of the city.

The broad client groups allow for flexibility in who they can provide services to, the non-defined ‘family’ could include a grandparent who has assumed day to day caring responsibility for grandchild(ren) due to the lifestyle of the parent. Because this group are often not the legal guardian of the children in their care, they are not entitled to access Working Tax Credit to assist with cost of childcare.

WFF is not limited to working with unemployed people. They can also step in and help where childcare barriers are threatening existing employment.

WFF clients tend to be people who cannot be helped by traditional employability programmes which assume job readiness in 6 – 12 months. The client group that WFF deal with are much further from the job market than this, WFF tend to fill the gap between social care services and employability services.

WFF employs 56.5 people across 10 organisations and the WFF brand is well recognised in Glasgow and people understand what it can do.



A client's first contact is generally through the Guidance and Mentoring project but there are a number of different projects undertaken by WFF:

- 21st Century Childcare;
- Young Parent Project;
- Voluntary Option – Childcare Works;
- Money Advice; and
- Transitions Project.

Shona felt the key lessons to date are that the key worker model that puts the client at the centre of the process is critical to the success of WFF as is the flexibility and creativity employed by the workers, solutions don't always have to cost a lot of money.

In the future WFF must ensure it aligns with other initiatives in the city including the City Strategy – Glasgow Works. In terms of funding, the objective is not only to maintain government funding, but also to try and achieve advance notification of funding decisions. The high quality of the staff is critical to the successful delivery of Working for Families and the program doesn't want to lose them because of unsecured funding. Finally, in recognition of the fact that funding is not guaranteed, the final exit strategy for the program is being continually developed to ensure clients are as insulated as possible from the negative impacts that this may bring.

1.7 The Stories: DVD Presentation Working for Families Clients

A short DVD was shown which included the stories of five different women who have been helped in different ways by WFF. After the presentation there was an opportunity for participants to have a discussion at their table and for them to talk with the clients on their tables about their own experiences. One WFF client told her story about her return to University to study Mental Health Nursing:

“For me the main issue was that when I started university, I lost my childcare. I knew I'd be facing 12 hour shifts as part of my course but initially I thought that I might be able to avoid them but it became clear I really had to do them. I was on the phone with my key worker: Sheila from Govan. It just seemed impossible, how was I going to face these 12 hour shifts, I was so emotional, but she calmed me down and then put me in touch with the sitter service who come out to your house from 7am -10pm, first it was a bit overwhelming and scary, plus I was worried about the costs because I don't get working Tax credits, so I couldn't get any additional help with childcare and the sitter service costs £15 ph. But thankfully WFF subsidises it, I pay £3 and they pay the rest. So I have been fortunate, if I didn't have that (support) I couldn't pursue this (nursing degree), they are a godsend, I wanted to do this for so many years and my boys are so proud of me being at University; it's making them see that they have choices in life.”

WFF Client



Participants were then advised of the agenda for day two of the Peer Review. The questions that would guide the discussion on day two had been devised in consultation with clients of WFF. These questions would help identify whether WFF was helping tackle child poverty in the city and what more could be done to make it more effective in the fight against poverty.

1.8 Closing Address

Alan MacGregor, Chairperson

Alan thanked everyone for their participation and reminded people of the early start the following day.



2 DISCUSSION QUESTION ONE

Part One:

What & how does Working for Families help parents/carers return to, or sustain, training and employment?

Part Two:

What are the best aspects of the Working for Families service and why?

2.1 Key Findings

2.1.1 Key worker Approach

“I thought ‘I’m a mother, what can I do?’ (WFF) took away all the barriers for me, now I feel as if I can do anything.”

WFF Client

“Any problem that I faced they found a way around it for me.”

WFF Client

The key element for all clients was the client centered one-to-one support they received from their WFF key worker. All WFF clients have a designated individual worker who remains their worker throughout using the service. Many clients commented on the uniqueness of this approach amongst employability services and spoke of the confidence boost it gave them to know that there was someone there to support them in their journey towards training or work. This individual attention reassures the client that their needs are the priority and that they will be cared for.

The important aspect of this approach for many was that clients did not have to repeat their story to a new worker every time they attended a meeting. This would be annoying for most people, but for those clients who have been through a particularly traumatic ordeal such as domestic violence, having to tell the story repeatedly can be highly damaging and could be enough to stop someone attending meetings and receiving the support they desired.

It can also help with the issue of low self esteem and lack of confidence, which are common issues for some new mothers:

“Mother’s don’t have any confidence after having babies. We need to say to some women – you’re not ready for work...one recent client I suggested she undertake a cognitive therapy course to help (with issues of self-esteem). Just that discussion lifted the burden. I can see her six months down the line in training or a job, but she needs time.”

WFF Worker

The client-centered approach of WFF is a holistic one. A client would not be considered in isolation from his or her family, the focus of the worker is on the family’s wellbeing, not just getting the individual into a job. This approach is crucial in helping the client see the big picture as well; the client may not have considered the impact that working will have on their family, they may not have thought about strategies to minimise the trauma of putting a child

in a childcare place for the first time. If they are thinking about returning to work for the first time since having a child, then they may not have stopped to consider how these factors will impact their ability to successfully sustain employment.

One client commented that it was the only place she went to that viewed having children as a positive thing, with all other providers she had to find childcare before she was able to attend meetings, with WFF she is encouraged to bring the child with her.

2.1.2 Money Advice

Part of the holistic approach taken by WFF is the Money Advice service. The service helps clients understand whether they'll be better-off in work than on benefits. The 'better-off calculation' looks at the short and long-term picture and explains the impact of tax credits on their income in the first year and how this changes in their second year of employment.

"It's one thing to go back to work, another thing to do it but not benefit from it."

WFF Client

The money advice service is essential to getting parents back on the right track. WFF established the Money Advice Service in an effort to provide uniform and consistent advice to clients particularly with regard to the 'better-off' calculations which considers what the financial implications are for an individual returning to work

Debt is also a huge issue for many parents accessing WFF projects and is often accrued in relation to their childcare. The Money Advice Service is essential in getting parents back on the right track and understanding how they can manage their debt.

WFF helps people into employment and training and it helps them to succeed. As one participant put it:

"Clients receive a package of support, they're not going into just 'any' job; they're going into the right job, with childcare in place and money advice in place."

WFF Worker

2.1.3 The WFF Approach

Many people commented that they can find the 'suited and booted' approach of some employability services intimidating; the friendlier more personal approach of WFF staff is a welcome change from the formality of other employability services.

It was clear that it was the relationship between the client and their WFF support workers that was the most engaging aspect for WFF clients. The trust and goodwill in the client/ key worker relationship was clearly a great asset to help a client achieve their goals and aspirations.

"It's the emotional support you get, you feel more confident and more courageous – (it) makes you think 'I can do this.'"

WFF Client



Several clients also said that they would remain in contact with their key workers after they started work:

“I’ll still keep in contact with my support worker – I couldn’t just let her go! Then I’d feel a sense of loss.”

WFF client

In addition to the clear commitment and enthusiasm for the job that the key workers displayed (both at the Peer Review and in the DVD documentary), there were several elements that contributed towards the good relations with clients:

- Workers were praised for being ‘highly knowledgeable’ about the options available to their clients.
- Their independence is viewed as important, client’s felt they can trust their advisors because they are not affiliated with one particular employer or training course. Clients believe key workers will have their best interest at heart and they will help each client choose the best option for them.
- Lack of hard targets: particularly with regard to how long a key worker is allowed to work with one client before they are expected to be placed in some form of employment or training. Whilst this of itself does not create good relationships it does allow the relationship to be built up naturally according to the needs of the individual client rather than the needs of the ‘system’.

The WFF model is centered on creating a relationship of trust between people. To a large extent this is enabled by working with the same people consistently on a one to one basis.

2.1.4 Flexibility

There is a great deal of flexibility built into the WFF model, not just in terms of its client groups that are broadly defined, but also in terms of the service and how it is provided. Staff have a great deal of autonomy in terms of working practices and how they implement their projects which again allows WFF staff to deal with each client as an individual.

The flexibility of WFF was demonstrated early in the project:

“When the programme first started the focus was on getting people into jobs – but we quickly started helping people (who were already) in work. We realised it was pretty silly for us to refuse help to someone in work (which would) help them to stay in work, only to tell them to come back when they’re signed on.”

WFF Worker

Being flexible about how she made contact with her key worker was important for one client when she was living on benefits. She had a mobile phone but struggled with the call costs, so she had an arrangement with her key worker that she would text him when she needed to talk and he would call her back.

The location of WFF in Local Regeneration Agencies is also important to clients. The settings are informal and local, both of which were appreciated by clients, as was the flexibility of



when or where meetings would take place. The option of meeting in community settings and even in the client's own home was considered 'brilliant' by participants who couldn't think of any other services that would do this. Again this type of flexibility demonstrates the client-centered approach of WFF.

Being able to work at an individual's own pace rather than having to fit timescales set by the agency, was also seen as an important element of the flexible nature of WFF.

Those participants familiar with the relationship between WFF Glasgow and the Scottish Government (who fund WFF) felt that the flexibility inherent in this relationship enabled flexibility at the point of delivery. Participants felt the trust and independence offered by the Scottish Government to the City Council had allowed the program to avoid a 'cookie-cutter' approach to employability.

2.1.5 Career-focus: 'Not just a job, but the right job'

"WFF gives you hope and confidence – helps you to achieve your aspirations."

WFF Client

"Without this support I wouldn't be at college doing an HNC in social care and looking forward to a future for myself and my son."

WFF Client

There was a strong feeling that WFF supported people to find a career that suited them and their family. It wasn't just about finding people a job. The focus was on finding out what the client wanted, and how this would work when combined with their family responsibilities. Workers were not interested in finding short-term fixes for their clients and were well aware that throwing someone into a job that didn't suit them would do more harm than good.

The voluntary placement with a childcare provider is a good example of how WFF helps people to try to find the right job. For many this is a critical stepping stone towards full time work. It allows an individual to test themselves, and in most cases prove themselves but without the pressure of committing to a full time job. It also allows a trial for the family to understand how this will impact them and it allows clients to make informed decisions about whether or not to take up childcare as a career. All of these are critical in building up an individual's confidence and self-esteem, which needs to happen before they will be able to commit to full-time work or training.

One participant compared the WFF approach with a client who had recently been informed by Job Centre Plus that they would have their benefits stopped if they didn't accept a job. The participant found this approach 'crazy' and questioned how this could lead to sustainable employment for that individual.

Help and support from WFF does not finish the day a client starts a new job. WFF are there to help clients with any crises or changes that arise during the course of their career. It is common for clients to experience difficulties once they start work which can range to childcare issues, family illness or issues with council tax and housing. These issues can often be easily overcome with the right advice and friendly support but faced alone, they may seem insurmountable and prevent an individual from remaining in employment.

WFF will also help with upskilling a client after they have started working and feel they would like to move up the career ladder:

“There’s a sense of security through the aftercare provided by WFF, as you can always return.”

WFF Client

2.1.6 Positive links with other organisations

WFF enjoys strong support from the Scottish Government, Glasgow City Council and from other government and voluntary organisations. The support is predicated on the shared goal of tackling poverty and worklessness in Glasgow.

Inter-agency support is also important to WFF with Job Centre Plus being the biggest referrer to Working for Families. Also important are good working relationships with the local regeneration agencies, local childcare providers across the city, voluntary organisations and many educational institutions. Relationships such as these are critical to successful delivery of the programme due to the complex nature facing some people and their families.



3. DISCUSSION QUESTION 2

Thinking about the services and support provided by Working for Families:

Part One:

What could it do better?

Part Two:

Who can't access it and why?

Part Three:

What else could Working for Families do to help parents return to work? (including training and education)

3.1 Key Findings – Part One: What could it do better?

3.1.1 Childcare: Fit for Purpose?

WFF has a good track record of making sure that its services fit around its clients but WFF must continue to innovate in the area of childcare provision. The Sitter Service³ is an excellent example of the innovative approach taken by WFF, as is the possibility of piloting a 24 hour sitter service to help individuals whose jobs or training require them to do overnight shifts. The needs of clients will continually evolve and child care provision needs to keep up with the rate of economic change if it is to remain relevant and useful for WFF clients.

3.1.2 Improving Communication

WFF has excellent working relationships with many of the organisations that it deals with on a daily basis. However, there is a lot of crossover between services and participants felt that WFF could improve its service by creating deeper links with other key agencies at both strategic and operational levels. This could include developing greater alignments and partnerships between the Community Health and Care Partnerships (CHCPs) and the City Strategy and the possibility of joint training and awareness raising sessions. This type of work could aim to try to reduce some of the complexity that inter-agency working has created in the city:

“There are lots of organisations marketing themselves who will help: Working Links, JobCentre Plus and so on; but (clients) can only be registered with one place at a time. One of my girls had got a job and was moving on, fantastic but she needed a job grant to help her back to work. And then we hit this brick wall with these organisations: ‘we can’t pay off her loans because it’s not a full time job’; ‘we can’t pay because she’s registered with someone else’. I had to un wrangle all this and spent a day and a half with three organisations trying to sort it out. I basically had to dig my heels and say ‘I don’t care whose mistake it is, this girl has got a job and needs the money – so pay her the money.’”

WFF Worker

3. The Sitter Service is available to WFF clients to help them take up employment in sectors of the Glasgow economy where shift working is common. Childcare is provided by trusted childcare organisations outside the normal childcare hours of 8am to 6pm.

3.1.3 Transport costs

Transport costs are not subsidised by WFF. For some participants this can be a real barrier to returning to work. One WFF client explained that in order for her to get to college and for her son to go to nursery she would have to catch three buses, which would take two hours. This meant she'd have to leave the house at 7am in order to make college on time. In addition, the bus stop nearest her house is inadequate and unsafe, as it was on a small country road with no footpath and an open road speed limit. She explained that this was bad enough under ordinary circumstances but on cold, dark winter mornings with her two year old son in his pram it became too dangerous to justify. As a result, she has been catching taxis to and from school and nursery which were being subsidised by her parents.

Transport costs currently fall outside of WFF remit but there are clearly clients for whom transport can be a barrier to re-entering training or employment. If WFF remains unable to fund transport costs for these clients, then this issue should be added to the list of issues that WFF should be lobbying others to take action.

3.1.4 Marketing of Working for Families

Many of the participants commented that they only found out about WFF by chance. They wanted more people to benefit from the services offered by WFF and felt a proactive marketing campaign should be put in place to make this happen.

Some participants saw value in creating a universal brand for all WFF projects and services. Many felt that a central website would be a good marketing tool and a good way to direct people to services and partners that may be able to help them.

Participants felt that a successful marketing strategy should target those not aware of WFF. Evidence should be gathered from city statistics to identify groups that are under-represented in WFF clients and they should be targeted. Good news stories should be used to assist in the recruitment of new members. An example of this type of marketing occurs in the London Borough of Newham where Housing Lists are used to target market employability services.

3.2 Key Findings - Part Two: Who can't access it?

3.2.1 Under 16 year olds

Under 16 year olds who become parents remain the responsibility of the local education service. They can access the WFF Young Parent project but only if they remain in full time education. There are resources available for the School to ensure that the child is able to remain in school but in reality many schools are unaware of the support available or unwilling to offer it. One participant's own experience supported this, she said when her school found out she was pregnant "they didn't encourage me to leave, but they certainly didn't encourage me to come back."

WFF workers have been asked by some schools to work with a few cases where they have advised the young parent of their rights and help them decide on the right course for themselves. The workers will often advise the school of their responsibilities towards the individual which includes providing childcare so the young parent can attend classes. The WFF worker's objective will be to keep that young parent engaged in the education system.



The Worker can also refer the parents of the young person to the Money Advice Project. As legal guardian of both their child and their grandchild, they will be able to apply for benefits and tax credits that would be available for their child if they were over the age of 16. Many parents are unaware of this benefit.

One participant, herself a young parent, suggested that the Young Parents project could be based in schools.

“The services WFF are providing are more suited a what the school can provide. Better (WFF provides the service) than to lose the person (because the school isn’t providing the support). Because when you lose them, when do they re-emerge? It’s about a lack of preciousness, it shouldn’t matter who provides the service as long as someone does.”

WFF Worker

3.2.2 16 – 19 year olds:

16 – 19 year olds can access the ‘Young Parent Project’ of WFF however the numbers accessing it currently are only a small percentage of parents in this age group. Nevertheless, for the clients that do access it, the biggest barrier for them and their key worker will be childcare. There is no provision for funding childcare for parents under the age of 18. They cannot access ‘Get Ready for Work’ Training which is the main training route for under 18s because there is no funding for childcare attached to the training. There are no other organisations that are able to fund childcare for this group.

“A client who was under 18 wanted to access a program through NHS link that would lead to employment, but can’t access it because we can’t fund the childcare for 12 weeks. They can access New Deal for Young Parents but there’s no childcare funding attached. They can access a personal development course but no childcare, so we looked at voluntary option, still no funding for childcare. Every way an under-18 is turning they hit a brick wall. There’s an assumption by local government and Scottish Enterprise that WFF can fund it, but we’re not here to fund long-term childcare – we only do short term childcare needs... These people want to do something and all these issues are stopping them.”

WFF Worker

The importance of easily available, well funded childcare was demonstrated by the experience of a young parent project worker:

“...same issue of not funding childcare keeps getting mentioned and these young parents turn into adults...You talk about the (Not in Education or Training) group, under 18year olds who become long-term unemployed. I’m right now phoning around trying to get funding (for childcare) for one of my clients – she was ready about a month ago to do something, but now I’m losing her a wee bit and I know that if I could have got her on there and then, I know I would have had her on, and she would have stayed on...”

WFF Worker



3.2.3 Immigrants to Scotland

Visas held by many immigrant groups will state that they have ‘no recourse to public funds’. This prohibits immigrants from accessing the WFF services. This group includes European Union Migrants, Asylum seekers and Student Visa Holders (or their partners).

For migrants located in the North of the Glasgow, they do have access to the ‘Rosemount Lifelong Learning Centre’ which, although it is a voluntary organization, does provide some WFF services to this group. Some of the clients of Rosemount attended the Peer Review and took part in their own focus group. They spoke of being isolated when they first came to Britain; it was common for them to be at home all day and would suffer depression as a result. Clients stated that attending Rosemount was helpful with this aspect of their lives, as they are happier now and have aspirations to move on and find work. Rosemount offered them a range of courses including ESOL or literacy and numeracy. Many of the courses achieve recognised qualifications and they are provided in a highly flexible way which helps people to stay enrolled.

Many of this group spoke of the difficulty of finding suitable childcare. Rosemount do provide it when a course is undertaken but when the course is finished, so does the childcare. Rosemount, where possible, offer places to clients who are attending college or University but these are limited. People spoke of great difficulty finding affordable, suitable childcare. There was a lot of private provision, but these were too expensive to consider. One participant had to give up work because she couldn’t afford the childcare costs. Most nurseries didn’t take children under three years and many were limited to just a few hours care per day. All of these issues present a major hurdle for any parent wanting to take up training or job opportunities.

In terms of improving the Rosemount service, clients felt that the service should be available Glasgow-wide as opposed to the current situation where it can only cater to the Glasgow North area. The clients also felt strongly that their interaction with WFF should not be limited to Rosemount. They unanimously wanted access to the full WFF service.

3.2.4 Fathers

There are no barriers to fathers accessing WFF but currently they only account for a very small percentage of clients. In part this is due to the fact that over 75% of clients are lone parents, and the overwhelming majority are lone parents are women. The most common way that male clients are recruited is through their partners. Once they see their partner being helped and supported into work, they will want to participate.

3.2.5 Other groups identified

In addition to the groups discussed above the following groups were also identified as not currently engaging with WFF:

- **Students;**
- **Carers looking after an adult (an elderly relative or disabled child);**
- **Families with no childcare commitments.**



3.3 Key Findings - Part Three: What else could Working for Families do to help parents return to work or training?

3.3.1 HNC Pilot Project

WFF worked closely with a local JobCentre Plus on a pilot project which saw the JobCentre Plus waive the 16 hour rule to enable a group of people to return to education to obtain their HNC. The rule applies to people on most benefits and limits the amount of training and employment undertaken to under 16 hours. This would normally prevent a return to full-time education, but this project helped 15 people achieve their HNC and was a highly successful intervention helping parents on their path to employment. Most participants thought this was a simple but effective idea and were keen to see it formally rolled out across Glasgow and more widely.

It was also suggested that the same waiver could be applied to the WFF Childcare Works Voluntary option which would mean that clients could undertake the option full time and then move straight into full-time employment.

3.3.2 Part-time, paid employment option

Currently the only paid employment option offered through Child Care Works is full-time. But WFF clients felt that there would be merit to offering a part-time, paid employment route. They felt that this may be an easier stepping stone for some clients and may encourage more people to try it out. The participant that suggested this was also attracted to it because it would enable her to spend more time with her son.

3.3.3 Lobbying Role

There were many issues discussed that were outside the remit of the WFF programme. But many participants, both workers and clients, thought that WFF were uniquely placed to highlight these issues to policymakers and represent the problems being experienced by their clients as they try to return to work. WFF do take this role on at the moment and have recently submitted a paper on the issues confronting parents under the age of 16. Some of the other issues people felt WFF could raise awareness about included:

Childcare

Childcare is often viewed as being only for people who are working. There is a significant gap in funding for parents who are trying to improve their future earning capacity by undertaking further adult education or volunteering. This is not only a significant gap in government policy but also conflicts with other government policies encouraging lifelong learning and a return to education for adults.

Lobbying could focus on the need for more funding of childcare for students in Higher Education and Further Education. Only when this is provided will further education be a real possibility for many lone parents.



“Primarily (WFF) funding is around filling gaps; not about replacing funding that is there or should be there. If we simply replace what should be there – it stops the mainstream doing what they should be doing. The ‘Get Ready for Work’ program should reflect the fact that Young Parents are under 18 and need funding for childcare in order to access these programs. Not that we can’t put the money in, we can support them – not through the whole program but could help to keep them there but firstly: this detracts from the funding we have, and secondly: it lets people off the hook.”

WFF Worker

There are also significant issues with how childcare is funded, here the conundrum is explained by a provider of childcare services:

“The funding for childcare is a nightmare; the basic model is a ‘pump-priming’ model. You’ll get money for the first year, but then they expect you to become ‘sustainable’, in other words charge fees. The cost of the baby room is £200 per child per week, there’s no way that we would charge that to our parents, wouldn’t dream of it. So we subsidise it by different means. But the pump-priming model just assumes that in three years we’ll find parents that will pay £200 per week. Well we might do, but they won’t be local parents. They probably won’t even be from Glasgow.”

Worker, Rosemount Lifelong Learning

Policy Failure

WFF should be challenging policies that exclude or are failing key groups. For example policies to support parents who are between 16 and 18:

“... it’s a raft of policy gaps – not just about the Scottish Government, but it’s also a Department of Work and Pensions gap. They haven’t pulled together and recognised all the issues that young parents face. They fall between the Lone Parent Advisor and the Young Person Advisor.”

WFF Worker

Delays in the benefit process

The gap in processing back-to-work applications means that people can be without money for a month before they get their first pay cheque. For many this is a major financial barrier preventing a return to work.

“I had a client who had to turn the job down because she’d be in training for 2 weeks and then there was a gap of a month before she started work. So she’d have to come off benefits to go on the training, but then they’d be no point trying to sign on (after the training) because there would be a 6 week delay processing the new benefit application”

WFF Worker



3.4 Recommendations for Working for Families Glasgow

3.4.1 Childcare

WFF must continue to contribute to the evolution of childcare in the city and ensure it keeps up with economic changes to work patterns and the changing needs of individuals.

3.4.2 User Engagement

WFF is clearly a very user friendly, user focused service, but it would be beneficial to consult with groups that are under-represented in WFF's client base to understand why they are not engaging. Fathers, parents of disabled children and young mothers were all mentioned as groups that fit within WFF's remit but are not currently well represented in WFF's client base. It would be worth consulting with those groups in an effort to understand how they could be brought into the process.

3.4.3 Funding

The current uncertainty around funding for the Glasgow WFF program is being well managed by the current delivery team who have an exit strategy in place intended to soften the impact that a drastic cut in funding could have for many of WFF's clients. However, it was recognised by all participants at the Peer Review that much of the success of WFF can be attributed to the quality and commitment of their staff. Delays in funding decisions could result in a loss of high quality staff unwilling to risk sudden unemployment and instead moving on to secure positions. If funding is to be continued then the decision should be made as early as possible in order to avoid negative impact on WFF staff.

3.5 Recommendations for UK policy

3.5.1 Young Parents

There is a critical and urgent need for national policy makers to address the situation for young parents in a coherent, realistic and holistic way. WFF have proven that it is possible to keep young parents in the educational system but to do so requires intervention, a supportive school, and childcare to be attached to educational and training opportunities aimed at this group.

There is also a need to review the current benefit system with regards to this group to ensure it is fair, equitable and consistent. A WFF Money advisor who participated in the peer review pointed out that one of the biggest issues with the rights and entitlements of this group is that they change constantly and even professional financial advisors find it difficult to keep up with what their entitlements.

3.5.2 Financial transitions

More consideration needs to be given to the financial transition for an individual moving from benefits into work, or vice versa. Individuals can experience gaps of up to six weeks between their last benefit payment and their first pay cheque. This occurs at a time when their focus should be settling in to their new job but instead they will be worried about how to pay for nappies, baby food or childcare during this period. The threat of being without money for 2 – 6 weeks may be enough to put people off taking a job.



Delays in processing benefit claims will, at best, cause unnecessary stress and at worst, prevent individuals from taking up job or training opportunities. Participants felt that a simple solution to this issue would be to allow a person to stay on benefits until they received their first pay cheque.

4. DISCUSSION QUESTION THREE

To what extent has Working for Families helped parents into employment or training and, in so doing, helped to tackle poverty and worklessness in Glasgow?

4.1 Key Findings

4.1.1 Motivates Individuals and their families

“Allison’s story was that her children are seeing her go to university and saying to her: ‘wow mum, you’re at university’ and they realise themselves when they are older that it’s not beyond them to do it. So it’s helping tackle poverty immediately, but it’s also helping the whole family, and at a later date, her children will have more confidence to go to university.”

Reference Group Member

Allison’s story was one of many that demonstrate the positive impact a mother returning to study can have on her and her children. Providing motivation for individuals and their families was considered key to helping people move from unemployment into jobs or training. The role of helping people see that there are opportunities was credited with ‘empowering’ the individual. Clients felt that WFF helped keep the momentum up and things seemed to happen faster with WFF. The fact that the program was voluntary was also viewed as a positive aspect, people are there because they want to be and that gives them ownership of their lives and their decisions. It was felt making the programme compulsory for people could be detrimental for the service and the client.

WFF recognises that moving from benefits into employment is a big step for individuals:

“(With benefits) ...the money is there, no matter what; that money is there – if I decide to change my college course next week it’s there. Whereas when you go into work it’s a huge step. It’s that complete independence which can be very, very rewarding obviously, you feel fantastic about yourself, but if it goes wrong – it’s very scary”

WFF client

...and takes a stepping stone approach to trying to get people into training or employment:

“I never thought I could go back to full time employment (after having my baby). I thought it would be too much, but it just shows you, you don’t know until you try it. Which is part of the problem because some people on benefits are too comfortable and don’t want to try anything new”

WFF client

The one worker, one client approach was considered essential to the success of WFF. It was accepted that this was very expensive but the short and long term results seemed to justify the investment. Being able to evidence the benefit of the WFF model was considered critical at this time. Government funding cuts combined with a strong interest in private-sector delivery of services traditionally the domain of the public-sector could both have a negative impact on WFF funding. Participants were keenly aware that unless the success of WFF was well documented and well evaluated then low-cost imitation programmes could be developed that cut corners and fail to deliver the results that WFF have delivered:

“People will always be cynical and say of course if you give everyone a personal advisor, of course they’ll do really well, but we can’t afford it. So it’s dead important to get the evidence to show it works. One of the most important bits (of WFF) is that clients get a decent job and they stay in that job; even if they go through a difficult patch, for example if they have a break-in and they’re not insured, it is a total disaster but they know their support worker will be able to help work this through.”

Young Parents Project Worker

4.1.2 Poverty of Aspiration

‘Poverty of aspiration’ was a term used by one group to explain one of the stumbling blocks preventing people in Glasgow returning to work. It was felt that this can impact the wider community and become an intergenerational issue for families. Areas of Glasgow that have been struggling with unemployment for generations have developed strong negative attitudes towards employment and training and this can negatively impact individuals who may want to make different decisions:

“(In some areas of Glasgow there is a) conspiracy of keeping people in your community out of work. If you’re 5th generation unemployed and the rest of the family is happy with that, and you get involved with WFF perhaps through a maternity nurse or social services, and you tell the family about this, the whole family will gang up and say ‘well, we didn’t work, why are you getting above yourself?’. All sorts of social pressures can come to bear, to keep them in the same place. If they decide to fight against this, you can get the whole street up against them because what they’re doing is saying to the family: ‘what you’ve got isn’t good enough for me’. Not just about Working for Families, but whole business of moving the community out of poverty.”

Full Employment Areas Initiative Worker

WFF can help with this situation because it gives an individual the opportunity to talk with someone outside of their direct community. Somebody that can present them with options for their future and help them make their own mind up about what they want. However, it needs to be recognised that WFF cannot tackle this alone; it is just one part of the City Strategy which sets out to tackle some deeply entrenched, and understandable in many cases, attitudes.



4.1.3 Employment is not always a route out of poverty: Life-long learning and education

Much of the current policy response to the issue of poverty in the UK and across Europe focuses predominantly on work as the only route out of poverty. Some participants in the Peer Review felt that education is not given the attention it deserves because it doesn't have the same 'quick fix' appeal as employment, but it does have the ability to lift people out of poverty. The government focus on work as the route out of poverty is one of the reasons that many of the barriers discussed during this review occur when a parent tries to return to education. An adult returning to further education may be the more costly option for the state and that individual, but the long term benefits will be much greater than that same individual taking on a low-paid, low-skilled job.

Participants believed the education system was designed for people under-25 and without children. To lift people out of poverty individuals must have good levels of education and skills and the motivation to find rewarding, sustainable employment. Life-long education and ensuring people have the tools they need to participate in education are critical elements in improving people's life chances. People should have more than one opportunity to educate themselves.

WFF, with help from the relevant NGOs, needs to demonstrate to policy makers and politicians the importance of education as route out of poverty and explain to them what parents need in order to make education a viable option for them.

4.1.4 Impact on the family

Participants thought that in general a parent returning to work had a positive impact on a child and their outlook on life; however it could take some time for them to get used to it:

"...(initially) the child can feel like: 'where's mum? She's not here to pick me up from school' and that can be quite a negative impact. But it's about involving the children in the transition and the journey so they can come to the realization that 'this is a good thing for us as well'."

Reference Group Member

Ensuring that children were happy in their childcare was very important and helped parents sustain employment. However, the common experience was that this became harder once the children reached 11 or 12. Children became awkward about after-school provision at this age, but one participant felt there was room for innovation in this market:

"(We have to consider) the whole question of 'what is after school care?' It doesn't seem to me that anyone is trying to meet the challenge of delivering the type of after-school care that over-12s would enjoy and want to go to. Must be lots of opportunity and funding relating to sport, I accept this won't meet everyone's needs, but I would have thought that with the Commonwealth Games and the Olympics, there would be plenty of funding available."

Voluntary Sector Worker



4.1.5 Careers in Care

Childcare appears to be one of the most popular career choice for large numbers of WFF's clients. Care is well suited to many of the clients as they have personal experience of children and obviously feel an affinity for the work, it may also fit well around their own childcare needs, and additionally it creates extra childcare workers, desperately needed by Glasgow City. But care is historically an undervalued profession and low wages are still the norm today.

If childcare continues to be the destination of choice for WFF clients, it is critical that a client's first step onto the career path is not their last. Only by ensuring that individuals continue to progress up the career ladder will WFF be able to claim that they have tackled poverty for that individual and their family. It does fall to the employer to make sure that all their employees continue to improve their skills and consequently their earning power, but WFF does have a role to play in this process. WFF could work with the employer to ensure they have suitable development programs in place, but they should also be available to clients in the long-term to help them consider what options are open to them after several years' full time employment. WFF are well placed to provide this service to a past client, but if they are unable to do so, it should be made very clear to the client where else they can go to obtain career advice.

Additionally, WFF should ensure that all clients have the option of further education discussed with them so they are able to factor it in to their decisions about the future. Whilst further education is difficult for parents, it is possible particularly where an individual has a good family or social network to assist with the demands of full time education. Further education may enhance an individual's earning potential and therefore enable them to obtain a greater degree of financial independence and security

4.2 Recommendations for Working for Families, Glasgow

4.2.1 Evaluations

As a pilot programme there has been much evaluation of WFF. This is critical when trying to prove the worth of WFF in an evidence-based policy environment. However, there was a view among participants that the true benefits of WFF will occur in the long-term rather than short or medium-term. Participants felt that the support received by clients of WFF will not only enable them to sustain employment throughout their working life but will probably result in improved earning potential as they progress. A longitudinal study may be the only way to measure the value of WFF as against other employability schemes.

4.3 Recommendations for Scottish and UK Policy

4.3.1 Life-long learning and education

Participants felt that there had been a shift within Government that saw work as the only route out of poverty and ignored the potential of education to lift people out of poverty. Long term, financially rewarding careers often required people to return to education. For education to be a genuinely life-long opportunity then childcare must be available at all levels from community learning through to Higher Education. Further and higher education were seen as important steps towards improving an individual's future earning potential and therefore enabling them to obtain a greater degree of financial independence and security for their family.

Currently the package of financial support available to parents in Scotland who undertake further and higher education is viewed by many as inadequate to encourage or enable a parent to return to study. It may be possible with a significant amount of help from family and social networks, but for many living in poverty, this support is not available. Networks such as these are particularly unlikely to exist for people who are newly arrived in the country.



5. TRANSFERABLE LESSONS FROM WORKING FOR FAMILIES: Improving implementation of policies tackling poverty and social exclusion

5.1 Location within existing community organisations

The fact that WFF staff were based within existing organisations, rather than being set up as a new separate organisation helped the agency integrate with the community (and the established service providers) more quickly. The decentralised approach was also appreciated by clients as they were located in areas where they were needed, and required less travel than a centrally located office would demand. It was probably also beneficial to distinguish them from existing employability services where clients may have already had bad experiences.

5.2 Key workers

The one-to-one support seemed to be the foundation on which the success of this programme is built. It is important to note that whilst the model itself has merit, the success relies on WFF dedicating sufficient funding and resources to implement it properly. Sufficient resources allowed WFF workers the time and flexibility they need to establish substantive relationships with their clients and understand the complex needs of the individuals with whom they are working.

Finally, the commitment demonstrated by the WFF workers was highly impressive. They were clearly very dedicated to helping their clients finding the right job, at the right time and ensuring it was sustainable and beneficial for both the client and their family.

5.3 Client focused and an holistic approach

The focus of the programme was on the wellbeing of the client and their family rather than simply getting people into jobs. Funding is not driven by tick boxes or time frames. WFF workers are given the flexibility and time they need to cater to the individual needs of the client and allow things to progress at a pace set by the client rather than by the 'system'.

5.4 Representations to employers on behalf of clients

Key workers are happy to approach employers on behalf of their clients to help employers make sure the conditions fit the client's broader needs. For example, a childcare mentor could ask an employer if a start date could be delayed for a week explaining that this would ensure time for the employee's child to settle in to their new child-care placement.

This may not be a true 'transferable lesson', but it is an excellent example of the 'no limits' approach of key workers when it comes to helping their clients into a sustainable job.



5.5 Long term approach

It was clear from the discussions that the WFF staff did not see their role as coming to an end when someone moved into a job or training. This was important for the clients who were more comfortable moving into employment if they knew they could call on their WFF support if a crisis arose. This type of ongoing support recognises that finding employment is not the end of an individual's difficulties. Childcare, housing, council tax and debt issues are just some of the issues that can crop up once a job starts and may prevent or discourage an individual from staying in their job.

One participant stated that the government target of 70% of lone parents in work 'could easily be reached' if lone parents were supported to sustain employment through difficult times in their lives. They felt the support that WFF workers provided was an excellent way of offering ongoing support to clients.

5.6 Money advice

The WFF keyworkers felt this part of the service was invaluable as a complementary WFF service. It was not just a question of building people's confidence or improving their skills, but was also about ensuring that people benefited from moving into employment in both the short and long term and understood how their finances would be impacted by the decisions they were taking.

5.7 No post code lottery

Given the spatial distribution of the problem of poverty in Glasgow, WFF did not take the usual geographical focus that most initiatives take which tend to focus services on the most deprived 15% of data zones. This was an important recognition that not all poor people live in poor areas. This decision has helped many people who would normally be prevented from accessing a service like this because government indices determined that they lived in a non-deprived area.

5.8 Flexibility

The flexibility of WFF can be seen both in terms of who they work with and in the services they provided. On the whole it appears part of the appeal of the programme is that it attempts to respond to need, rather than being restricted by a pre-agreed set of interventions. It achieves this by delegating much of the decision-making to the operational staff who benefit from the autonomy this provides and the results that it enables.



5.9 Partnership working

Partnership working is necessitated by the complexity of the problems facing people living in poverty and the Government's ambition to tackle them. The Government needs to ensure that funding decisions are made in the knowledge that where good partnership working does exist it could be impacted if central policy required changes to an agency's roles and responsibilities. For example, the relationships built in Glasgow between Working for Families, Local Regeneration Agencies, JobCentre Plus, Careers Scotland and the voluntary sector are predicated on complementary service provision. Central government should be sensitive to the fact that changes to funding structures of one organisation could impact the ability of other agencies to deliver their services successfully.

5.10 The Exit Strategy

While there is uncertainty about the future of WFF funding, what should be noted by other services facing similar funding issues is that the WFF delivery team have created an exit strategy and through an intelligent approach to handling budgets have tried to prevent an abrupt halt to funding. The Programme has effectively slowed its spending in this year in order to have funding in reserve that can be used to soften the blow for clients who depend on WFF for childcare in order for them to attend work or training. WFF workers also understand that in the event of funding cuts, clients will be migrated over to existing service providers and that an appropriate amount of time will be allowed to implement this strategy. This action once again demonstrates WFF's commitment to putting the client's needs at the centre of their service.

6. CONCLUSION

One of the interviewees in the DVD shown at this Peer Review referred to poverty ‘as a dripping tap’ that she didn’t know how to stop. A series of traumatic events had occurred in this woman’s life and she felt that her and her children were trapped in a life of poverty. The overwhelming conclusion from the Peer Review was that the Working for Families program in Glasgow is successfully showing many Glaswegians that poverty is not inevitable and helping these people to create financially secure futures for their family.

The success of WFF Glasgow lay in the ability of the program (and consequently its staff) to treat people as individuals. The ability of WFF to transform people’s lives seemed tied not to what WFF could offer by way of job placements and training, but rather how staff worked with their clients. The one to one relationships between clients and key workers resulted in a relationship based on understanding and trust; key workers seemed to have a natural empathy with their clients and understood the complex nature of the issues and barriers facing clients. Once a relationship of trust was established they were able to help clients understand their options, the benefit (or not) of returning to work or training, and how they could overcome barriers such as childcare or debt issues. The individual is then encouraged to make their own decision about their career and training goals that are right for them and for their family. The client is then able to work towards those goals at their own pace with continuing support from the key worker. This was the basic story told over and over again by clients of WFF at the Peer Review; the individual issues, options and results always varied but the relationship with their key worker was always at the heart of the story.

Current government policy is committed to the concept of employment as the key route out of poverty. Much government funding is being directed towards ‘employability’ programs designed to help individuals back into employment. Working for Families may be targeted at parents and families but the transferable lessons identified by this Peer Review are not limited in their application to ‘parents’ but can be applied to almost all individuals who face barriers preventing them from returning to work. The long term, sustained support that Working for Families provides to people who want to return to the labour market has important lessons for current welfare to work policies. As mentioned above, WFF’s success is attributable, in large part, to the ongoing individualised support that is available. However, it also has much to do with the voluntary nature of the programme and the fact that it strives to find meaningful careers for its clients, rather than just a job at any price. These are valuable lessons for all those who are concerned about making work a genuine and sustained route out of poverty.



Appendix One: Participant List

Prof. Alan McGregor	Chairperson, Glasgow University
Alan Davidson	Glasgow City Council
Allison Bradford	WFF Participant
Angela McAllister	WFF Participant
Angela Vance	WFF Participant
Angela Spence	Reference Group (LASE network member)
Annemarie Pattison	Working for Families
Carol Wylie	Rosemount Lifelong Learning
Cathy Cairns	WFF Participant
Celia Moignahan	Reference Group (London Borough of Newham)
Chris Burston	Reference Group (Department of Work and Pensions)
Christine McLellan	GERA
Clare Batty	Reference Group, (Local Authority Social Exclusion Network, Warwick Business School)
Cllr. Jim Coleman	Glasgow City Council
Colin Agnew	Childcare Greater Easterhouse
Debbie Jones	Reference Group (Community Member)
Donna Tibbs	WFF Participant
Elaine McFarlane	WFF Participant
Esther O'Brien	WFF Participant
Fiona Forsyth	Rosemount Lifelong Learning
Fiona Robertson	Community Enterprise in Strathclyde
Florence Burke	Community Enterprise in Strathclyde
Gerry Boyle	Social Work Services
Ian Mather	Reference Group (Community Member)
Innocencia Mpofo	WFF Participant
James Coleman	Depute Leader/Glasgow City Council
Jane Macpherson	Scottish Executive
Janice Docherty	Reference Group (Community Member)
Johann Lamont	Labour MSP, Glasgow Pollok



Karen Grunhut	Reference Group (City & County of Swansea)
Karen McCormack	GSERA
Kate Still	The Wise Group
Kayleigh Lynch	WFF Participant
Kelly Ann McLeish	WFF Participant
Kellymarie Gelder	Rosemount
Keren McMunigle	WFF Participant
Kirsty Macfarlane	WFF Participant
Laura Van Eck	WFF Participant
Libby Rohan	Glasgow City Council
Linda Duff	Glasgow South East Regeneration Agency
Liz anne Campbell	Glasgow Community Planning Ltd
Louise Bridges	WFF Participant
Maisie O'Brien	DRS
Mary Carson	Careers Scotland
Mary Mcgrory	Childcare Works
Mo Reid	Careers Scotland
Olga Vassiljeva	Rosemount
Patricia Docherty	Glasgow City Council
Pauline Healy	WFF Participant
Peter Kelly	Reference Group (The Poverty Alliance)
Rhona Steel	Careers Scotland
Richard Brown	Community Planning Partnership
Richard Cairns	Development & Regeneration Services
Robert Winning	Childcare Works
Sally Mackenzie	Reference Group (Bridging the Policy Gap National Co-ordinator)
Sara Disanto	The Poverty Alliance
Shona Honeyman	Reference Group (Glasgow City Council)
Tahira Zaheer	WFF Participant
Tom Golcher	Equal Access Glasgow
Vivian Balmain	Community Enterprise in Strathclyde



Appendix Two: Peer Review Agenda

THE GLASGOW PEER REVIEW PROGRAMME

Day One

TIME	ACTIVITY
12.00	Lunch and Registration
1.00	Introduction and Administration by Professor Alan McGregor, Glasgow University
1.05	Welcome by Councillor Coleman, Glasgow City Council
1.20	Icebreaker engaging all participants
1.30	Introduction to the project: purpose & desired outcomes by Sally Mackenzie, Bridging the Policy Gap
	How this project will impact on National Policy: Introduction to the National Action Plan social inclusion by Peter Kelly, The Poverty Alliance
	Introductions of Reference Group by Peter Kelly, The Poverty Alliance
2.00	<i>Working for Working for Families</i> - DVD Q and A with WFF staff
2.30	Afternoon Break (expenses reimbursed for participants – please see Adrian Gorst)
2.45	<i>Working for Families: The Client's View</i> - DVD Q and A with clients at tables
3.45	Working for Families – A brief overview Shona Honeyman, Glasgow City Council
4.00	Close Day One



THE GLASGOW PEER REVIEW PROGRAMME

Day Two

TIME	ACTIVITY
10.00	Tea/Coffee
10.30	Welcome and admin announcements Chairman: Professor Alan McGregor
10.35	Introduction of discussion questions Professor Alan McGregor
10.40	Discussion Question One: <i>Part One:</i> What & how does Working for Families help parents/ carers return to, or sustain, training and employment? <i>Part Two:</i> What are the best aspects of the Working for Families service and why?
11.40	Feedback to whole group
11.45	Discussion Question Two: Thinking about the services and support provided by Working for Families: <i>Part One:</i> What could it do better? <i>Part Two:</i> Who can't access it and why? <i>Part Three:</i> What else could Working for Families do to help parents return to work? (including training and education)
12.30	Feedback to whole group
12.45	LUNCH
1.30	Discussion Question Three: To what extent has Working for Families helped parents into employment or training and, in so doing, helped to tackle poverty and worklessness in Glasgow?
2.30	Feedback to whole group
2.45	Afternoon Break
3.00	Identifying the lessons for policies tackling poverty and social exclusion across Britain. Group Discussion Led by Professor Alan McGregor
3.45	Evaluation of the peer review (written questionnaire)
4.00	Conclusion of peer review

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Opinions expressed in this report do
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DWP Department for
Work and Pensions



Tea in the Pot
Anti Poverty Network Cymru
Social Policy Task Force



LASE
Local Authorities &
Social Exclusion Network

Action and Rights of Disabled People in Newham