**North Lanarkshire Council**

**Period Products (Free Provision) Scotland Act 2021**

**Statement on Exercise of Functions**

1. **Introduction**

The Period Products (Free Provision) (Scotland) Act 2021 was passed by the Scottish Parliament on 24th November 2020 and gained royal assent on 12th January 2021. The Act requires local authorities as a responsible body to provide period products free of charge to anyone who needs them, by making products reasonably easy to obtain.

Additionally, as a responsible body – this should be done mindful of respecting dignity and by offering a reasonable choice of types of period products.

Local Authorities are required to produce a Statement on Exercise of Functions to summarise the arrangements that will be put in place to meet the duty, which includes carrying out one or more public consultations.

This statement has been produced in accordance with our statutory duties and outlines North Lanarkshire Council’s commitment to free product provision and details current and future provision within education establishments and the wider community.

1. **Our commitment**

North Lanarkshire Council is committed to providing free period products for those who need them. Our approach involves children and young people having access to products within their school setting and for residents and visitors through a network of local access points within public buildings and community facilities within North Lanarkshire.

Individuals unable to attend a local access point can contact the council so that alternative arrangements can made, which may include postal deliver or deliver by our local community partner organisations. Funding has been made available by the Scottish government to enable this.

In providing this free service, it is our aim to ensure that:

• A range of period products, including single use items and re-usable environmentally

friendly products are available to those who need them via all secondary schools and a

network of local access points

• Our local access network is kept under review and developed further where appropriate. It

is our commitment to do this in conjunction with community planning partners and third

sector organisations, mindful of geographically gaps in provision and also of the 20-minute

neighbourhood model

• Barriers to access are minimised and removed and that people can access products with

dignity and without stigma

• Consideration is given to additional support for those who may require it

• Product demand is regularly monitored so that public buildings and community facilities

do not run out of stock

• Residents and visitors are aware of our free provision. This will involve a range of

advertising and promotional campaigns. Information will also be available on the council

website; through social media platforms and through other communications such as

posters and informational flyers.

• Regular feedback is sought from service users so that improvements can be identified

• Public consultations and community engagement is carried out to inform our provision

1. **Public Consultation**

The North Lanarkshire public consultation took the form of an online questionnaire. This was launched in March 2022 and ran until the end of July 2022.

The survey was designed to capture the views of the general public with a particular focus on views from those currently using sanitary products; those who will use sanitary products in the future and those who may collect sanitary products on behalf of others.

The consultation covered the following broad themes:

• General awareness of the availability of free period products and advertising campaigns

• Types of products currently used and views on

• Accessing environmentally friendly products

• Locations of access points used and suggestions for new sites

• Availability of products and views on service received at access points

The survey was completed by 288 people and the findings from the consultation will be used to inform the provision within North Lanarkshire.

Full details of the findings are contained within the 2022 update report which can be accessed on our website.

1. **Community Based Provision**

North Lanarkshire Council has developed a large network of community access points. The access points are in all 9 towns and many local communities within public buildings, and community facilities. To date we have 90 local access points throughout North Lanarkshire which we will continue to monitor, review, grow and update accordingly. The access points have been established in public buildings and community facilities.

North Lanarkshire Council have also partnered with five local community anchor organisations who will provide local services within a cluster of priority communities. This also includes a fast free local delivery service for those who cannot attend our centres and access to environmentally friendly period products.

Local food banks and organisations providing emergency food aid are also part of our network and on request can provide products to vulnerable individuals and families.

Additionally, residents can contact the council directly by email to request products. In doing so the quickest method of delivery will be selected.

Products available within our community access points include single use pads (with and without wings, regular, super and long) and tampons (regular and super) the various sizes/ absorbencies provided allow us to accommodate individual needs and preferences. The type of products available will be regularly reviewed to meet the needs and wants of the community. Environmentally friendly products are available on request.

Products are available for collection by anyone who needs them, or by anyone collecting on behalf of another person. Products will normally be available within toilet facilities of a building, unless otherwise stated. Those who wish to access products can do so without having to ask a member of staff and in a way that respects their dignity. A person may access as many products as required.

Information on stocked venues can be accessed via the PickUpMyPeriod App and North Lanarkshire Council Directory website. This allows users to enter a postcode or location to see where free period products are available in their area.

1. **Provision within Education**

North Lanarkshire Council provide free products in all secondary school establishments and on request will be made available to primary schools.

Products will be available in a way which respects the dignity of the pupil and can be accessed without having to ask a teacher.

Products will be available during term time in at least one part of the school, normally the toilet facilities or from the school reception. Some schools may have products available in multiple locations.

North Lanarkshire Council will provide ongoing support to its education establishments to ensure every pupil who requires products is able to obtain them easily.

1. **Communication**

Information on our free period product initiative is available on the North Lanarkshire Council website. Details are provided on how, where and when people can obtain free products via our own easy to use app and also the official Period Products Locator app.

Enquiries can also be submitted at any time and will dealt with by our Community Partnership Team.

It is our intention to regularly promote and raise awareness of the free access to period products. This will involve advertising and marketing campaigns using digital and traditional methods. Information posters are also posted on notice and information boards in all of our public buildings and community facilities.

1. **Future Provision and Improvements**

North Lanarkshire Council recognises the importance of securing period dignity for all and will commit to using intelligence from our consultation work as well as other feedback from partners and stakeholders, to continue to develop our approach to providing free period products within North Lanarkshire.

From our recent consultation and engagement work a number of key developments are currently underway. Completion of which will assist with a further targeted expansion and the implementation of improvements aimed to improve processes, service deliver and the overall offer for residents and visitors. Further details are provided within the 2022 update report which can be accessed on our website.

1. **Further information**

Additional information can be found on the NLC website

<https://www.northlanarkshire.gov.uk/your-community/working-communities/free-period-products>

The NLC interactive mapping tool can be accessed using the following link: <https://www.northlanarkshire.gov.uk/directories/free-period-products-locations>

Scottish Government ‘Pick up my period’ app enables individuals to put in a town, city or post code and find out where to access products

<https://apps.apple.com/gb/app/pickupmyperiod/id1500403938>

<https://play.google.com/store/apps/details?id=com.myperiodapp>

<https://myperiodlive.azurewebsites.net/Dashboard>