

Anti-Poverty and Inequality Committee

ABERDEEN, 20 March 2024. Minute of Meeting of the ANTI-POVERTY AND INEQUALITY COMMITTEE. Present:- Councillor Bouse, Vice-Convenor in the Chair; and Councillors Allard, Brooks, Davidson, Hutchison, Kusznr, Radley (as substitute for Councillor Mennie), Tissera and Watson.

External Advisers: - Dr John Bone (University of Aberdeen) and Phil Mackie (NHS Grampian).

The agenda and reports associated with this minute can be located [here](#).

Please note that if any changes are made to this minute at the point of approval, these will be outlined in the subsequent minute and this document will not be retrospectively altered.

URGENT BUSINESS

1. There was no Urgent Business.

EXEMPT BUSINESS

2. There was no Exempt Business.

DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST OR TRANSPARENCY STATEMENTS

3. Members were requested to intimate any Declarations of Interest or Transparency Statements in respect of the items on the agenda.

The Committee resolved:-

- (i) to note that Councillor Brooks advised that he had a connection in relation to agenda item 9.2 (Fairer Aberdeen Fund Annual Report) as he was founder and Chairman of the TLC Charity which was part of the Trussell Trust family of food banks however, having applied the objective test he did not consider that his connection amounted to an interest which would prevent him from participating in the discussion on the item;
- (ii) to note that Councillor Kusznr advised that he had a connection in relation to agenda item 9.2 as he was a Board Member of Aberdeen Citizens Advice Bureau however, having applied the objective test he did not consider that his connection amounted to an interest which would prevent him from participating in the discussion on the item;
- (iii) to note that Councillor Allard advised that he had a connection in relation to agenda items 9.1 (Six monthly update on the Memorandum of Understanding with the Department of Work and Pensions) and 9.2 as he was a European Economic Area national and a Board Member of Fairer Aberdeen respectively, however, having applied the objective test he did not consider that his

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- connection amounted to an interest which would prevent him from participating in the discussion on the items; and
- (iv) to note that Dr Bone advised that he had a connection in relation to agenda item 9.2 as he was a Board member of CFINE however, having applied the objective test he did not consider that his connection amounted to an interest which would prevent him from participating in the discussion on the item.

DEPUTATIONS

4. There were no deputations.

MINUTE OF PREVIOUS MEETING OF 31 JANUARY 2024

5. The Committee had before it the minute of the previous meeting of 31 January 2024.

The Committee resolved:-

to approve the minute.

COMMITTEE BUSINESS PLANNER

6. The Committee had before it the planner of committee business, as prepared by the Interim Chief Officer – Governance (Assurance).

The Committee resolved:-

- (i) to note that the External advisors would participate in the creation of the criteria for allocating funding as well as recommendations for the allocation of £1million to mitigate against the ongoing cost of living crisis and contribute to alleviating poverty in the city and that suggestions from members would be welcome;
- (ii) to instruct the Executive Director - Corporate Services, to issue a Service Update on the potential criteria to be considered in order to make recommendations for the allocation of the £1million funding outlined at line 13; and
- (iii) to otherwise note the Planner.

NOTICE OF MOTION

7. The Committee had before it a Notice of Motion from Councillor Kuszniir in the following terms:-

“That the Committee:

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Notes the Scottish Women's Budget Group 'Policy Briefing: Childcare Survey 2023'.

Considers that the cost of childcare, its availability and accessibility can be factors in accentuating or leading to poverty, especially for those with children who have Additional Support Needs and/or single parent families.

Agrees to instruct the Chief Executive to write to the Minister for Children, Young People and Keeping the Promise:

- (i) seeking information on the financial support that will be provided to Aberdeen City Council to (a) build additional capacity and (b) pay sustainable rates to Early Learning and Childcare (ELC) providers; and
- (ii) noting the Education and Children's Services Committee Report on the National Delivery Framework for School Age Childcare and Local Delivery Plans of 20 February 2024."

The Committee resolved:-

- (i) to note the information from the Interim Executive Director - Families and Communities, with regard to the Scottish Government update and guidance in respect of Early Learning And Childcare Funding for 2024-25;
- (ii) to agree that the correspondence from the Scottish Government referred to by the Interim Executive Director be circulated to the Committee; and
- (iii) to note that Councillor Kusznr had withdrawn his Notice of Motion in light of the update by the Interim Executive Director.

SIX MONTHLY UPDATE ON THE MEMORANDUM OF UNDERSTANDING WITH THE DEPARTMENT OF WORK AND PENSIONS - CUS/24/077

8. The Committee had before it an update prepared by the Locality Inclusion Manager on work agreed through the Memorandum of Understanding signed with the Department of Work and Pensions on preventing homelessness.

The report recommended:-

that the Committee:

- (a) note the report; and
- (b) instruct the Chief Officer - Housing to liaise with the Department of Work and Pensions and update the Memorandum of Understanding in line with current priorities and submit it back to Committee for approval.

The Vice Convener in the Chair moved, seconded by Councillor Radley:-
that the Committee approve the recommendations.

Councillor Tissera, seconded by Councillor Watson, moved as an amendment:-
that the Committee:

- (1) agree the recommendations contained within the report;

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- (2) note Appendix 1 and the progress against each aspect of the MOU;
- (3) note despite the fine words agreed by ACC and the Department for Work and Pensions, homelessness is up, Child poverty is up, Drug deaths are up, Fuel poverty is up, Food poverty is up, in work poverty is up, and the common denominator in all of these deplorable facts is the unwillingness of the Scottish government to support local authorities and other agencies with proper financial support. Agree we can have all the agreements we like with the Department of Work and Pensions and other government agencies but until the SNP Scottish government get serious about tackling homelessness, drug deaths and all forms of poverty, the benefits to those most in need from the MOU will be miniscule.

On a division, there voted:- for the motion (5) – the Vice Convener in the Chair, and Councillors Allard, Davidson, Hutchison, and Radley; for the amendment (4) – Councillors Brooks, Kuszniir, Tissera and Watson.

The Committee resolved:-

to adopt the motion.

FAIRER ABERDEEN FUND ANNUAL REPORT - CUS/24/003

9. The Committee had before it the Fairer Aberdeen Fund Annual Report 2022-23. The Fairer Aberdeen Co-ordinator introduced one of the Fairer Aberdeen Board members and they both spoke to the report and introduced video presentations on five of the supported projects.

The report recommended:-

that the Committee:

- (a) note the Fairer Aberdeen Fund Annual Report for 2022-23, at Appendix 1 and the positive impact that has been made to lives of people in Aberdeen; and
- (b) instruct the Executive Director - Corporate Services, to thank all the Fairer Aberdeen Board members, funded partners, and volunteers for the work they have done and their many successes.

The Committee resolved:-

- (i) to instruct the Interim Executive Director - Families and Communities, to circulate information in respect of the Relationship Resolution project in schools;
- (ii) to instruct the Fairer Aberdeen Coordinator to include comparison of previous years' indicators in future reports;
- (iii) to agree that the video presentations be circulated to the Committee;
- (iv) to instruct the Executive Director - Corporate Services, to circulate information in respect of any funding or grants to the new Rolex store being developed on Union Street; and
- (v) to otherwise approve the recommendations.

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INTEGRATED CHILDREN'S SERVICES PLAN - ANNUAL UPDATE - CFS/24/042

10. The Committee had before the Aberdeen City Integrated Children's Services Strategic Plan Annual Report April 2023 – March 2024. The Interim Executive Director – Families and Communities, introduced the report and responded to questions from members.

The report recommended:-

that the Committee:

- (a) note the progress made in delivering the Aberdeen City Integrated Children's Services Strategic Plan and associated work to address child poverty from April 2023 to date;
- (b) note and comment on the changes evident in data sets released over the reporting period; and
- (c) delegate authority to the Interim Executive Director - Families and Communities, to submit the Annual Report, which was inclusive of the Local Child Poverty Action Report (LCPAR), to Scottish Government.

The Vice Convener in the Chair moved, seconded by Councillor Radley:-
that the Committee approve the recommendations.

Councillor Tissera, seconded by Councillor Watson, moved as an amendment:-
that the Committee:

- (1) note the progress made in delivering the Aberdeen City Integrated Children's Services Strategic Plan and associated work to address child poverty from April 2023 to date;
- (2) note the changes evident in data sets released over the reporting period to this committee excludes School violence and the causes of school violence in our Schools despite the recent EIS report which will be discussed at the next Education and Children's Services Committee; and
- (3) delegate authority to the Interim Executive Director of Families and Communities to submit the Annual Report (including a section on violence within our schools), which is inclusive of the Local Child Poverty Action Report (LCPAR), to the Scottish Government.

On a division, there voted:- for the motion (7) – the Vice Convener in the Chair; and Councillors Allard, Brooks, Davidson, Hutchison, Kuszniir and Radley; for the amendment (2) – Councillors Tissera and Watson.

The Committee resolved:-

- (i) to agree in future years that the Plan would be presented to the Anti Poverty and Inequality Committee for its input in advance of being presented to the Education and Children's Services Committee for formal approval; and
- (ii) to otherwise adopt the motion.

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REPORT ON COMMITTEE VISIT TO ABERDEEN CYRENIANS ON 31 JANUARY 2024 - CUS/24/085

11. The Committee had before it a report prepared by the Locality Inclusion Manager providing an update on the Committee visit to Aberdeen Cyrenians on 31 January 2024.

The report recommended:-

that the Committee:

- (a) note the report with information provided by Aberdeen Cyrenians; and
- (b) thank all those at Aberdeen Cyrenians, including the many staff and volunteers, who welcomed the Committee and provided an informative and interesting visit.

The Vice Convener in the Chair moved, seconded by the Councillor Radley:- that the Committee approve the recommendations.

Councillor Tissera, seconded by Councillor Watson, moved as an amendment:-

That the Committee:

- (1) Note the contents of the report; and
- (2) Agree the Anti-Poverty and Inequality Committee should recommend to the Finance and Resources Committee to provide Aberdeen Cyrenians with £250,000 out of the £1m budget allocated from the 2024/25 Budget for Anti Poverty Measures to help them and VSA deliver a fuel poverty scheme for citizens in Aberdeen who are suffering with Fuel poverty based on the Fuel Poverty Foundation principles.

On a division, there voted:- for the motion (7) – the Vice Convener in the Chair; and Councillors Allard, Brooks, Davidson, Hutchison, Kuszniir and Radley; for the amendment (2) – Councillors Tissera and Watson.

The Committee resolved:-

- (i) to instruct the Executive Director - Corporate Services, to formally write to Aberdeen Cyrenians expressing the Committee's thanks for the visit; and
- (ii) to otherwise adopt the motion.

- COUNCILLOR DESMOND BOUSE, Vice Convener.