

ABERDEEN CITY COUNCIL

COMMITTEE	Anti-Poverty and Inequality
DATE	6 November 2024
EXEMPT	No
CONFIDENTIAL	No
REPORT TITLE	Supporting People with the Cost of Living Crisis 2024/25: Interim Evaluation.
REPORT NUMBER	CORS/24/291
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR	Andy MacDonald
CHIEF OFFICER	Michelle Crombie
REPORT AUTHOR	Michelle Crombie, Community Planning Manager
TERMS OF REFERENCE	1.1, 3.1

1. PURPOSE OF REPORT

- 1.1 This report provides an update to the Anti-Poverty and Inequality Committee on the outcomes achieved to date from Round 1 of the Cost of Living Funding allocated for 2024/25.

2. RECOMMENDATIONS

That the Committee:-

- 2.1 Approve the outputs and anticipated outcomes of the Cost of Living Fund achieved to date and actions to ensure funds will be fully spent by April 2025.

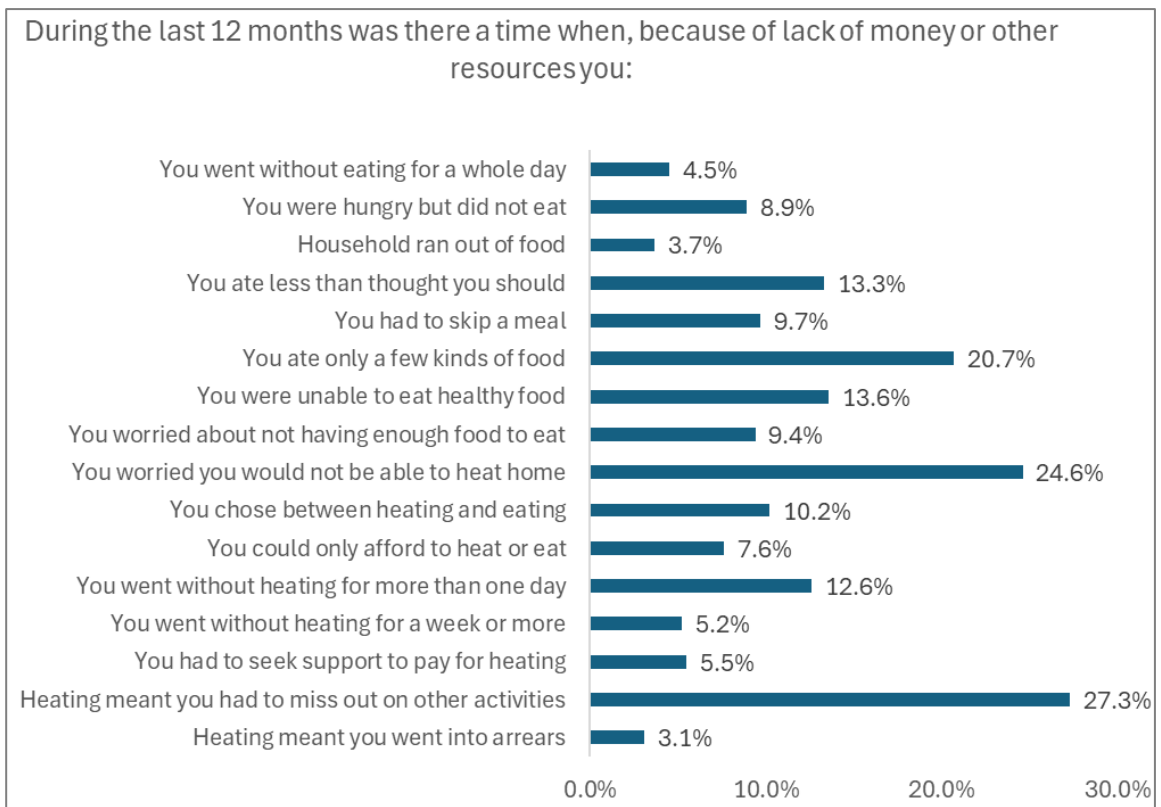
3. CURRENT SITUATION

3.1 Cost of Living Crisis

- 3.1.1 The Aberdeen City [Population Needs Assessment 2024](#) provides an overview of the current cost of living crisis in the City. It states that while all households will be affected by increases in the cost of living it is those with lower incomes and little or no savings who will be most impacted as they spend a higher proportion than average on energy, food and transport and they therefore have less flexibility in their budget to cope with price rises. Research by the Money and Pensions Service (November 2022) suggests that one in six UK adults have no savings and a quarter of UK adults have less than £100 put away. More recent research (January 2023) suggests that as many as one in five adults are borrowing to pay for food and other essential bills, with half doing so for the first time.
- 3.1.2 Research published by the End Child Poverty coalition reported that in 2021/22 an estimated 7,994 children (0-15 years) in Aberdeen City were living in poverty (below 60% median income after housing costs). This is equivalent to 20.5% of children compared to 18.3% in 2020/21.
- 3.1.3 It has been reported nationally that poverty and the cost of living crisis is pushing people to choose between heating and eating. To understand the impact on people and families across the City, questions about food and fuel security have been included in City Voice questionnaires each year since 2018.

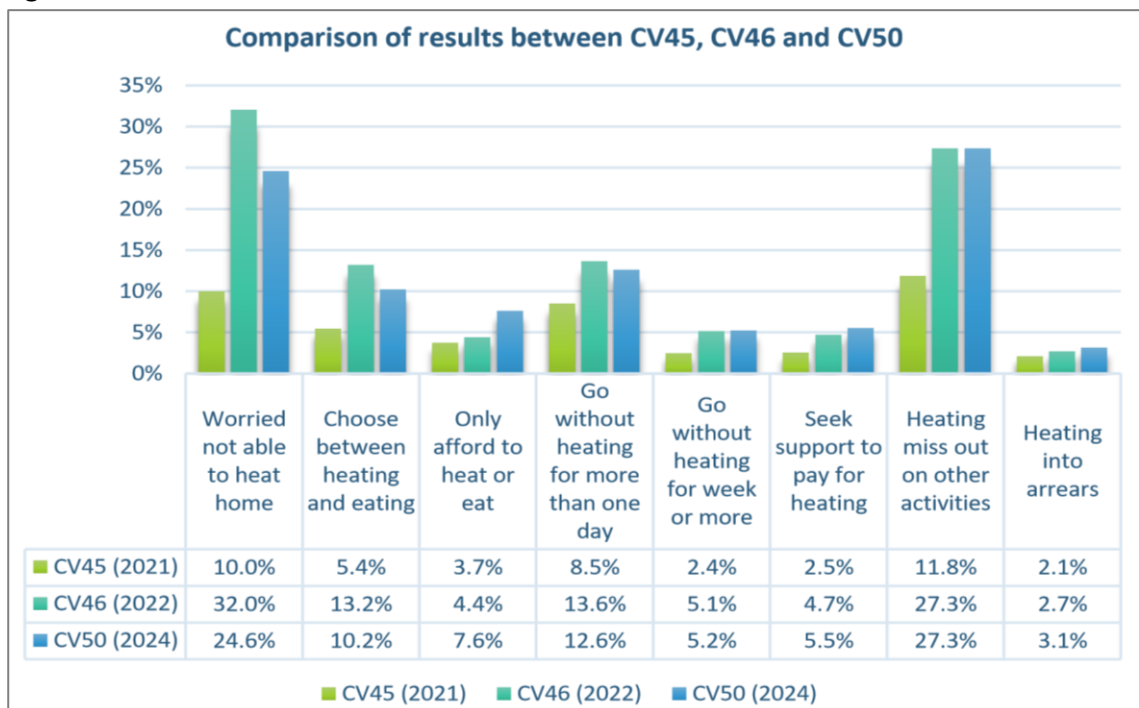
3.1.4 In the latest [City Voice Report published in July 2024](#), participants were asked if during the last 12 months there was a time when, because of lack of money or other resources they had to go without food or fuel or other activities.

Figure 1



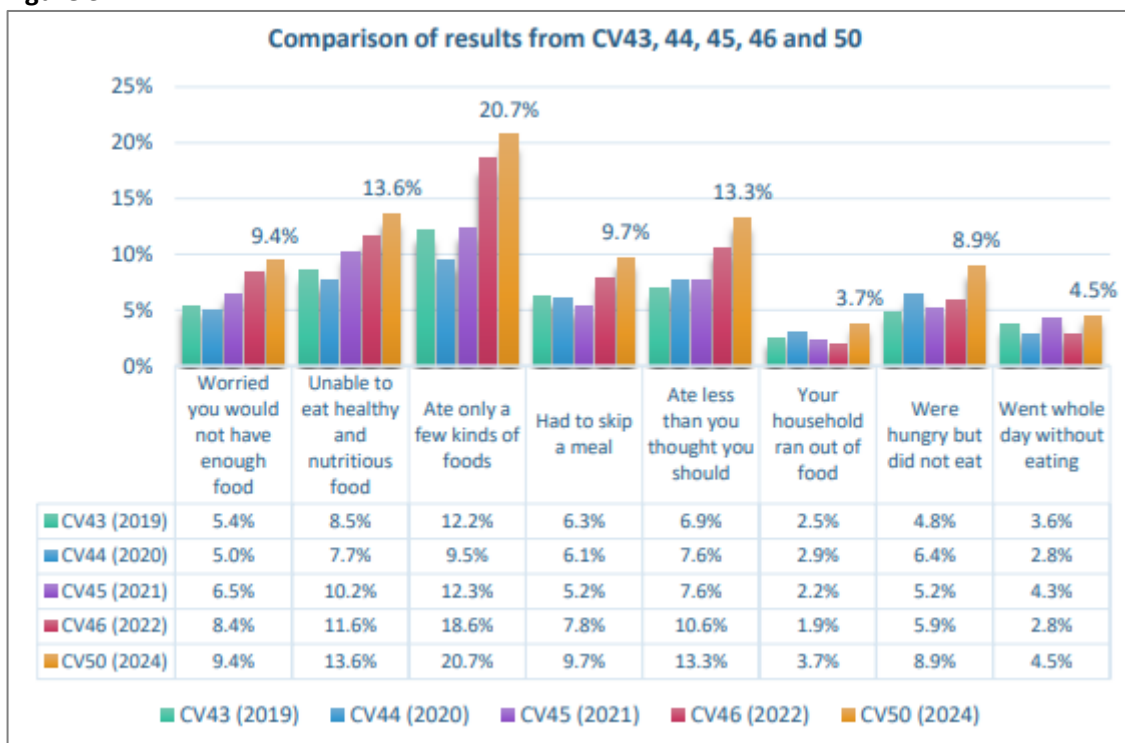
3.1.5 These questions have been asked in previous City Voice questionnaires. The charts below show the proportion of respondents who answered ‘yes’ to each question.

Figure 2



3.1.6 The chart above shows that with the exception of worried not able to heat their home which has gone down from 32% to 24.6%, the responses in 2024 are broadly similar to those in 2022. The largest increase is in the proportion of respondents who reported being worried they could only afford to heat their home or feed themselves/their family (from 4.4% to 7.6%).

Figure 3



3.1.7 The chart above shows that since the questions were first asked, the percentage of respondents who answered ‘yes’ has increased for every question. Similarly, since last asked in December 2022, the percentage who answered ‘yes’ has increased for all questions, with the largest increase being in the proportion who reported they were hungry but did not eat (from 5.9% to 8.9%).

3.1.8 While there has been support for people with the cost of energy, people and families have been affected by the increase in inflation and locally there has been an increase in demand for emergency support. Support to mitigate some of the impacts locally has included:

- Increased financial advice provision
- Increased support through Scottish Welfare Fund
- Procurement of suitable food to increase supply of emergency food
- Provision of fuel vouchers
- Provision of [Warm Spaces](#) during the winter period to alleviate cost of heating homes

3.2 Supporting People with the Cost of Living Crisis 2024/25

3.2.1 On 6 March 2024, Aberdeen City Council agreed to provide £1 million to mitigate against the ongoing cost of living crisis. Between June and August 2024 the Anti-Poverty and Inequality Committee agreed recommendations for how this funding should be spent.

Allocation	Organisation	Amount
Round 1 – June 2024		
Food procurement and pantries	Food Poverty Action Aberdeen	£251,260
Fuel	SCARF	£50,000
Poverty Awareness Films	SHMU	£20,000
Discretionary Housing Payments	ACC Revs and Bens	£100,000
School costs (Winter Clothing)*	ACC Revs and Bens	£20,000
Telecare/Tec	ACHSCP	£20,020
Power of Attorney	ACHSCP	£10,000
Childcare Costs	ACC ABZ Works	£60,000
Round 2 - August 2024		
Christmas Family Panto Package for low income families.	Aberdeen Performing Arts	£10,000
Scottish Welfare Fund Crisis Grants/ Community Care Grants	Aberdeen City Council (Revenues and Benefits)	£96,382
Food procurement and pantries	Food Poverty Action Aberdeen	£242,038
Fuel poverty vouchers and advice	SCARF	£80,000
Essentials for underprivileged families	AberNecessities	£40,300

3.3 Inputs, Outputs and Outcomes from Round 1 So Far

3.3.1 This report provides an update on the inputs, outputs and outcomes so far from Round 1 of the cost of living the funding. A summary is provided overleaf in a logic model format. A logic model helps illustrate the relationships between a program's resources, activities, outputs, and the anticipated outcomes.

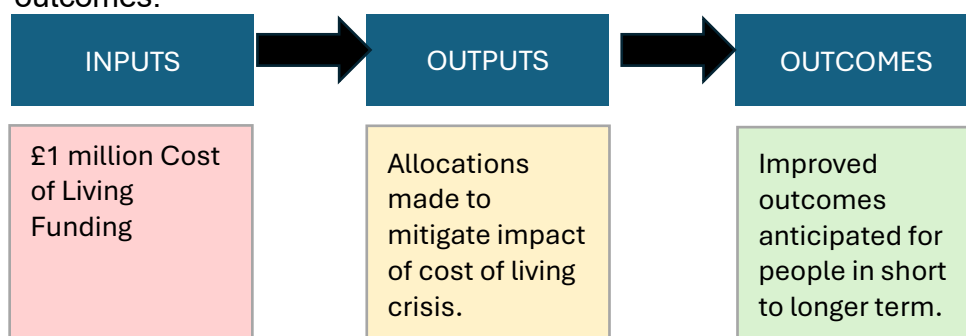


Figure 4 – Round 1 summary of inputs, outputs and anticipated outcomes.

INPUTS		OUTPUTS	ANTICIPATED OUTCOMES		
What did we invest in to mitigate against the rising cost of living and why?		What have we done so far and who have we reached?	Short term impacts	Longer term impacts	
RESPONSE	Food £251,260	The rising cost of living has put pressure on food banks, causing increased demand and falling food donations.	Equivalent to 72,620 meals distributed to 69 organisations across the City. 73 people supported through SAFE outreach and 500 weekly shops provided.	People experiencing food insecurity are able to access good, nutritious food to meet their basic needs.	Food pantries can help people break free from poverty by providing additional support that can help prevent future crisis.
	Fuel £50,000	Fuel poverty can have a significant impact on people's mental and physical health over winter.	292 households provided with payment towards their fuel bills and tailored energy efficiency advice.	People are able to heat their homes over winter to help ensure their general wellbeing.	Better living conditions can contribute to improvement in health outcomes in the long term.
EARLY INTERVENTION	Housing £100,000	There are people that rent their home that get Housing Benefit or Universal Credit but still can't afford their housing costs.	67 claimants supported with shortfall in their local housing allowance or income related, preventing further escalation of harm to people.	People who are having difficulty paying their rent due to financial challenges are supported to prevent going into rent arrears.	Discretionary Housing Payments can help people address financial challenges and achieve housing security.
	Winter clothing £20,000	The rising cost of living can make clothing difficult to afford and children in poverty can suffer not only physically but mentally as a result.	2,559 winter clothing payment awards of £30 made so far, supporting 4,009 children to have the clothing they need over winter.	Children and young people are supported to purchase weather-appropriate clothing which removes stress and improves school attendance.	Providing winter clothing to children and young people in poverty can improve their self-esteem, wellbeing and improve test results.
PREVENTION	Telecare £20,020	Telecare helps elderly and disabled people live independently and safely at home. However, digital poverty can impact access to telecare and health services.	Funding available to support 100 low income families that are assessed as can't afford to pay. Identification of individuals in need ongoing.	Older people and people with disabilities that can't afford telecare are assisted and kept safe in their home over winter when there is a greater risk of harm.	Benefit checks are built into the application process to ensure people receive the reduced fees/exemptions they are entitled to and supported to stay in their homes for longer.
	Power of Attorney £10,000	Lack of Power of Attorney lacks in delayed discharge. This is often due to the cost of putting it in place. 80% of cases are from SIMD 1.	Funding available to support 40 people living in SIMD 1 that are not eligible for legal aid. Identification of individuals in need ongoing.	Older people living in Aberdeen's most deprived communities receive financial support with putting in place Power of Attorney.	Reduction in delayed discharges for people in poverty who are ready to go home, minimising risk of further infection, loss of mobility and independence.
	Child Care Costs £60,000	Childcare costs can be a significant expense for parents and the cost of living crisis can put some parents off going back to work.	4 families supported with childcare costs to date enabling three parents into employment and supporting another parent to sustain their education.	Support with childcare costs to help parents get back into work, stay employed and earn more.	Keeping parents in the workforce when their children are young can help generate economic growth and boost the local economy.
	Poverty Awareness £20,000	Raising awareness of poverty is essential to help people understand the effects on individuals and communities and think about how they can help.	2 short films produced to raise awareness of challenges for people with No Recourse to Public Funds and gendered impacts of poverty to shared widely during Challenge Poverty Week.	Podcasts and short films capturing the lived experience of people in poverty shown during Challenge Poverty Week 2024 to raise awareness.	Increased support from all sectors in reducing stigma, increasing uptake of support available, and working together to prevent poverty,

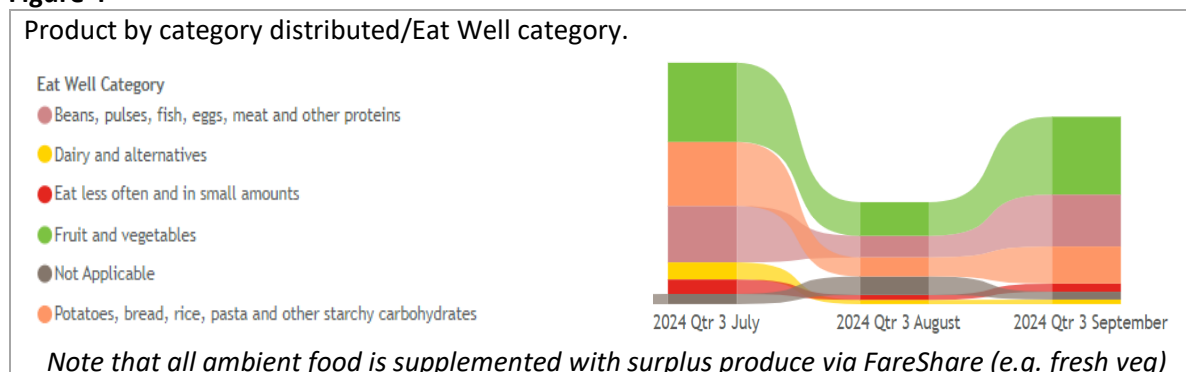
3.4 Food

Input	£251,260 allocated to Food Poverty Action Aberdeen (FPAA)
Output	<p>£152,957 spent to date on food procurement & distribution, SAFE outreach and pantry memberships</p> <p>30.5 tonnes of food distributed to 69 FPAA partners and Community Food Members, equivalent to 72,620 meals.</p> <p>7 partner organisations received outreach support from SAFE Team</p> <p>73 people referred through SAFE outreach, improving their financial situation</p> <p>500 pantry memberships/ weekly shops provided</p> <p>Instant formula pathway continued, providing £1,028 in crisis support</p>
Outcome	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increased levels of food availability in communities • Adequate types of food for emergency food parcels • Reduced social isolation • Increased education and food skills • Better access to nutritious meals for families • Causes of food insecurity addressed through wrap-around services. • Income maximised for individuals and families • Increased benefit uptake • Reduced 'food stress' and poverty-related issues tackled. • Increased volunteering opportunities leading to improved wellbeing

3.4.1 Food Poverty Action Aberdeen (FPAA) is a partnership of organisations providing support to individuals residing in Aberdeen and experiencing food poverty. The cost-of living crisis continues to have a negative impact on residents, and FPAA partners have reported continued high demand for emergency food and wrap-around services. The £251,260 allocated to FPAA as part of round 1 of funding has been used to procure and distribute a total of 30.5 tonnes of food to 69 partners throughout the city. Food will continue to be purchased twice per month from November to March 25, with the exception of December where there will be one purchase due to seasonal closures across the city and due to the festive season.

3.4.2 With increased costs being felt, many food providers have seen a drop in donations from the public, at a time of increased need. The purchased food has significantly helped address the gap between supply and demand, providing the right types and quantities of food for emergency provision, and providing flexibility when coupled with existing surplus food supply through FareShare. Food categories which have been chosen are based on feedback from partner organisations.

Figure 4



3.4.3 Organisations benefiting include those supporting people on low or no income, families and children, people affected by domestic violence, community centres/hubs, community pantries, food banks, out of school clubs, people with drug and/or alcohol addiction, older people, day centres/drop in centres, homeless people & rough sleepers, long term unemployed, faith organisations, people with experience of the justice system, local health and social care services, sheltered housing complexes, and young people. FPAA and CFM partners prioritise early intervention and prevention by providing person-centred wrap-around services which tackle underlying reasons that can lead someone to request emergency food.

3.4.4 **See Appendix 1** for further detail on how food has been distributed to Food Poverty Action Aberdeen partners and Community Food Members.

3.4.5 It is expected that the funds from round 1 will be fully spent by December 2024 with the following actions:

- Continue procurement of food from suppliers based on feedback from FPAA partner organisations and pantry members.
- Continue to store, process, allocate, and distribute from CFINE’s warehouse in Aberdeen, utilizing their fleet of vans, and increased capacity due to recruitment of new volunteers and ongoing employability trainees, adding value to their training/work experience.
- Continue to respond to new requests from community organisations requiring access to food supplies as required which will ensure a wider spread of distribution going forward over 2024/25.
- Supplement purchased food with surplus via FareShare to maximise added value and choice.
- Ensure on-going engagement with FPAA partners and Community Food Members across the city to ensure CFINE are providing appropriate food depending on the needs of the organisation and communities.
- Continue the development of community pantries and extend the mobile service and SAFE outreach to other areas which are identified as areas of need.

3.5 **Fuel**

Input	£50,000 allocated to SCARF
Output	£45,875 spent to date on fuel support. 292 households supported with payment towards their fuel bills, including: 377 Adults and 129 Children 631 onward referrals have been made 292 households have received tailored energy efficiency advice via a home visit.
Outcome	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Households supported to heat their home • Fuel debt cleared for households under serious financial pressure • Improved mental health for families • Energy advice to help reduce energy costs • Home visits to help clients in their own homes • General advice provided over the phone and at events • Onward referrals to further support with finance and food • Income maximised for individuals and families

3.5.1 Scarf is a social enterprise, based in Aberdeen, that delivers free advice to householders and businesses including advice on how to reduce heating costs. The £50,000 allocated to Scarf as part of round 1 of funding has been used to support householders and families living in fuel poverty. Depending on the size of the household, families have received a payment towards their fuel bills, and some received discretionary amounts to clear fuel debt. This has further helped to relieve financial pressures and improve mental health for families living with the extra stress of fuel debt hanging over their heads.

3.5.2 Households supported totalled 292 for the period, all of which had received a home visit from a Scarf advisor, and the breakdown of the areas visited is below.

Post code	Area	Number of Home Visits
AB24	Tillydrone, Seaton, Woodside, Old Aberdeen	88
AB16	Mastrick, Northfield, Middlefield, Sheddocksley	66
AB11	Ferryhill, Torry	51
AB25	George Street, Kittybrewster, Rosemount	35
AB21	Bucksburn, Dyce	26
AB15	Hazlehead, Kingswells	11
AB12	Cove, Kincorth	8
AB22	Bridge of Don, Danestone	7

3.5.3 Onward referrals are often made to supporting organisations, to support the energy saving, financial and wellbeing impacts made by Scarf advisors. This includes referrals to the Fuelbank Foundation who provide really useful on-the-day support to clients who may require immediate support getting back on supply, or to keep them on supply while longer term support, in the form of Centre for Sustainable Energy or Housing Association Charitable Trust vouchers which have a higher value, but takes longer to arrive. Advisors do their best to make their home visit really count towards improving a clients situation, and onward referrals are a good way to offer well rounded and longer-term outcomes.

3.5.4 Onward referrals (375 for this period) have been made to the following partners:

- Citizens Advice Bureau – money support etc
- Aberdeen City Council – repairs etc
- Centre for Sustainable Energy – vouchers x 6 £49
- Priority Services Register - gas, electricity and water
- Financial Inclusion Team – benefits check etc
- Instant neighbour – further top ups of 1 x £49 voucher
- Fuelbank Foundation – 1x £31 vouchers
- Housing Association Charitable Trust – vouchers x 6 £49
- CFINE – food parcels & SAFE team
- VSA – up to £500 grants
- Home Energy Scotland– ECO4, Warmer home Scotland, Grants & Loans

3.5.5 Energy advice has been provided to clients in their own home during a scheduled visit with one of Scarf’s advisors, and is specific just to the client’s own property and behaviours. General advice can be provided on the phone and at events etc, but Scarf find the greatest impact can be made when an advisor visits a client’s home. This allows the opportunity to have a conversation around specific areas of concern that the client may have, and to discuss aspects of their life which can impact their energy usage (e.g. programming heating systems, using extractor fans) and any specific savings that can be made from these proposed changes in behaviour can be communicated with the client. Some examples of energy savings advice includes conserving hot water, reducing thermostats, switching off standby and reducing shower times. Also, installing draft proofing, low energy lighting, radiator reflector panels, hot water tank jackets and smart meters. It is expected that the funds from round 1 will be fully spent by December 2024.

3.6 Housing

Input	£100,000 allocated to Aberdeen City Council, Revenues & Benefits
Output	£96,377.03 spent to date on Discretionary Housing Payments 67 claimants. 52 cases where there is a shortfall in the Local Housing Allowance (£80,132.49) 15 cases where there is an income related payment (£16,244.54)
Outcome	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Prevention of people in difficulty going into rent arrears • Prevention of homelessness due to being in rent arrears • Signposting to financial advice services and support • Improved mental wellbeing of people in financial crisis

3.6.1 Aberdeen City Council provides Discretionary Housing Payments (DHP) to help people who are having trouble paying their rent. DHPs can help with rent, rent deposits, or removal costs. They can also help with restrictions that limit Housing Benefit, such as the maximum number of bedrooms that benefits can cover.

3.6.2 The £100,000 allocated to Revenues & Benefits as part of round 1 of funding has been used to support 67 claimants with their shortfall in the local housing allowance or for income related reasons, preventing further escalation of harm to claimants. It is expected that the funds will be fully spent by December 2024 by processing existing claims and renewal applications received in October 2024. We do not anticipate being able to award any new renewal awards as the remaining budget will be exhausted by the few current claims still to be processed.

3.7 Winter Clothing

Input	£20,000 allocated to Aberdeen City Council, Revenues & Benefits <i>(Note that this was in addition to £30,000 from SG and £100,000 allocated from the common good fund to provide a total of £30 per child for 5,000 children over winter 2024/25).</i>
Output	£126,120 spent to date on Winter Clothing Grant (Approx £17,000 from the cost of living fund) 2,559 awards made 4,009 children benefitting from the additional £30
Outcome	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Children/ young people have weather appropriate clothing over winter • Reduced stress for children/ young people to fit in with their peers • Improved attendance at school with access to appropriate clothing • Improved self-esteem and wellbeing for children/ young people • Improved ability to focus on education

3.7.1 Aberdeen City Council provides winter clothing payments to anyone already in receipt of a school clothing grant. School clothing grants are available to anyone whose child attends an Aberdeen City Council school, or are away to enter Primary 1, and are in receipt of benefits including Income Support, Universal Credit and Housing Benefit. Students who receive an Education Maintenance Allowance can also apply for a school clothing grant for themselves. Winter clothing payments assist families in need by ensuring that children have what they need to keep warm throughout the winter.

3.7.2 The Scottish Government provides £6 per child for winter clothing. However, funding from the Cost of Living Fund and the Common Good Fund means that the Council can top this up to provide 5,000 children with a total of £30. The £20,000 allocated to Revenues & Benefits as part of round 1 of funding has been used to issue the Winter Clothing Grant city wide to all existing School Clothing recipients from 16 September 2024. To date, 2,713 awards (4,204 children) have received the additional £30. This totals £126,120. Any subsequent claim for a School Clothing Grant will automatically receive the additional £30 as part of the School Clothing Grant payment. It is expected that the funds will be fully spent by April 2025.

3.8 Telecare

Input	£20,020 allocated to Aberdeen City Health and Social Care Partnership
Output	£0 spent to date on Telecare Payments to support low income families.
Outcome	Anticipated outcomes relate to prevention of harm over winter.

3.8.1 Aberdeen City Health and Social Care Partnership will provide telecare support to low income families to support both cared for and Carer in purchasing equipment and devices for additional support straight into their homes. The £20,000 allocated to the Health and Social Care Partnership as part of round 1 of funding will be utilised to break the barrier of device costs for telecare support for low income families. Both unpaid Carers and the cared for person receive reassurance, reminders, prompts and support digitally reducing the need for hands on care support and reducing the risk of emergency response.

3.8.2 Arrangements are now in place for the Telecare provider Bon Accord Care to support the distribution of Telecare Payments to support low income families at pace. To date, time has been spent identifying individuals that require this service and undertaking assessments of their ability to pay. There is a high demand for this support and it is expected that the funds will be fully spent by April 2025 with the following actions:

- Gather data and information for distribution of funds to relevant families by Bon Accord Care.
- Identify families before December 2024.
- Purchase and install devices.
- Report on demographics, SIMD zones and collate impact/ stories early 2025.

3.9 **Power of Attorney**

Input	£10,000 allocated to Aberdeen City Health and Social Care Partnership
Output	£0 spent to date on Power of Attorney Payments to support low income families in SIMD 1.
Outcome	Anticipated outcomes relate to reduction in delayed discharge.

3.9.1 Aberdeen City Health and Social Care Partnership will provide support to low income families to arrange power of attorney because delays in support, health and care decisions and access can be due to a lack of Power of Attorney arrangements in place. The cost of Power of Attorney is usually unexpected and a barrier to low income families, particularly at point of crisis. The £10,000 allocated to the Health and Social Care Partnership will support families in gaining power of attorney arrangements for Carers without delay or barrier.

3.9.2 Quarriers are the Carers Support Services for Adults in the city and will manage the distribution of Power of Attorney support to low income families. There is a high demand for this support and entitlement to legal aid is explored first to reduce spend and maximise funding available. It is expected that the funds will be fully spent by April 2025 with the following actions:

- Transfer funds to Carers Support Services.
- Identify families and provide Solicitor lists before December 2024.
- Report arrangements on demographic information, timescales, and impact from feedback and stories and what this fund has enabled.

3.10 **Child Care Costs**

Input	£60,000 allocated to Aberdeen City ABZ Works
Output	£4,631.42 spent to date on supporting families with child care costs 4 families supported with child care costs to date 3 parents supported into employment 1 parent supported to sustain education in health and social care
Outcome	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increased opportunities for parents that face child care cost barriers • Parents enabled to enter into employment and stay in employment • Support to continue education to access paid employment • Increased self-esteem and mental health for parents • Income maximised for individuals and families

3.10.1 Aberdeen City Council ABZ Works provides support with childcare costs to parents as we know that childcare provision is a main barrier to employment or employability support. The £60,000 allocated to ABZ Works as part of round 1 of funding has been used to provide financial grants to parents who are looking to enter into employability support, employment or education but have childcare as a barrier to this. The allocation of funds can also be used for parents already in employment, but struggling to sustain this due to cost of childcare. The funding can also be used to pay for deposits or settling in periods to help alleviate initial financial pressures, and ease the transition process for both parents and their children.

3.10.2 The families that have been supported so far would not have otherwise been able to enter into employment and/or education, without support from the funding. For one parent, they are looking for roles in health and social care but do not currently have enough qualifications for their desired position. They have been accepted on to a university programme to enhance their career, but have been unable to access financial support for their two young children. ABZ Works will be using some of the allocated funds to support childcare payments during the first semester, where they will then be able to access their funded hours.

3.10.3 It is expected that demand for this support will continue to increase as a result of greater promotion of the support. Further, commissioned activities will be introduced to provide additional employability support for parents, and it is expected that these funds will help break down barriers and allow more parents to engage with the programmes. ABZ Works will also be offering paid work experience for parents in key sectors, and it is expected that some will be able to access childcare payments where needed in order to take up the placements. However these placements can take some time to be arranged due to awaiting PVG checks and identifying placements.

3.10.4 It is expected that the funds will be fully spent by April 2025 with the following actions:

- Promotional activities with commissioned services supporting parents.
- Promotional activities with partners to encourage referrals for support.
- Childcare payments offered to parents looking to engage with employability support, employment or education where financial support via DWP is not available.

3.11 **Poverty Awareness**

Input	£20,000 allocated to SHMU
Output	£8,000 spent to date on producing two short films shown during challenge poverty week 2024 Development of two more short films and podcast series underway
Outcome	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increased awareness of the reality of life for people in poverty • Improved understanding of challenge of people with No Recourse to Public Funds and gendered impacts of poverty • Volunteering opportunities for people with lived experience • Partnership working between lived experience, subject experts and support organisations • Informs decision making and training opportunities

- 3.11.1 Station House Media Unit (SHMU) is a charity based in the Woodside area of Aberdeen that supports residents in regeneration areas in radio and video production, traditional and on-line publications, music production and digital inclusion. The £20,000 allocated to SHMU as part of round 1 of funding has so far been used to increase capacity within the organisation to co-produce two short films with partner organisations about people with lived experience of poverty. The first was made with the No Recourse North East Partnership's lived experience group and the second with two females in Woodside exploring the gendered impacts of poverty in Aberdeen. Both films were screened at an event aimed at policy and decision makers on 11 October as part of [Challenge Poverty Week 2024](#).
- 3.11.2 Other areas which are being progressed using the funding include recruitment of people in Tillydrone to be trained on podcasting and interview methods to co-create a short series of podcasts shining a light on the challenges, support mechanisms and opportunities in the area. SHMU believe this place-based approach will be particularly impactful, both for those involved in its making, and for those who listen to it. Also, SHMU are working with the Joseph Rowntree Foundation to co-produce a short film on stigma to raise awareness with policy and decision makers and provide a training aid for practitioners in various sectors in the City. Finally, a short film which looks at the issue of unclaimed benefits will be produced in support of the Local Outcome Improvement Plan project on this topic.
- 3.11.3 SHMU will create a multimedia digital resource with all the outputs made through the project, and share this with elected officials and officers of Community Planning Aberdeen partners. SHMU will include an evaluation link when they circulate this resource and will interview and collect feedback from those that participate in the project, so that they can ascertain the impact on those involved. It is expected that the funds will be fully spent by April 2025.

3.12 **Next Steps**

- 3.12.1 An evaluation of the full cost of living funding allocated during 2024/25 will be submitted to the Anti-Poverty and Inequality Committee meeting in June 2025.

4. **FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

- 4.1 It is expected that the funds allocated from the £1 million approved by the Council at the meeting on 6 March 2024 will be fully spent by April 2025. This is a one-off fund that has no recurring commitment.

5. **LEGAL IMPLICATIONS**

- 5.1 Funds allocated to third parties are subject to Aberdeen City Council's standard terms and conditions.

6. **ENVIRONMENTAL IMPLICATIONS**

- 6.1 There are no environmental implications arising from this report.

7. RISK

Category	Risks	Primary Controls/Control Actions to achieve Target Risk Level	*Target Risk Level (L, M or H) *taking into account controls/control actions	*Does Target Risk Level Match Appetite Set?
Strategic Risk	There is a risk that failing to support people struggling to meet the increased cost of living could lead to longer term economic harm.	Delivery of measures to help mitigate the cost of living impacts for the most vulnerable, alongside work and support across services, partners and third sector.	L	Yes
Compliance	There is a risk of failing to comply with a Council decision to spend the allocated £1m to help the most vulnerable in our community with energy costs.	Delivery of measures to help mitigate the cost of living impacts for the most vulnerable, alongside work and support across services, partners and third sector.	L	Yes
Operational	The project delivery in this report requires some resource from the Council, but mainly through partners	Strong partnership working with organisations identified will ensure this risk is minimised.	L	Yes
Financial	There is a risk of failing to deliver and spend the approved budget	It is expected that funds will be fully spent by April 2025.	L	Yes
Reputational	There is a risk that failing to support people struggling to meet the cost of living could lead to reputational damage.	The delivery described in this report demonstrates a clear commitment to supporting people with the cost of living.	L	Yes
Environment / Climate	No environmental risks identified	N/A	N/A	N/A

8. OUTCOMES

Council Delivery Plan 2024	
Impact of Report	
Aberdeen City Council Policy Statement Working in Partnership for Aberdeen	The proposals within this report support the delivery of the following aspects of the policy statement:- <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Supporting People with the Cost of Living • Actively support Aberdeen’s foodbanks and provide assistance with bulk purchasing where desirable.
<u>Local Outcome Improvement Plan</u>	
Prosperous Economy Stretch Outcomes	Stretch outcome 1: 20% reduction in the percentage of people who report they have been worried they would not have enough food to eat and/ or not be able to heat their home by 2026.
Prosperous People Stretch Outcomes	Stretch outcome 12: Reduce homelessness by 10% and youth homelessness by 6% by 2026, ensuring it is rare, brief and non-recurring with a longer term ambition to end homelessness in Aberdeen City.

9. IMPACT ASSESSMENTS

Assessment	Outcome
Integrated Impact Assessment	New Integrated Impact Assessment has been completed
Data Protection Impact Assessment	Not required.
Other	N/A

10. BACKGROUND PAPERS

10.1 [Supporting People with the Cost of Living CORS/24/152](#)

11. APPENDICES

Appendix 1

Food Poverty Action Aberdeen Food Distribution and Outcomes and Impact Statements.

12. REPORT AUTHOR CONTACT DETAILS

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APPENDIX 1 FOOD POVERTY ACTION ABERDEEN FOOD DISTRIBUTION

Charity/Community Organisation	Food Distribute (KG)	Meal Equivalents
Instant Neighbour	3,235	7,703
St Vincent De Paul Society	1,435	3,416
Cairncry Community Centre	899	2,141
The Care Hub Aberdeen	482	1,147
The Holy Family Sisters of the Needy	404	963
Touch of love outreach (sacred heart church)	268	637
Deeper Christian Life Ministry	93	222
Mobile Pantry (Aberdeenshire)	549	1,307
CFINE Food Bank	4,226	10,062
FITTIE COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT TRUST	338	805
Heathryburn Community Cafe/Breakfast Club	302	720
SALEM INTERNATIONAL CHRISTIAN CENTRE	48	114
Time to Heal	285	679
CFINE Community Food Pantry	2,026	4,824
Tillydrone Community Flat	505	1,203
Hilton Community Centre	419	997
Seaton Community Hub	381	907
Cummings Park Community Centre "Cubby "	338	805
Kincorth Community Centre	338	805
Manor Park School	300	713
Craigielea Childrens Centre	290	690
Dyce Community Centre	268	637
Danestone Community Centre Cfo	214	509
ACC Youth Team	225	535
Printfield Community Project	163	389
Northfield Community Centre	1,034	2,462
Middlefield Community Centre	651	1,551
Quarry Family Centre	432	1,028
Tullos Community Centre	293	697
Star Community Flat	92	219
Mastrick Community Centre Cfo	538	1,281
Sunnybank Community Centre	43	102
Stocket Grange Cfo	311	740
Mark Bush Court Cfo	93	222
Powis Community Centre	312	742
Williamson Family Centre	260	620
Ymca Aberdeen	245	584
Mobile pantry (ABERDEEN)	1,125	2,679
Aberdeen Duty Social Work Dept	435	1,036
St Vincent de Paul - St. Mary's Cathedral	1,098	2,615
Affinity Trust	334	794
Fersands Cafe	43	102

RISE	3	7
Woodside Pantry	404	962
Clifton Court Sheltered Complex	48	114
Drugs Action Aberdeen	23	54
Cyrenians (Summer Street)	626	1,491
Aberdeen Cyrenians - Warehouse	439	1,045
Community meals at St Andrews Com	48	114
Mamacita Foundation	476	1,133
Orchard brae school (Integrated children and family service)	316	752
Nescol Students Association	302	720
Northfield Academy	266	632
Kittybrewster Foodbank	248	591
Jesus House Torry	264	629
Jesus house Holburn street - City Of God	65	155
Higher ground assembly	5	13
Catalyst Vineyard Church	218	518
RCCG City Of The Great King	48	114
Meadow Court	260	620
Regensburg Court	93	222
Murray Court	23	54
Cyrenians (Wernham House)	93	222
Foyer (82A Crown Street)	93	222
Foyer (Marywell Street)	338	805
Clinterty - Adult Learning	93	222
TRE-Life C.I.C	23	54
Royal Aberdeen Children's Hospital	275	656
AUSA Aberdeen University Students' Association	43	102
Total	30,503	72,627

Outcomes and Impact Statements

Northfield Community Centre

"We have received pallets of the purchased food which has been a lifesaver. Every week we are dealing with anything up to 165 people in the two days our food bank is open (Tuesday 6 to 7.30 and Thursday 10 to 2pm). That's not counting the additional emergency referrals or calls coming in through the week.

The ambient food is a blessing as it is food that doesn't need to be frozen/chilled can just go straight in the cupboard – these are staples that people need just now.

I spoke to a mother today who has a family of 7 who said:"I'm grateful for whatever is given to us. As as you can imagine, with kids it's a constant round of needs like food and clothes. I wish we didn't need to use the food bank, but needs must."

We are working as part of Food Poverty Action Aberdeen to make sure that folk have access to the essentials they need."



Photo: Northfield Community Centre food bank being stocked

Cummings Park Community Centre

“Cummings Park receives regular deliveries of food from CFINE purchased with funding from the Council, as well as surplus FareShare food.

Working in partnership with local schools, Family Learning, community groups, individuals and city-wide agencies, Cummings Park was identified as vulnerable regarding food stress and other issues around poverty.

Food poverty, defined as the inability to access sufficient, safe, and nutritious food, has far-reaching impacts on individuals and communities. This leads to malnutrition, which can cause a range of health issues. Along with educational challenges where children may struggle academically due to lack of poor nutrition, which affects concentration and cognitive function.

Accessing food at Cummings Park has allowed those with possible social isolation, educational challenges and mental health issues to take food with no judgement and may allow them to access foods they may not have tried. We encourage them to try new products by telling them different ways of cooking things or how certain foods go well together.

The local community has commented on how accessing what we have as a godsend, takes the strain off of family relationships, allows their children to have better nutritional meals and gives them a friendly place to come and not feel judged. We also give advice on budgeting, services to access for help and any other information they ask and we have the knowledge about.”

St Vincent De Paul Society

“The impact that CFINE have given us is huge. We can now offer a fairly balanced & healthy food parcel to the needy, mainly from the Mastrick area of Aberdeen. We are serving on average 60 people per week. We have found that they are really struggling to provide themselves with food, especially with the energy costs so high these days. Holy Family is a poor parish, and without this support would not be able to provide anywhere near the 60 or so parcels that we give out each week.”



Photos: food parcels ready for distribution by SVDP

Instant Neighbour

“Instant Neighbour receives ambient food once a week from CFINE, this food being purchased with the Cost-of-Living funding provided by Aberdeen City Council.

The food bank at Instant Neighbour issues on average 150 emergency food parcels a week. These parcels consist of ambient foods, and we aim for them to last around 2-3 days, each parcel usually weighing between 6-8kg.

We provide food parcels, advice and signposting to people from all walks of life; families, people in work, people with disabilities, people with no recourse to public funds and so on. Everyone that visits us has a unique set of challenges which has meant they need to access emergency food.

However, for the majority of early 2024, we were unable to provide the same level of food support that we previously did because of the end of the funding to CFINE. This meant reducing the amount of food in a food parcel, with the amount of food only lasting around 1-2 days.

Now the funding has been reinstated, we have received, since July, approximately 2,160kg of ambient food from CFINE. This has helped us to provide at least 360 food parcels. Without this food, the food bank would not be able to provide a substantial food parcel to clients.

This has also taken a significant amount of pressure off the charity, as during the period we were not receiving this food from CFINE, we spent £2,572.90 on purchasing food to keep stock levels up, alongside public donations. This was not

sustainable, and our purchased food would usually only last 3 or 4 days as demand was unchanged.

As the cost of living remains high, and with the end of the universal Winter Fuel Payment in Scotland, that demand going into the winter months will remain high and is likely to grow. If demand remains the same or grows further, the food that CFINE provides will prove vital to our continued provision to those in need throughout Aberdeen City.”

CFINE

The additional food purchased with funding through the Cost-of-Living fund has already had a major positive impact on services. CFINE operates one of the busiest food banks in the city, and demand has continued to be incredibly high due to the cost-of-living. In 2023-24, CFINE distributed >38,000 food parcels, averaging more than 100 per day. This trend has continued, with over 6,000 food parcels distributed in July and August, and so it was vital that the supply of food was made available to keep up with demand. Demand typically increases in the winter months, but has remained stubbornly high for some time.

Food is something that we all have in common and the conversations that stem from food can reveal deeper underlying issues associated with poverty which can then be addressed. CFINE uses food as a vehicle for engagement and community development, not just treating the symptom (hunger), but through wrap-around services tackles underlying causes of food insecurity and poverty.

500 free pantry memberships and weekly shops has been rolled out at CFINE and Woodside Pantry. This has proved successful in reducing household expenditure for members, and maximise income.



Photo: the first lorry-load of food arriving to be sorted and distributed

Letter from Community Pantry Member

"Dear CFINE Pantry Team,

Thank you for helping me!

Thank you for enabling me to have healthy food , week after week, and enabling me to have a decent quality of life.

As many of you know I was homeless or insecurely housed for a number of years and my life was chaotic. I often as without enough money to eat properly as priority was to keep was to keep myself safe with a roof over my head.

Since arriving in Aberdeen my life is changing, through friend I have safe accommodation and can have a future to look forward to.

Food insecurity has been very traumatic, especially if it's prolonged and I know it will take time to recover. It's so lovely that here at cfine pantry its not just about shopping. Theres a wonderful warmth and a buzz in the place and I really look forward to my weekly visit.

Thank you so much for your kindness and your solidarity!

Kind regards

AS"

Case Study – CFINE Pantry Volunteer

Volunteers come from all areas of life, retired, in recovery from addiction, poor mental health, unemployed – job seekers and students to name a few. Many volunteers arrive at CFINE with low self- esteem, low confidence, poor attendance etc but thrive on the 'family and friendly' atmosphere that develops and gain in confidence, skills and sometimes move on to employment and better prospects or just a better outlook on life.

DC, started his volunteering journey quite recently, working in the CFINE Pantry on a Thursday morning. When DC started he presented as shy, quiet and lacking in confidence. He quickly picked up the 'job' made friends and is now an invaluable member of the team. His confidence has grown along with his skills, knowledge and now helps teaches other new volunteers and supports many of the more vulnerable pantry members. I will let his own words describe how his volunteering journey has been.

"I am a 73 year old and live on my own, my wife died 8 years ago. I have worked since the age of 14, retiring at 68, making mistakes along the way. If the bills fell behind, I changed my job or asked for overtime, but mostly worked an extra job as bills had to be paid. Doing charitable work was out of the question, but now I have paid the house and added to my pension pot I don't have to earn any more.

I had a few major operations last year and needed some extra help for anxiety from the doctor. Was given medication which I stopped, then was passed over for counselling with Jenny who in turn recommended me to contact CFINE which I did. Best thing ever, great group of personnel, easy to work with. Until now I did not realise how much people needed our help which is sad. I have found a team on which I work very supportive and the work rewarding. Glad I am now involved in something worthwhile."



SAFE Outreach

CFINE's SAFE team work to maximise household incomes through benefit uptake. An element of the funding has been used on SAFE outreach work, embedding the service in communities and generating financial gain for individuals.

Middlefield Hub, Tillydrone Community Flat, Cummings Park Community Flat and Cairncry Community Centre are all receiving outreach support either fortnightly or monthly as agreed with the centres based on level of need. Further to this HomeStart and HMP Grampian have a named outreach adviser who facilitates immediate appointments upon receiving referrals covering two priority groups, families and male prisoners preparing for liberation. Since July there have been 25 community outreach sessions delivered on a drop-in basis at the locations. Cairncry is a new addition based on a visit from the Anti-Poverty & Inequality Committee members that identified need for the service users and the outreach adviser is delivering a drop in during their wellbeing café and food bank sessions fortnightly.

Additionally, the outreach adviser hosts a drop-in session at Aberdeen Vaccination and Wellbeing centre fortnightly and has recently set up a session at Frederick Street clinic. SAFE advisers are also scheduled to visit priority postcode areas once per week on rotation with the pantry van.

Anyone who requires ongoing support with income maximisation or budgeting matters are offered a follow up home visit from the outreach advisers to complete forms etc in privacy. This has shown to be positive with those seeking advice or support and an increase in home visits being facilitated, 34 in July and August. Further to this 39 people have been referred from outreach advisers for wider SAFE input and have been assigned an adviser

Tillydrone Community Flat

“The provision of purchased food distributed through CFINE and facilitated via funding from Aberdeen City Council has been an absolute godsend to Tillydrone Community Flat.

Foodbank demand has risen exponentially over the last couple of years, rising from 993 parcels in the years 2020/21 to 3500 in the year 2023/24.

As a small grassroots charity with limited funding, we have struggled to maintain our emergency food provision service and earlier this year thought we may have to stop the service completely.

Benefiting from this initiative has enabled us to continue supporting those most in need in the Tillydrone area where poverty levels are high, and the cost of daily living is an ongoing struggle for many residents. We are very thankful for this support and the positive impact it has on our service.”

Middlefield Community Project

“I can’t stress how vital and how much help the deliveries of ambient non-perishable food has been for lots of local people. From having conversations with people, the reasons people come for a food parcel is so varied. We have an elderly woman who struggles to move around due to ill-health, and with no family.

These food parcels are a “lifesaver” for her. She can’t afford to bulk buy, she doesn’t have a freezer, and she can’t go to the shops often. She was often going days on end without food as she was too sore to go to the shops. Some families struggle to make ends meet each month, especially if they have had big outlays of money such as school uniforms being bought for multiple children from single parent households, household appliances breaking, or a delay with benefits payments, for example.

This service also means we are able to check on the wellbeing of our most vulnerable in our communities, we are also able to signpost to other services when they come for a food bag, and check in on their mental health as well. The non-perishable goods are also a brilliant support to struggling families as people can make it last for longer, they can bulk cook, and they can spread it over a few weeks and not have to worry about a short “Use By” date. We estimate over 120 people a week benefits from the service including children all the way up to people 80+.”

Holy Family Sisters of the Needy

“What a joyful privilege to write to impart the invaluable help your organisation makes in our work of helping our needy and vulnerable brothers and sisters who come to us daily for their livelihood. Truly, this work would have been undoable without the great support we get from you.”



Photo: emergency food parcels ready to be distributed by Holy Family Sisters of the Needy using the purchased food.

Cairncry CC Foodbank Case Study

Our foodbank is open 3 days a week alongside our free café opening times. This has been hugely beneficial to the local community with numbers ranging from 20 – 30 each day using both foodbank and café. We have various users that require food parcels from several different walks of life.

The café staff use some store cupboard goods from the foodbank showing examples of what can be made with tinned items etc, this may range from carrot soup to vegetable pasta in tomato sauce. Without C-Fine's weekly deliveries the centre would struggle to provide these necessary resources to our users.

User's statements:

"it's been a god send" "so grateful" "if it wasn't for the foodbank I would be unable to eat"

