

CRWIA front sheet	
Policy/measure A general description of the policy/measure	<p>A Connected Scotland: Our national strategy for tackling social isolation and loneliness and building stronger social connections.</p>
Project initiation document Add link to the document	<p>A Connected Scotland: our national strategy for tackling social isolation and loneliness and building stronger social connections.</p> <p>https://www.gov.scot/binaries/content/documents/govscot/publications/publication/2018/12/connected-scotland-strategy-tackling-social-isolation-loneliness-building-stronger-social-connections/documents/00544263-pdf/00544263-pdf/govscot%3Adocument</p>
Initiating department The responsible team or division. If this is a cross-cutting policy, name the team that has overall responsibility	<p>Directorate for Local Government and Communities: Equality, Human Rights and Third sector: Equality Unit</p>
Policy aims What the policy or measure is trying to achieve; what are the expected outcomes	<p>A Connected Scotland is the Scottish Government’s first national strategy for tackling social isolation and loneliness and building stronger social connections in Scotland. The strategy is the first step in work towards a vision of a Scotland where individuals and communities are more connected, and everyone has the opportunity to develop meaningful relationships regardless of age, status, circumstances or identity.</p> <p>It includes ambitions and actions that cut across a wide range of policy areas, including: community empowerment and public service reform; building cohesive communities; investing resources; reducing stigma; addressing inequalities; promoting health and wellbeing; working with business; promoting the third sector and volunteering; encouraging intergenerational dialogue; promoting Scotland’s culture and heritage and improving infrastructure that underpins our ability to connect with others.</p>
Timetable What is the time frame for a policy announcement/consultation/	<p>Following the engagement process from January 2018 – April 2018, the final strategy was published 18 December 2018.</p> <p>In recognising the importance of a long-term approach, the strategy will run from 2018-2026.</p>

implementation?	
Date	14 February 2019
Signature	Bronach Hughes

**CRWIA Stage 1
Screening - key questions**

1. What aspects of the policy/measure will affect children and young people up to the age of 18?

All actions within the strategy that aim to tackle loneliness and social isolation within communities generally can have an impact on children and young people 0-18. The strategy is relevant to the overarching principle of improving the wellbeing of children and young people captured by the Children and Young People (Scotland) 2014.

2. What likely impact - direct or indirect - will the policy/measure have on children and young people?

The policy will impact on children and young people both directly and indirectly, through poverty reduction initiatives, transport changes and third sector support. Children and young people will be amongst the key groups to benefit from any actions or changes that would be made under this new strategy.

Directly, we hope to positively impact young people through connecting with existing work in other policy areas such as education and child health and wellbeing.

3. Are there particular groups of children and young people who are more likely to be affected than others?

Social isolation and loneliness can affect any member of society, however those going through life transitions or with protected characteristics are recognised as more at risk of being affected by these issues. We anticipate that children and young people with disabilities, LGBTI children, children in rural areas, children in care or care experienced children and children living in poverty will benefit the most from this policy.

4. Who else have you involved in your deliberations? Have you included all policy leads who may have an interest in these developments?

We have undertaken consultation with relevant bodies representing children and young people, including Young Scot and Youth Link. We ensured there are relevant stakeholders present at formal engagement events and we continue to seek input from relevant policy leads in Children and Families. A representative of Youth Link will sit on the National Implementation Group.

5. Will this require a CRWIA?

Yes

CRWIA Declaration

CRWIA required

CRWIA not required

X

Authorisation

Policy lead Trevor Owen Bronach Hughes	Date 14 February 2019
Deputy Director or equivalent Lisa Bird, Deputy Director, Equalities, Human Rights & Third Sector	Date 14 February 2019

CRWIA Stage 2

Scoping - key questions

1. What children's rights are likely to be affected by the policy/measure?

Article 1 defines a child as anyone under the age of 18.

Note that the Scottish Government prefers to use the term 'children and young people'.

The main articles which the Social Isolation and Loneliness strategy will impact on are noted below,

Article 2 (non-discrimination): The Convention applies to every child without discrimination, whatever their ethnicity, gender, religion, language, abilities or any other status, whatever they think or say, whatever their family background.

Article 3 (best interests of the child): The best interests of the child must be a top priority in all decisions and actions that affect children.

Article 4 (implementation of the Convention): Governments must do all they can to make sure every child can enjoy their rights by creating systems and passing laws that promote and protect children's rights.

Article 6 (life, survival and development): Every child has the right to life. Governments must do all they can to ensure that children survive and develop to their full potential.

Article 12 (respect for the views of the child): Every child has the right to express their views, feelings and wishes in all matters affecting them, and to have their views considered and taken seriously. This right applies at all times, for example during immigration proceedings, housing decisions or the child's day-to-day home life.

Article 18 (parental responsibilities and state assistance): Both parents share responsibility for bringing up their child and should always consider what is best for the child. Governments must support parents by creating support services for children and giving parents the help they need to raise their children.

Article 23 (children with a disability): A child with a disability has the right to live a full and decent life with dignity and, as far as possible, independence and to play an active part in the community. Governments must do all they can to support disabled children and their families.

Article 27(4) (Adequate standard of living) Governments should take all appropriate measures to recover child maintenance from parents or others who have financial responsibility for the child.

Article 31 (Leisure, play and culture) Every child has a right to rest and leisure, to engage in play and recreational activities, and to take part in a range of cultural and artistic activities.

2. How will the policy/measure affect children's wellbeing as defined by the wellbeing indicators?

The strategy to tackle social isolation and loneliness will mostly impact the following wellbeing indicators:

- **Healthy** – by promoting good physical and mental health, the strategy will help children and

young people to participate fully in their communities

- **Achieving** – by empowering local communities, children will be able to develop skills, confidence and self-esteem, at home, in school and in the community.
- **Nurtured** – by tackling poverty and inequality, the strategy contributes to the government’s aim of creating a nurturing place to live in
- **Active** – by supporting opportunities to take part in activities such as play, recreation and sport, the strategy will contribute to healthy growth and development, at home, in school and in the community.
- **Responsible** – by generating local opportunities and encouragement to play active and responsible roles at home, in school and in the community, and where necessary, having appropriate guidance and supervision, children and young people will feel part of the communities they live in.
- **Included** – by helping to overcome social, education, physical and economic inequalities, the strategy contributes to including children and young people as part of the community in which they live and learn.

3. How many children and young people are likely to be affected by the policy or measure?

The Under 18 population for Scotland as a total is 1,042,597 (19.68%).

<http://www.scotlandscensus.gov.uk/census-results>

Children and young people in every local authority will be impacted by these changes, though the impact will be greater for those with disabilities, LGBTI children and young people, children in rural areas, children in care or care experienced children, children for whom English is not their first language and children living in poverty will benefit the most from this policy.

Disabled children: In the Scottish Health Survey 2016, almost one in six (16%) children (aged 0 to 15) had at least one long-term health condition.

LGBTI: In 2016, younger people were more likely to identify as LGBT or Other. 4.4% of people aged 16 to 24 identified as being LGB or Other ([Scottish Surveys Core Questions 2016](#))

Children and young people living in rural areas: In contrast and despite average levels of children (0-16) living in rural Scotland, the number of young people (aged 16-34) is substantially lower than in urban Scotland. Around 18% of the population in remote rural areas and 20% of accessible rural areas are aged 16-34 compared with 26% for the rest of Scotland (Review of Equality Evidence in Rural Scotland, 2015)

Children in care: At 31 July 2017, there were 14,897 looked after children - a decrease of 3% from 2016 according to the NRS (Scottish Government Equality Evidence Finder, April 2018).

Children for whom English is not their first language: The last census showed that 310,676 people, around 5%, over the age of three spoke another language other than English in the home. More precise data for languages spoken by those under the 18 is not available.

<http://www.scotlandscensus.gov.uk/census-results>.

Children and young people living in poverty: After housing costs, it is estimated that 24% of children, or 230,000 children each year, were in relative poverty (Poverty & Income Inequality in Scotland: 2014-17)

Although exact data is not available, it is expected that the strategy will also impact on children and young people of different ethnic groups.

4. What research evidence is available?

There is limited evidence on children and young people and loneliness, and most of the existing evidence comes from an evidence review carried out by NHS Scotland as well as surveys run by

relevant stakeholders such as Young Scot or the Mental Health Foundation.

According to NHS Scotland, social isolation among children often emerges in the context of peer and friendship relationships. Survey data from Scotland (HBSC) found that, in 2014, for children aged 11–15:

- 57% reported high perceived peer support
- 62% had high perceived classmate support (declined since 2002)
- 88% (of 13 and 15 year olds only) found it easy to talk with their best friend about things that bothered them (reduced over time)
- 62% reported high family support.

Proportions for peer, classmate and family support were lowest among the older children. This suggests a significant minority of children have poor peer support and that this is more of a problem among older children. Similarly, a significant minority of children are vulnerable to social isolation because of poor peer support or bullying (**Health Behaviours in School Age Children, 2014**)

In Scotland, girls appear to be more likely to have high peer support and find it easier to talk to friends about problems, while boys may feel more accepted by their peers for who they are. However, the highest rates for being bullied are for girls aged 13. Rates of being bullied have increased, particularly for girls, since 2010 (NHS Scotland, 2017)

Data from UK surveys also found that children from ethnic minority groups are at increased risk of being bullied and socially isolated (NHS Scotland, 2017).

Scottish surveys found that, in 2012, over half (52%) of lesbian, gay and bisexual young people experienced homophobic bullying behaviour in Scotland's schools, rising to over three quarters (77%) among young people who identified as transgender (NHS Scotland, 2017).

We have introduced a new question on loneliness in the Scottish Household Survey that will allow us to obtain evidence to be analysed by sub-groups.

5. Has there been any public or stakeholder consultations on the policy/measure?

We have engaged extensively with stakeholders and no concerns have been raised regarding any potential negative impacts on children.

A public consultation on the draft strategy was conducted between January and April 2018, giving stakeholders further space to raise any concerns and none were raised. We will continue to monitor the impact of this policy on children and young people during implementation. The consultation was complemented by 17 public engagement events giving members of the public and local organisations the chance to influence the direction of the strategy.

After public consultation closed and responses analysed, further roundtables of public sector and funder organisations and third sector organisations were convened to gather final input prior to completion of the final strategy.

6. Has there been any estimate of the resource implications of the policy/measure?

No formal estimate has yet been produced, however, we will work with policy leads in other areas to determine any resource implications associated with actions targeted at children and young people.

CRWIA Stage 3

Data Collection, Evidence Gathering, Involvement of/Consultation with Stakeholder Groups - key questions

1. What does the evidence tell you?

There is limited evidence on children and young people and loneliness, and most of the existing evidence comes from an evidence review carried out by NHS Scotland as well as, surveys run by relevant stakeholders such as Young Scot or the Mental Health Foundation.

According to NHS Scotland, social isolation among children often emerges in the context of peer and friendship relationships. Survey data from Scotland (HBSC) found that, in 2014, for children aged 11–15:

- 57% reported high perceived peer support
- 62% had high perceived classmate support (declined since 2002)
- 88% (of 13 and 15 year olds only) found it easy to talk with their best friend about things that bothered them (reduced over time)
- 62% reported high family support.

Proportions for peer, classmate and family support were lowest among the older children. This suggests a significant minority of children have poor peer support and that this is more of a problem among older children. Similarly, a significant minority of children are vulnerable to social isolation because of poor peer support or bullying (**Health Behaviours in School Age Children, 2014**)

In Scotland, girls appear to be more likely to have high peer support and find it easier to talk to friends about problems, while boys may feel more accepted by their peers for who they are. However, the highest rates for being bullied are for girls aged 13. Rates of being bullied have increased, particularly for girls, since 2010 (NHS Scotland, 2017)

Data from UK surveys also found that children from ethnic minority groups are at increased risk of being bullied and socially isolated (NHS Scotland, 2017).

Scottish surveys found that, in 2012, over half (52%) of lesbian, gay and bisexual young people experienced homophobic bullying behaviour in Scotland's schools, rising to over three quarters (77%) among young people who identified as transgender (NHS Scotland, 2017).

Figures from Childline revealed that last year there were 295,202 counselling sessions (2016-17), of which 4,063 were about loneliness. The majority of the sessions concerning loneliness (73%) were with girls

We have introduced a new question on loneliness in the Scottish Household Survey that will allow us to obtain evidence to be analysed by sub-groups.

2. What further data or evidence is required?

There is very limited information on loneliness and children and young people. The Scottish Government has included a new question on loneliness in the Scottish Household Survey to gather evidence on the scale and nature of the issue in Scotland.

3. Has there been any consultation on the development of the proposal(s)?

We have engaged extensively with stakeholders and no concerns have been raised regarding any potential negative impacts on children.

A public consultation on the draft strategy was conducted between January and April 2018, giving stakeholders further space to raise any concerns and none were raised. We will continue to monitor the impact of this policy on children and young people during implementation. The consultation was complemented by 17 public engagement events giving members of the public and local organisations the possibility of influencing the direction of our strategy.

4. Should children and young people be further involved in the development of this policy? Are there particular groups of children and young people whose views should be sought?

Children and young people are involved in policy development through our stakeholders. One of our stakeholders, Young Scot, is currently running a project that will see 50 young people engage with their peers at school level to identify their views on loneliness and develop resources to overcome it.

Our partners delivering changes as a result of this policy will be required to take account of particular needs, abilities, characteristics and circumstances of different service users, and they can decide to further involve children and young people if necessary.

5. Should other stakeholders and experts be further involved in the development of this policy?

Stakeholders were encouraged to submit responses to the consultation and continued to be engaged with during the process of developing the final strategy.

As we progress to implementation, a representative for Youth Link will sit on the National Implementation Group.

CRWIA Stage 4

Assessing the Impact and Presenting Options - key questions

1. What likely impact will the policy have on children's rights?

The strategy as a whole has the potential to have a particularly positive impact on children's rights. It is important that any changes derived from the strategy are implemented consistently across Scotland, otherwise it may be possible that implementation is inconsistent and some children have access to improved services and others do not. We will work with our partners, and particularly COSLA, to prevent this from occurring.

2 How will the policy/measure contribute to the wellbeing of children and young people?

Section 96(2) of Children and Young People (Scotland) Act lists the eight wellbeing indicators, sometimes referred to by the acronym SHANARRI as described above in stage 2.

- **Healthy** – by promoting good physical and mental health, the strategy will help children and young people to participate fully in their communities
- **Achieving** – by empowering local communities, children will be able to develop skills, confidence and self-esteem, at home, in school and in the community.
- **Nurtured** – by tackling poverty and inequality, the strategy contributes to the government's aim of creating a nurturing place to live in
- **Active** – by supporting opportunities to take part in activities such as play, recreation and sport, the strategy will contribute to healthy growth and development, at home, in school and in the community.
- **Responsible** – by generating local opportunities and encouragement to play active and responsible roles at home, in school and in the community, and where necessary, having appropriate guidance and supervision, children and young people will feel part of the communities they live in.
- **Included** – by helping to overcome social, education, physical and economic inequalities, the strategy contributes to including children and young people as part of the community in which they live and learn.

Children and young people will benefit from a range of actions contained in the strategy, particularly in stigma reduction, poverty reduction, health promotion, intergenerational practices, and transport.

3. Are some children and young people more likely to be affected than others?

Yes, as indicated in 1.3 of this impact assessment.

4. Resource implications of policy modification or mitigation

No formal estimate has yet been produced, however, we will work with policy leads in other areas to determine any resource implications associated with actions targeted at children and young people.

5. How does the policy/measure promote or impede the implementation of the UNCRC and other relevant human rights standards?

The strategy as a whole will promote the implementation of the UNCRC by improving children and young people's rights in Scotland as per the articles listed in 2.1 of this impact assessment.

CRWIA Stage 5

Recommendations, Monitoring and Review - key points

1. Record your overall conclusions from the CRWIA

The Scottish Government considers that the strategy to tackle social isolation and loneliness will have a positive impact on children and young people by bringing together a range of policy areas across Government to tackle social isolation and loneliness in a strategic way, and creating the conditions for building stronger social connections across Scotland.

2. Recommendations

As a result of this CRWIA, it is concluded that the Scottish Government should proceed with the implementation of the final strategy to tackle social isolation and loneliness.

The strategy will focus the Scottish Government's efforts across a range of policy areas including health, transport and community empowerment to improve the wellbeing of children and young people as defined in the Children and Young People (Scotland) 2014 Act.

The strategy is compatible with, and complementary to, the intentions of the UNCRC and meets the recommendations outlined.

3. How will the policy/measure be monitored? Date and agreed process for monitoring and review

In reflection of the cross-sectoral approach required for a successful strategy, the National Implementation Group will convene to co-produce a shared delivery plan and performance framework for the strategy.

Progress will be reported on every two years over the strategy's life time - 2020, 2022 and 2024.

Over this time, further data will be available from the new question on loneliness being added to the Scottish Household Survey, first data from which will be available in September 2019.

4. Date and agreed process for Child Rights and Wellbeing Impact Evaluation

As part of wider work to monitor progress between now and 2026, we will consider the timing and process for evaluation of the Child Rights and Wellbeing Impact.