

Anti-Poverty and Inequality Committee

ABERDEEN, 12 June 2024. Minute of Meeting of the ANTI-POVERTY AND INEQUALITY COMMITTEE. Present:- Councillor Allard, Convener; and Councillors Brooks, Davidson, Henrickson (as substitute for Councillor Bouse), Hutchison, Kuszniir, Mennie (up to article 11), Tissera, Watson and Yuill (for article 12) (as substitute for Councillor Mennie).

External Advisers: - Dr John Bone (University of Aberdeen), Sophy Green (Instant Neighbour), Phil Mackie (NHS Grampian) and Edward Obi.

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.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

1. The Convener welcomed everyone to the meeting and reminded Members that they were in the pre-election period and that the link to the Pre-election guidance on the intranet had been emailed to all Members.

The Convener advised that this was the last Anti-Poverty and Inequality Committee meeting for External Adviser Phil Mackie. The Convener thanked him for his valued contributions and advised that a report had been prepared for full Council on 3 July 2024 to approve Phil's replacement on the Committee.

The Convener paid tribute to the Locality Manager, Paul Tytler and wished him well for his retirement from the Council at the end of June. He noted that Paul had been involved in the Committee from its beginning and had been the author of many of the reports.

The Convener welcomed Michelle Crombie - Corporate Strategy and Community Planning Manager, who would be supporting the Executive Director – Corporate Services at the Committee.

URGENT BUSINESS

2. There was no Urgent Business.

DETERMINATION OF EXEMPT BUSINESS

3. There was no Exempt Business.

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DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST AND TRANSPARENCY STATEMENTS

4. 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 9.4 (Accessing Money Advice Services) as he had immediate family members who worked in Customer Services within Aberdeen City Council 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 Kuszniir advised that he had a connection in relation to agenda item 9.4 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 Watson advised that he had a connection in relation to agenda item 9.4 as he was on the Executive of Aberdeen Trades Union Council 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;
- (iv) to note that Sophy Green advised that she had a connection in relation to agenda item 9.5 (Working in Partnership for Aberdeen - Supporting People with the Cost of Living) as she was Chief Executive of Instant Neighbour however, having applied the objective test she did not consider that her connection amounted to an interest which would prevent her from participating in the discussion on the item; and
- (v) to note that Dr Bone advised that he had a connection in relation to agenda item 9.5 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.

MINUTE OF PREVIOUS MEETING OF 20 MARCH 2024

5. The Committee had before it the minute of the previous meeting of 20 March 2024.

The Committee resolved:-

to approve the minute.

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COMMITTEE BUSINESS PLANNER

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

The Committee resolved:-

to note the Planner.

FOOD POVERTY ACTION ABERDEEN ACTION PLAN - EXTERNAL ADVISERS' REPORT - CORS/24/151

7. The Committee had before it the Food Poverty Action Aberdeen Action Plan 2024 prepared by the External Advisers and Locality Manager.

The Chair of the Outcome Improvement Group introduced the Chief Executive of CFINE who spoke to the report. The Chief Executives of Instant Neighbour and CFINE responded to questions from members in respect of partnership working and the many organisations involved, food income versus food requirements and the impact of free school meals.

The report recommended:-

that the Committee:

- (a) note the Food Poverty Action Aberdeen Action Plan attached at Appendix 1 of the report; and
- (b) note the Food Poverty Action Aberdeen - Action Plan Update attached at Appendix 2 of the report.

The Convener moved, seconded by Councillor Mennie:-
that the Committee approve the recommendations.

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

- (1) agree the recommendations;
- (2) note CFINE has been mentioned 30 times within the reports and agree the SNP seem obsessed with CFINE as the only show in town, therefore instruct the Executive Director – Corporate Services to bring forward a food poverty action plan from at least one other source to compare and contrast the proposed actions contained within the report;
- (3) agree the Scottish Government's Annual Progress Report on Child Poverty is nothing short of a national scandal noting that time after time the SNP voted against Labour's right to food bill and the consequences of the SNP's actions are highlighted within Appendix 2; and
- (4) request the Corporate Strategy and Community Planning Manager to present an annual report to the committee on progress being made.

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On a division, there voted:- for the motion (5) – the Convener, and Councillors Davidson, Henrickson, Hutchison and Mennie; for the amendment (2) – Councillors Tissera and Watson; declined to vote (2) – Councillors Brooks and Kuszniir.

The Committee resolved:-

- (i) to instruct the Executive Director – Corporate Services, in conjunction with the Executive Director – Families and Communities, to provide a Service Update on the costs and potential benefits of providing free school meals to Primary 6 and Primary 7 pupils; and
- (ii) to otherwise adopt the motion.

REFRESHED LOCAL OUTCOME IMPROVEMENT PLAN 2016-2026 - CORS/24/145

8. The Committee had before it the Refreshed Local Outcome Improvement Plan for 2016-2026 prepared by the Corporate Strategy and Community Planning Manager, which had been approved by the Community Planning Aberdeen (CPA) Board on 29 April 2024.

The report recommended:-

that the Committee:

- (a) consider the LOIP presented at Appendix 1; and
- (b) consider the LOIP in conjunction with the Locality Plans at Item 9.3 which connects the LOIP to community priorities and assets.

The Convener moved, seconded by Councillor Mennie:-
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;
- (2) agree that the Anti-Poverty and Inequality Committee hinders not enhances the Local Outcome Improvement Plan and recommend to Council that the Committee should cease to exist; and
- (3) request the Executive Director - Corporate Services to present an annual report to the Communities Housing and Public Protection Committee on progress being made on the Anti-Poverty and Inequality aspects of the Local Outcome Improvement Plan prior to consideration by Council of the annual report on the LOIP.

On a division, there voted:- for the motion (5) – the Convener, and Councillors Davidson, Henrickson, Hutchison and Mennie; for the amendment (2) – Councillors Tissera and Watson; declined to vote (2) – Councillors Brooks and Kuszniir.

The Committee resolved:-

to adopt the motion.

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REFRESHED LOCALITY PLANS 2021-26: NORTH, SOUTH AND CENTRAL - CORS/24/146

9. The Committee had before it the Refreshed Locality Plans 2021-26 for North, South and Central localities which had been approved by the Community Planning Aberdeen Board on 29 April 2024. The Corporate Strategy and Community Planning Manager introduced the report and responded to questions from Members.

The report recommended:-

that the Committee:

- (a) note the Locality Plans presented at Appendices 1, 2 and 3 of the report; and
- (b) note the Locality Plans in conjunction with the refreshed Local Outcome Improvement Plan 2016- 2026 at Item 9.2 of the agenda which connected the Locality Plans to city wide priorities for improvement.

The Convener moved, seconded by Councillor Mennie:-
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;
- (2) agree that the Chief Officer bring forward to the next committee on how exactly priority 3 of support children and young people to achieve their maximum potential if the SNP get their way and St Fittick's Park becomes a developer's paradise. Also to consult with friends of St Fittick's Park as part of this process; and
- (3) agree that the Chief Officer confirm in writing why the good work of Sistema is not mentioned within the South locality plan.

At this juncture, the Legal Adviser reminded Members when debating the amendment not to stray into potentially making comments which could be considered as predetermining any Planning matters which could be considered in the future at either the Planning Development Management Committee or full Council.

On a division, there voted:- for the motion (5) – the Convener, and Councillors Davidson, Henrickson, Hutchison and Mennie; for the amendment (3) – Councillors Kusznir, Tissera and Watson; declined to vote (1) – Councillor Brooks.

The Committee resolved:-

- (i) to note that the Corporate Strategy and Community Planning Manager would include reference to Sistema within the South Locality Plan; and
- (ii) to otherwise adopt the motion.

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ACCESSING MONEY ADVICE SERVICES - CORS/24/149

10. The Committee had before it a report prepared by the Locality Manager on Accessing Money Advice Services.

The Executive Director, Corporate Services introduced the report and responded to questions from Members.

The report recommended:-

that the Committee note the recommendations at 3.12 of the report to support the development of access to money advice services in Aberdeen.

The Convener moved, seconded by Councillor Hutchison:-
that the Committee:

- (1) instruct the Executive Director – Corporate Services to bring a report to a future committee to consider with partners the provisions of other advisory services in the city; and
- (2) otherwise approve the recommendation.

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

- (1) agree the recommendation contained within the report;
- (2) agree the SNP gives a whole new meaning to dither, delay and defer given the Committee instructed a report on 30th August 2023, with the report due no later than summer 2024, noting that there are no specific recommendations contained within the report on the actual issues faced by people in poverty in relation to accessing advice services and financial services and the impact this had; on the services available in Aberdeen; on the unmet need; and no specific recommendations for council services and other organisations to address this unmet need; and
- (3) instruct the Executive Director – Corporate Services to bring a report to the next committee detailing exactly what was asked for on 30 August 2023 in order to give confidence to those who may need help in this matter.

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

The Committee resolved:-

to adopt the motion.

In terms of Standing Order 34.1, Councillor Kuszniir intimated that he would like this matter to be referred to full Council. Councillor Kuszniir was supported by Councillors Brooks, Tissera and Watson.

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WORKING IN PARTNERSHIP FOR ABERDEEN - SUPPORTING PEOPLE WITH THE COST OF LIVING - CORS/24/152

11. The Committee had before it a report prepared by the Executive Director - Corporate Services providing options for how the Council could use the allocation of £1million to address poverty in the city.

The report recommended:-

that the Committee:

- (a) approve the proposed allocation of funds as described at 3.6 of the report;
- (b) instruct the Executive Director of Corporate Services to submit the approved recommendations for allocation of funds to the Council meeting on 3rd July 2024; and
- (c) instruct the Executive Director of Corporate Services to bring an update on spend, progress, any reallocation of resources and further proposals for the balance of funding to the meeting of the Committee on 28 August 2024.

The Convener moved, seconded by Councillor Mennie:-
that the Committee approve the recommendations.

Councillor Kuszniir, seconded by Councillor Brooks moved as an amendment:-
that the Committee:

- (1) approve the proposed allocation of costs in principle and subject to confirmation by the supported organisations that they will not use any of the allocated funds to pay staff costs;
- (2) instruct the Executive Director of Corporate Services to submit the approved recommendations along with further details on the breakdown of the indicative costs for allocation of funds to the Council meeting on 3rd July 2024; and
- (3) instruct the Executive Director of Corporate Services to bring an update on spend, progress, any reallocation of resources and further proposals for the balance of funding to the meeting of the Committee on 28 August 2024.

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

- (1) note the report and agree the recommendations; 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 and to allocate Instant Neighbour £10,000 for foodbanks from the same budget.

There being a motion and two amendments, the Committee first divided between the amendment by Councillor Kuszniir and the amendment by Councillor Tissera.

On a division, there voted:-

For the amendment by Cllr Kuszniir (2) – Councillors Brooks and Kuszniir.

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For the amendment by Cllr Tissera (2) – Councillors Tissera and Watson.

Declined to vote (5) – Convener, and Councillors Davidson, Henrickson, Hutchison and Mennie.

In accordance with Standing Order 32.7, the Convener exercised his casting vote in favour of the amendment by Councillor Kuszniir.

The Committee then divided between the motion and the amendment by Councillor Kuszniir.

On a division, there voted:-

For the motion (5) – Convener, and Councillors Davidson, Henrickson, Hutchison and Mennie.

For the amendment by Councillor Kuszniir (2) - Councillors Brooks and Kuszniir.

Declined to vote (2) – Councillors Tissera and Watson.

The Committee resolved:-

- (i) to note that the Corporate Strategy and Community Planning Manager would circulate to Members the staffing costs in respect of the monies allocated; and
- (ii) to otherwise adopt the motion.

CITIZENS' ASSEMBLIES - CORS/24/150

12. The Committee had before it a report prepared by the Locality Manager presenting a proposal for delivering a citizens' assembly approach on poverty and gender inequality. The Legal Adviser spoke to the report.

The report recommended:-

that the Committee:

- (a) approve the proposal outlined in the report for delivering a citizens' assembly approach on poverty and gender inequality; and
- (d) instruct the Executive Director of Corporate Services to, in accordance with the Council's Procurement Regulations, commission the Scottish Women's Budget Group to deliver the proposal.

The Convener moved, seconded by Councillor Hutchison:-
that the Committee approve the recommendations.

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

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- (1) agree that a Citizens' Assembly is a waste of public resources given Aberdeen City Council has Aberdeen City Voice a panel of Aberdeen City residents who have agreed to give their views on a range of issues;
- (2) note the Council contacts panellists and asks them to complete at least two questionnaire surveys a year. The questionnaires cover a wide range of topics and issues that affect our community;
- (3) agree engagement with citizens should continue through Aberdeen City Voice Panel which supports a recruitment campaign to attract underrepresented groups such as those living in SIMD areas minority ethnic and young people in order to bring about positive change;
- (4) agree as part of Aberdeen City Voice there is already an Anti-Poverty Outcome Improvement Group which is responsible for actions under Stretch Outcome 1 which supports the delivery of the Local Outcome Improvement Plan and underpinning locality plans;
- (5) agree that if the SNP move forward with the Citizens' Assembly, they are undermining Community Planning Aberdeen and the volunteers from the city that partake in Aberdeen City Voice; and
- (6) agree the money being spent on bringing forward Citizens Assemblies should be diverted to Abernecessities in order for them to allocate the monies towards winter clothing for School children, noting the positive benefits of doing this regarding the objectives of the Anti-Poverty and Inequality Committee.

Councillor Kuszniir, seconded by Councillor Brooks, moved as a further amendment:-
that the Committee:

- (1) note progress on plans to facilitate Citizens' Assemblies on Poverty and Inequality;
- (2) instruct that no further work on Citizens' Assemblies is undertaken in light of the complexity, costs and risks regarding the effectiveness of Citizens' Assemblies; and
- (3) request that the Finance and Resources Committee reallocate any funds previously committed to Citizens Assemblies to increasing available crisis grants.

There being a motion and two amendments, the Committee first divided between the amendment by Councillor Tissera and the amendment by Councillor Kuszniir.

On a division, there voted:-

For the amendment by Councillor Tissera (2) – Councillors Tissera and Watson.

For the amendment by Councillor Kuszniir (2) – Councillors Brooks and Kuszniir.

Declined to vote (5) – Convener, and Councillors Davidson, Henrickson, Hutchison and Yuill.

In accordance with Standing Order 32.7, the Convener exercised his casting vote in favour of the amendment by Councillor Kuszniir.

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The Committee then divided between the motion and the amendment by Councillor Kusznr.

On a division, there voted:-

For the motion (5) – Convener, and Councillors Davidson, Henrickson, Hutchison and Yuill.

For the amendment by Councillor Kusznr (4) - Councillors Brooks, Kusznr, Tissera and Watson.

The Committee resolved:-

to adopt the motion.

- **COUNCILLOR CHRISTIAN ALLARD, Convener.**