
Report To:	Policy & Resources Committee	Date:	20 September 2016
Report By:	Chief Financial Officer and Corporate Director (Chief Officer) Health & Social Care Partnership	Report No:	FIN/88/16/AP/LA
Contact Officer:	Alan Puckrin	Contact No:	01475 712223
Subject:	Welfare Reforms Update		

1.0 PURPOSE

- 1.1 The purpose of this report is to provide the Committee with an update on the actions being taken by the Council in response to ongoing Welfare Reform changes.

2.0 SUMMARY

- 2.1 The Inverclyde area has been selected for the next phase of Universal Credit Full Service with this to be implemented within Inverclyde on 23 November 2016. This is earlier than previously expected and is testament to the assessed state of readiness which the DWP have of the service delivered in Inverclyde. There will be impacts for many claimants within Inverclyde and these are explored in more detail in the report.
- 2.2 The latest position in respect of the Scottish Welfare Fund (SWF) and Discretionary Housing Payments is that both are currently projected to contain costs within available budgets however this is only after significant extra funding has been allocated directly from the Council's own resources to supplement DWP/Scottish Government Funding. It is anticipated that demand for both sources of funding will continue to grow as Universal Credit is rolled out and in the event that further funding is required then officers will report back to Committee.
- 2.3 The Health & Social Care Committee received a report regarding the transition from Disability Living Allowance (DLA) to Personal Independence Payment (PIP). This full report is attached at Appendix 3. Updates on this area will continue to be provided to Committee.
- 2.4 The Benefit Cap enters a new phase from November this year and is estimated to impact on more than 40 households. Proactive contact with those affected is being undertaken by the Council and its Partners.

3.0 RECOMMENDATIONS

- 3.1 It is recommended that the Committee note the implementation date of 23 November 2016 for Universal Credit Full Service within Inverclyde.
- 3.2 It is recommended that the Committee otherwise note the contents of the report.

Alan Puckrin
Chief Financial Officer

Brian Moore
Chief Officer (HSCP)

4.0 BACKGROUND

- 4.1 The Committee receives a report each cycle providing updates on the Council's response to the major Welfare Reform changes being rolled out across the UK. The Council has set aside in excess of £1.2 million on a recurring basis from 2016/17 to meet the significant financial challenges generated by these changes.
- 4.2 Members have previously received a briefing in respect of Universal Credit and whilst numbers moving to Universal Credit have been relatively low this will significantly change in coming months as detailed later in the report.

5.0 UNIVERSAL CREDIT

- 5.1 The Department for Work and Pensions has notified the Council that the Greenock and Port Glasgow Jobcentre Plus offices are being selected for the Universal Credit Full Service from 23 November 2016 instead of further expansion in the Highlands. UC Full Service removes the restrictions in the eligibility criteria currently in place and opens the scheme to all working age welfare benefit claimants who make a new benefit claim, regardless of their circumstances.
- 5.2 More than 800 Universal Credit claims have been made in Inverclyde to date, with more than 250 with housing costs and approximately 35% of UC claimants having income from employment taken into account in the assessment award. The number of Universal Credit claimants is expected to increase rapidly when seasonal employment ends and with Full Service roll-out. Appendix 1 provides details of how UC uptake has evolved over the last 10 months.
- 5.3 Housing Associations are reviewing their processes in anticipation of UC Full Service as well as Advice Services and Community Learning and Development who plan changes to their service provision to respond to new demands from those who would not normally engage with their services such as those already in employment. Officers have already made contact with East Lothian Council who went live in March 2016 and have convened a meeting there to learn from their experience.
- 5.4 UC Full Service will reduce the Council's Housing Benefit incoming work levels because working age applicants will apply instead for the Universal Credit housing element. Responsibility for the maintenance of the "stock" working age Housing Benefit claims will remain with the Council until claimants migrate to Universal Credit, expected to take place between July 2019 and March 2022. A small number of Supported Exempt Accommodation claims will however remain with Pension Age claims which accounts for a third of the caseload until at least 2022.

6.0 SCOTTISH WELFARE FUND AND DISCRETIONARY HOUSING PAYMENTS

- 6.1 Appendix 2 shows Scottish Welfare Fund (SWF) payments up to 12 August 2016. The level of grants awarded is 10% above the Scottish Government programme funding and is met by the balance carried forward from 2015/16 and the allocation of £100k from the recurring Welfare Reforms budget.
- 6.2 The average Crisis Grant for a UC applicant is on average £112 compared with £76 for a non-UC customer because of the extended period of up to 6 weeks UC claimants must wait until their first UC payment is received from the DWP. Universal Credit has to date had a limited effect on the SWF budget with 16 Crisis Grants approved for UC customers between April and August 2016. UC Full Service is however expected to put pressure on the budget due to the higher award levels.
- 6.3 The Scottish Public Services Ombudsman started its new role on 1 April 2016 as SWF 2nd tier independent reviewer. Their initial findings are that in general the decision-making by local authorities has been appropriate. One of the main themes emerging from the cases considered so far is in respect of exclusions for Crisis Grants, and the application of exceptional circumstances to qualify for a grant. To date over 110 enquiries or requests to review decisions

have been received throughout Scotland with the SPSO upholding 30% of crisis grant applications and around 50% of community care grants. In these circumstances the SPSO instructs the relevant council to pay the grant. Inverclyde Council has had no 2nd tier reviews heard by the SPSO.

- 6.4 All Housing Association tenants affected by the Social Sector Size Criteria (also known as the bedroom tax) in receipt of Discretionary Housing Payment (DHP) at 31 March 2016 have had their award rolled over to 2016/17 and all new applications have been assessed. The projected value of DHP to mitigate the SSSC for those currently affected and assuming their awards continue to year end is £887,000. Committee should note that the Scottish Government has undertaken to underwrite "Bedroom Tax" costs.
- 6.5 DHP to meet pressures as a result of other welfare reforms including the Benefits Cap and restrictions in the private rented and homelessness sectors is projected to be in the region of £91,000. This estimate is based on assumptions about Universal Credit, the Homelessness Service and the uptake of DHP. It is within budget and will be subject to continuous review.

7.0 DLA/PIP

- 7.1 Members had asked for a more detailed update in respect of the migration from DLA to PIP within Inverclyde. This report was presented the Health & Social Care Committee on 25 August 2016 and is attached as Appendix 3 to this report.
- 7.2 It is early days for officers to arrive at any definitive conclusions but as expected there have been significant reductions in awards and the requirement for a large number of appeals which are being supported by HSCP Advice Service Team. Updates in this area as the position becomes clearer will be provided to Committee.

8.0 REDUCED BENEFIT CAP

- 8.1 From 7 November 2016 the Benefits Cap which limits the amount of benefit most working age people can get, currently at £26,000 per year, is to be reduced to £20,000 for couples and families and for single people from £18,200 to £13,400.
- 8.2 Data released by the Department for Work and Pensions indicates that 48 households in Inverclyde where neither the householder nor their partner are employed are expected to have their housing benefit award reduced when the lower benefit cap is introduced. Each household received a letter from DWP preparing them for the reduction later this year.
- 8.3 The average weekly housing benefit reduction will be £47, with the highest reduction expected to be £114. Discretionary Housing Payment can assist with 50% of the shortfall and an application form is sent from the benefits service immediately to the customer after the service is instructed by the DWP to make the deduction.
- 8.4 A group was convened locally to make best use of available expertise to support those expected to be affected with representation from Housing Benefits, HSCP Advice Services, Community Learning and Development (CLD), Inverclyde Community Development Trust (The Trust), DWP Welfare Reforms team, Jobcentre Plus and Housing Associations. A programme of engagement has been agreed to help customers understand the impact of the cap, to help prepare for employment which will remove the household from the cap or if appropriate to determine exemption from the cap by the qualification for certain welfare benefits such as Carers Allowance.
- 8.5 HSCP Advice Services plan to contact each of the households, the Housing Associations plan to visit their tenants and the DWP Welfare Reforms team will contact customers who live in the Private Rented Sector. Jobcentre Plus work coaches can offer additional Flexible Support payments and advice and The Trust can provide resilience training and various means of employability support.

9.0 OTHER ISSUES

- 9.1 The Committee will be aware that there are significant changes occurring to the Council Tax system with effect from 1 April 2017. Whilst a more detailed report on this area will be presented to the next Committee in respect of the changes in the multipliers and the expected impacts on Inverclyde there is also a knock on impact to the Council Tax Reduction Scheme.
- 9.2 Discussions are ongoing between Cosla and the Scottish Government as part of the Spending Review regarding the financial impact of the increase in Council Tax reduction payments to ensure that Councils are fully funded for these policy changes.

10.0 IMPLICATIONS

10.1 Finance

As detailed in the report.

Financial Implications:

One off Costs

Cost Centre	Budget Heading	Budget Years	Proposed Spend this Report £000	Virement From	Other Comments

Annually Recurring Costs/ (Savings)

Cost Centre	Budget Heading	With Effect from	Annual Net Impact £000	Virement From (If Applicable)	Other Comments

10.2 Legal

There are no legal implications arising from this report.

10.3 Human Resources

There are no HR implications arising from this report.

10.4 Equalities

Has an Equality Impact Assessment been carried out?

Yes See attached appendix

No This report does not introduce a new policy, function or strategy or recommend a change to an existing policy, function or strategy. Therefore, no Equality Impact Assessment is required.

10.5 Repopulation

There are no repopulation implications arising from this report.

11.0 LIST OF BACKGROUND PAPERS

11.1 None

Universal Credit - Inverclyde - cumulative stats

UC meeting	Inverclyde UC Caseload			Evidence of Earnings after 3 months	No. of UC claimants with Housing Costs (approx.)	Council Tax Reduction - number of applicants on UC	No. of SWF Grants
	Greenock JCP	Port Glasgow JCP	Total				
1.12.15	61	35	96	not applicable	19	10	12
12.1.16	127	57	184	not applicable	47	32	33
23.2.16	229	115	344	32%	58	53	52
30.3.16	342	not available	n/a	39%	100	84	62
24.5.16	418	192	610	34%	206	107	67
27.7.16	563	255	818	35%	244	117	72

Notes

1. Caseload is the number of individuals in receipt of Universal Credit either individually or as part of a couple
2. "Evidence of Earnings after 3 months" is the percentage of customers with earnings included in the assessment of their UC award 3 months after the date they first claimed UC

Scottish Welfare Fund
12th August 2016

Calls Answered	3679		
Applications	1757		
Applications Granted	1177	66.99%	
Applications Refused	264	15.03%	Note 3
Applications Withdrawn	237	13.49%	
In Progress	78	4.49%	
Referrals to DWP	86		Note 2
	<u>Spend</u>	<u>Budget</u>	<u>Spend</u>
	<u>£000</u>	<u>£000</u>	<u>%</u>
Crisis Grant paid (776)	58.7	195.8	29.98%
Community Care Grants paid (416) (includes 15 applications paying both CCG & CG)	210.7	655.5	32.14%
	<hr/>	<hr/>	
	269.4	851.3	31.64%

Note 1 1st Tier Reviews = 23 (1.37%)
1st Tier Reviews Upheld in Customer Favour = 12 (52.17%)
2nd Tier Reviews = 0 (0%)
2nd Tier Reviews Upheld in Customers Favour = 0 (0%)

Note 2 Referrals to DWP relates to customers who are awaiting payment of a new claim for Universal Credit JSA / ESA from DWP. In these circumstances an application for an advance payment of benefit, repayable to the DWP can be made.

Note 3 The most common reasons for refusal of claims are, applicants not meeting the eligibility criteria, not being in receipt of a qualifying benefit or incomplete evidence provided.

Note 4 Core Budget is £681,000 to which is added £70,000 carried forward from earlier years plus £100,000 from the Welfare Reforms Budget.

Discretionary Housing Payments

12th August 2016

Renewals

Renewals - approved	1327	(93.58%)	
Renewals - refused	12	(0.85%)	Applicants no longer meet priority group criteria
Renewals – not eligible	79	(5.57%)	No entitlement to DHP because Housing Benefit has stopped

New Applications

New Applications Received to date	217		
Applications Approved	120	(55.30%)	
Applications Refused	70	(32.26%)	
Applications - No Action	9	(4.15%)	DHP paid as 'Renewal'
Awaiting Supporting Evidence	0	(0%)	
New Applications still to be assessed	18	(8.29%)	

£000

DHP paid to date	333		
DHP Commitments Includes Non-SSSC (£43k)	597		Non-SSSC budget: £119k
New applications to be assessed	13		Estimate based on current average award £14.40
Total Projected Spend (current applications)	<u>943</u>		Anticipate more demand following implementation of UC Full Service and Reduced Benefits Cap
Reviews requested	7	(0.43%)	

SSSC

Households affected by SSSC at 12.8.16	1305		
Households currently receiving DHP	1269	(97.24%)	
SSSC spend (based on applications in payment at 12.8.16)	£887k		Scottish Government SSSC Projection: £974k

AGENDA ITEM NO:

Report To:	Health & Social Care Committee	Date:
Report By:	Brian Moore Chief Officer Inverclyde Health and Social Care Partnership (HSCP)	Report No:
Contact Officer:	Helen Watson Head of Service: Planning, Health Improvement & Commissioning	Contact No: 01475 715285
Subject:	Disability Living Allowance (DLA) Migration to Personal Independence Payment (PIP).	

1.0 PURPOSE

- 1.1 To update Committee on the introduction of the new welfare benefit Personal Independence Payment (PIP); the reassessment process for migrating working age Disability Living Allowance recipients to Personal Independence Payment, and the emerging issues and mitigation responses.

2.0 SUMMARY

- 2.1 Disability Living Allowance (DLA) was introduced in 1992 in recognition of the additional costs associated with disability. Personal Independence Payment (PIP) has now replaced DLA for working age claimants. All new claims for disability support are made for Personal Independence Payments, whilst all existing working age DLA claimants in Inverclyde are being invited to apply, and be reassessed for PIP on a rolling programme between October 2015 and late 2017.
- 2.2 There are approximately 3,700 working age DLA claimants in Inverclyde. The first national DWP statistics for outcomes of DLA to PIP reassessments showed 32% of those reassessed in Inverclyde lost all entitlement to disability benefit. Analysis of initial outcome decisions for the DLA to PIP reassessment cases in Inverclyde, notified to Inverclyde Advice Services by DWP, has allowed for extrapolation from DWP caseload statistics to project possible impacts. Analysis suggests an estimated 1,357 existing DLA claimants currently receiving either High or Middle Rate Care stand to lose entitlement to PIP Daily Living Component.
- 2.3 Concerns have been raised as to the PIP claim and reassessment process in addition to decision making in general. Assessments for Inverclyde residents are by and large conducted in Glasgow, in spite of the availability of DWP assessment facilities in Greenock.
- 2.4 Of those Inverclyde claimants who challenge adverse assessment decisions at appeal with Welfare Rights representation, 73 per cent of appeals are found in the claimants favour.
- 2.5 DLA/PIP helps disabled people pay for extra costs, supports daily living and assists

with them remaining independent in the community. If the income of the disabled person is reduced it will be more difficult for them to meet their basic needs and as a result possibly increase the demand for social care to help meet those needs.

- 2.6 At the same time, DLA/PIP income that has played a part in subsidising the cost of social care through charging will no longer be available and lost to the social care system.
- 2.7 The cumulative loss of disability benefit to Inverclyde claimants, and thereby the Inverclyde economy, from the DLA to PIP reassessment process has been estimated at approximately £9 million per annum.
- 2.8 In order to best support members of the community, a range of activities have commenced in addition to the welfare benefits and appeals and representation already in place. This includes establishment of data sharing protocols; in-depth analysis of cases; and on-going research to capture and reflect the consequences of loss of disability benefit on individual claimants to inform future policy development.

3.0 RECOMMENDATIONS

- 3.1 Note the content of the report and the possible impact of the reassessment from DLA to PIP process on Inverclyde claimants, HSCP service delivery, and the wider Inverclyde economy.
- 3.2 To recommend that Inverclyde Council formally approach DWP with a request for greater utilisation of the facilities available at Duff Street in order that PIP assessments for Inverclyde claimants can be conducted in Inverclyde.
- 3.3 To note the range of proactive measures in place to support claimants and consider at a future committee the findings of the DLA/PIP monitoring exercise.
- 3.4 To await further information from the Scottish Government on the new Social Security Bill, which includes the devolvement of disability benefits to Scotland.

Brian Moore
Chief Officer
Inverclyde HSCP

4.0 BACKGROUND

- 4.1 Disability Living Allowance (DLA) was introduced in 1992 in recognition of the additional costs associated with disability. Additional food costs as a result of a special diet, additional heating costs, costs to meet on-going transport needs that allows access to essential services and maintains a degree of independence and social contact.
- 4.2 Personal Independence Payment (PIP) has now replaced DLA for working age claimants. All new claims since 2015 are made for PIP. Existing DLA working age claimants in Inverclyde will be invited to apply for PIP on the basis of a rolling programme between October 2015 and late 2017.
- 4.3 It is important to note that PIP does not directly replace DLA and as it is classed as a completely different benefit, existing DLA claimants have to apply for PIP. Current entitlement to DLA at the highest levels or that a DLA award has been made for an indefinite period or on a life time basis is immaterial and offers no guarantee of securing any entitlement to PIP. If an existing DLA claimant fails to respond to their invitation to claim PIP from DWP their entitlement to DLA will nevertheless stop.
- 4.4 Although PIP is a different benefit it shares many similarities with DLA. It is not means tested, not based on National Insurance contributions; acts as a passport to other entitlements; is based on need; is not an earnings replacement benefit and as such is available to those both in and out of work.

5.0 DLA TO PIP MIGRATION IMPACTS

- 5.1 A stated aim of Government in phasing out DLA and introducing PIP was to reduce the numbers receiving disability benefit thereby reducing expenditure on welfare. The June 2010 Budget announced that reform of DLA would save more than £1 billion per year by 2014/15. (HM Treasury, June 2010). The Department of Work and Pensions (DWP) Impact Assessment published in 2012 predicted there would be 500,000 fewer people receiving PIP by 2015/16 that would have received DLA under the existing rules.
(DWP, Disability Living Allowance Reform Impact Assessment)
- 5.2 Between 2013 and 2018, 190,000 working age DLA claimants in Scotland will be reassessed to determine eligibility for PIP. On the basis of DWP projections it is estimated approximately 150,000 reassessed disabled claimants will lose some or all of their disability benefit by 2018 with a loss of at least £1,134 per claimant per year. Of those, 47 per cent are estimated to receive no PIP award and the remaining 53 per cent to receive a reduced PIP award. Savings stemming from a stricter test of mobility will result in a decrease of £35 per week or a loss of £57 per week for an estimated 47,000 disabled people in Scotland.
(Scottish Government, Financial Impacts of Welfare Reform on Disabled People in Scotland, August 2014)
- 5.3 Further savings will arise as under PIP there is no replacement of the lowest care component of DLA (£21.80 per week, £1,134 per year) which is currently claimed by approximately 88,630 claimants in Scotland.
(DWP Tabulation Tool)
- 5.4 The Extra Costs Commission recently published the "Driving down the extra costs disabled people face" report which found that disabled people pay on average £550 per month more than people who are not disabled on everyday living costs. The average award of DLA/PIP is £360 per month. Disability organisations have voiced concern that losses or reductions in entitlement will lead to many current DLA claimants facing financial hardship. A UK survey conducted by the Papworth Trust found that: *"Three-quarters of disabled people would not*

have enough money if their DLA was cut. Six in ten would lose some of their independence [and] 86 per cent of disabled people would cut back on essentials like food and transport if their DLA was cut”.

(Papworth Trust, Changes to Disability Living Allowance Survey Results)

5.5 Criticism has been levelled at the PIP claim process from initial claim to assessment through to appeal. Concerns nationally include:

- Application is by way of completion of a 35 page form which is perceived as too long, too complex, often requiring explanation of multiple fluctuating symptoms and cognitive difficulties.
- Participants described the process of claiming PIP as stressful and demoralising from the outset. This caused exacerbation of physical symptoms as well as added emotional distress.
- PIP assessments were perceived as adversarial, designed to be as difficult as possible, and failure inevitable.
- The impact was increased stigma and isolation from family and friends as the process left them fearful and feeling judged, ‘like a criminal’. In some cases this placed a strain on family relationships.
- The emphasis on having to prove their disability was disempowering for claimants, and incompatible with the NHS emphasis on self-management.
- Delays and frequent need for appeal tribunals left some in severe financial hardship, with increased debt and dependency.

(A Deeply Dehumanising Experience. M.E/CFS Journeys Through the PIP Claim Process in Scotland. March 2016, Newcastle University.)

5.6 Ministry of Justice statistics published on 10th March 2016 indicate an increase of 47% in the number of social security appeals from October to December 2015 compared to the same period in 2014. The same statistics reveal PIP appeals is now the largest appeal jurisdiction accounting for 39 per cent of all appeals.

6.0 INVERCLYDE

6.1 There are approximately 3,700 working age DLA claimants in Inverclyde who will be reassessed for PIP. The first set of DLA to PIP reassessment statistics was published by DWP in December 2015. The statistics fail to provide case load numbers but do provide percentage breakdowns of outcomes for completed reassessments.

6.2 The figures for Inverclyde show 32% of those reassessed had lost all entitlement to disability benefit. No breakdown is provided for the 68% securing an award to indicate if the award of PIP was a reduced award compared to that previously received under DLA.
(PIP: Registrations, Clearances and Awards to October 2015, DWP 16/12/15).

6.3 Almost 40% of all enquiries to Inverclyde HSCP Advice First were in relation to sickness and disability related benefits such as Personal Independence Payments/Disability Living Allowance.

6.4 In the year April 1st 2015 to March 31st 2016, Advice Services provided advice on PIP entitlement for 343 clients, assistance to challenge PIP decisions for 239 clients, and provided representation at PIP appeals for 81 clients securing entitlement of £643,704 in the process.

- 6.5 Within Inverclyde, adverse PIP decisions which are progressed to appeal and are represented by Inverclyde HSCP Welfare Rights, have a 73% success at this appeal stage. This is indicative of both poor DWP decision making at the assessment stage and the effectiveness of HSCP Welfare Rights representation at the Tribunal Hearing. For comparison, the national figure for appeals found in favour of the claimant stands at 61%.
(Ministry of Justice, Tribunal Statistics Quarterly Oct – Dec 2015, published 10/3/16)

- 6.6 Of particular concern for Inverclyde residents is that PIP assessments are most often held in Glasgow. This in spite of DWP facilities at Duff Street in Greenock being suitable for assessment. The required journey to Glasgow involving in excess of one hour's travel can exhaust claimants impairing their ability to participate in the assessment effectively.

7.0 EMERGING ISSUES

- 7.1 The impact of welfare changes such as the introduction of PIP has to be set in the context of an individual's life circumstances. For example, a claimant's ability to navigate the benefits system depends on their health at that point of time. Health is a primary focus and determinant of well-being that can constrain a claimant's ability to tackle the process of applying for benefits and can pose a significant barrier to tackling the complexity of the benefits system. This may well be at a point where an individual has few material resources to fall back on, and at the same time as struggling to make ends meet due to the high costs imposed by ill-health and/ or disability. This means that even temporary delay or loss of benefit can have a substantial negative impact.
- 7.2 Inverclyde Council, in common with other local authorities, means-tests for social care to take account of a client contribution that includes an element of DLA/PIP. If service users lose entitlement to DLA/PIP the contribution towards the costs of social care from DLA/PIP is also lost. It is also possible that the cumulative effect of the loss of an award of DLA/PIP and associated passport entitlements could leave an individual less able to meet the costs of their basic needs, leave the individual potentially housebound and consequently unable to work, socialise and struggle to attend to the requirements of day to day living. It is likely in such a set of circumstances that for some disabled people the dependency on eligibility for, and access to social care will substantially increase at the same time as the client contribution towards the cost of care is reduced.
- 7.3 Receipt of PIP Daily Living Component is a core qualifying criterion in allowing for a carer to receive Carers Allowance. This is awarded in respect of care provided by the carer to the disabled person claiming PIP. If PIP entitlement is lost and as a consequence carers are rendered ineligible for Carers Allowance this could result in a significant financial burden on social care services as many carers would no longer be able to continue to provide unpaid social care, transferring the burden to the HSCP.
- 7.4 Powers over benefits for disabled people and carers are devolved to the Scottish Parliament and it is likely that the Social Security Bill will be introduced over the coming years. Given the complexities and practicalities of the issues involved, benefits such as PIP will probably continue to exist in broadly their current form for a number of years. Consideration should be given as to how existing eligibility can be improved and how assessment should better reflect the needs of disabled people and the impact of their disability or health condition on day to day living. There is the potential to better align the ill-health, disability and carers benefits with other devolved services, especially in the health and social care field.
(Creating A Fairer Scotland. A New Future For Social Security In Scotland. Scottish Government – March 2016.)

8.0 MITIGATION RESPONSES

- 8.1 In order to best support members of the community, a range of activities have commenced in addition to the welfare benefits appeals and representation already in place. This includes establishment of data sharing protocols; in-depth analysis of cases; and on-going research to capture and reflect the consequences of loss of disability benefit on individual claimants to inform future policy development.

9.0 ADVICE AND REPRESENTATION

- 9.1 A number of organisations within Inverclyde provide direct support to clients who are applying for PIP or migrating from DLA to PIP. The HSCP Advice Services team provides a comprehensive support package from initial enquiry through to advice including completion of forms and also representation at appeal if required. Riverclyde homes, Inverclyde Council on Disability and Financial Fitness all provide welfare benefits advice and in addition ICOD are funded by Inverclyde Council to support vulnerable people at their assessments if required. The latest Impact of Welfare Reform in Scotland Tracking Study Sweep 4 - June 2016 highlights the importance of practical and moral support in navigating the benefits system.

10.0 DATA SHARING PROTOCOL

- 10.1 HSCP Advice Services and Inverclyde Council Revenue and Benefits Service have entered into a formal data sharing agreement in relation to information received by Revenue and Benefits from DWP of outcome decisions following reassessment of DLA to PIP cases. This data sharing agreement allows the HSCP Advice Service to be proactive in offering support to those affected by the DLA to PIP reassessment process in challenging adverse decision and exploring avenues of income maximisation to mitigate the impacts of the reassessment process as far as possible.

11.0 DETAILED ANALYSIS

- 11.1 Details of the first set of outcome cases were passed to HSCP Advice Services in March. This has allowed for analysis of outcomes and by extrapolating from the most up to date DLA Claimant Count for Inverclyde (August 2015) use the DWP Tabulation Tool to project possible future impacts of the reassessment process. The analysis focused on detailed outcomes for 59 claimants going through the DLA to PIP reassessment process during the four months from January to April of this year. Results after April were not included due to restrictions in the data shared by Revenue and Benefits Service from this point that now only covers those cases where income loss has occurred as a result of the reassessment process.

Results:

- Before reassessment the total weekly DLA received by the 59 claimants was £4,962.
- After reassessment the total weekly PIP received by the 59 claimants was £2,174.
- Weekly income lost as a result of the reassessment process for the 59 claimants was £2,788 (57% of their collective entitlement to Disability Benefit).

Consideration of outcomes by individual component type in addition to overall outcomes has allowed for a more detailed analysis. A further longitudinal analysis will be conducted later in the year to track the claimant experience of the reassessment process allowing for

consideration of more comprehensive data including the outcome of challenges to DWP decisions by way of appeal.

Projections:

- By the end of 2017 the expectation from DWP is that all 3,700 working age DLA claimants living in Inverclyde will be reassessed for PIP.
- The total weekly DLA received by working age claimants in Inverclyde in August 2015 was £305,000.
- If the early outcomes are indicative, the total loss to Inverclyde will be in the region of £174,000 a week, or £9,152,000 per annum.

Considerations:

It should be noted the above projections take no account of the loss of associated premiums and other passported entitlements awarded as a result of disability benefit than can often be of greater monetary value than the actual award of DLA/PIP itself.

- The projected loss of PIP standard rate care for existing DLA claimants means claims to Carers Allowance will no longer be applicable;
- The projected loss of PIP enhanced rate mobility for existing DLA claimants excludes applications to the Motability Scheme and loss of any current Motability vehicle;
- The projected loss of PIP mobility at any rate for existing DLA low rate mobility claimants will primarily fall on those whose current DLA low rate mobility entitlement is predicated on mental ill-health problems.

12.0 INVERCLYDE PIP MONITORING INFORMATION

12.1 In order to determine an Inverclyde wide perspective on DLA to PIP demand on services, HSCP Advice Services; Riverclyde homes, Inverclyde Council on Disability and Financial Fitness have agreed to collate on a monthly basis the numbers of clients seeking advice and support (appendix 1). The first return for all these organisations is still in the process of collation however, the return from HSCP Advice Service for the period December 1st 2015 to May 31st 2016 shows:

- 179 advice interventions relating to questions of PIP entitlement;
- 142 advice interventions dealing with PIP decision making disputes;
- 42 PIP Appeal Hearings with Welfare Rights representation; and
- 77% of Appeal Hearing outcomes found in favour of the client.

13.0 INVERCLYDE PIP CLAIMANT EXPERIENCE QUESTIONNAIRE

13.1 In order to inform future redesign of PIP or proposals as to the possible shape of devolved disability benefits, Inverclyde Financial Inclusion Partnership has developed a PIP monitoring questionnaire covering claimant experience of the claims, assessment and decision making process. Claimant experience should be central to establishing if the current provision of disability benefit and assessment treats claimants fairly and with dignity or if it falls short. As part of Inverclyde Council's funding arrangements, partner organisations have entered into formal service level agreements that include provision to make comprehensive use of the monitoring return. This will help ensure that the impacts of PIP on claimants in Inverclyde can

be captured and reflected upon and perhaps form the basis for disabled claimants being directly involved in the co-production of the future design of devolved disability benefits in Scotland. Due to the long term timescale from initial application to appeal, the initial returns will be collated over the summer allowing for further analysis of the impact of the introduction of PIP and reassessment of existing DLA claimants in Inverclyde in the autumn. (appendix 2)

14.0 IMPLICATIONS

14.1 FINANCE

Financial Implications:

One off Costs

Cost Centre	Budget Heading	Budget Years	Proposed Spend this Report £000	Virement From	Other Comments

Annually Recurring Costs/ (Savings)

Cost Centre	Budget Heading	With Effect from	Annual Net Impact £000	Virement From (If Applicable)	Other Comments

14.2 LEGAL

There are/are no legal issues within this report.

14.3 HUMAN RESOURCES

There are/are no human resources issues within this report.

14.4 EQUALITIES

Disabled people are one of the protected characteristic groups under the national Equality legislation

Has an Equality Impact Assessment been carried out?

YES (see attached appendix)

NO – This report does not introduce a new policy, function or strategy or recommend a change to an existing policy, function or strategy. Therefore, no Equality Impact Assessment is required.

14.5 REPOPULATION

There are/are no repopulation issues within this report.

15.0 CONSULTATION

15.1 This report has been prepared by the Chief Officer, Inverclyde Health and Social Care Partnership (HSCP) after due consultation with officers from the Inverclyde Financial Inclusion Partnership and HSCP Advice Service.