

Anti-Poverty and Inequality Committee

Annual Effectiveness Report 2023/2024



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1. Introduction from Convener

- 1.1 I am pleased to present the annual effectiveness report for the Anti-Poverty and Inequality Committee. The report represents good practice in governance and also informs the annual review of the Council's Scheme of Governance, enabling officers to identify if any changes are required, for example, to the Committee Terms of Reference.
- 1.2 The Anti-Poverty and Inequality Committee Terms of Reference have been updated to reflect that the Committee will approve for publication the Local Child Poverty Action report and reports on progress on mainstreaming equality duty, sets of equality outcomes and report on progress to achieve equality outcomes.
- 1.3 Committee welcomes the expertise and input from our External Advisers - who have supported the Committee since it was established in November 2022 - informing the development of committee business as well as the input of members of Community Planning Aberdeen's [Anti-Poverty Group](#).
- 1.4 A key piece of work this year was progression on Citizens' Assemblies. The Committee has received three reports on this subject, with the most recent resolution to commission the Scottish Women's Budget Group (SWBG) to deliver an assembly approach on poverty and gender inequality in Aberdeen. The Scottish Women's Budget Group is due to report to the Committee on its findings in 2025.
- 1.5 Committee Members have been visiting our Communities and the organisations supporting them. This year we have been to Aberdeen Cyrenians and Cairncry Community Centre. The visits have been extremely helpful for the Committee and for officers in learning about the work of organisations across the city. They have also assisted the organisations themselves, as each visit identified actions for improvement to be carried out by officers. The commitment of the organisations in organising and hosting the visits is very much appreciated.
- 1.6 I would like to thank members, past and present - both elected and external - and officers for their contributions over the last year and look forward to working with them, and my Vice Convener Councillor Desmond Bouse next year.



Councillor Christian Allard
Convener – Anti-Poverty and Inequality Committee

2. The Role of the Committee

PURPOSE OF COMMITTEE

To monitor and determine the Council's contribution to alleviating and mitigating all forms of poverty and inequality in the city.

The Committee will develop an Anti-Poverty Strategy.

REMIT OF COMMITTEE

1. The Committee will, in respect of poverty and inequality issues in the city:
 - 1.1 Consider the impact of poverty on the city as a whole and targeted population levels, including on key groups such as children, minority ethnic communities and those of pensionable age who are known to be particularly disadvantaged by poverty;
 - 1.2 Consider the evidence from Citizen's Assemblies on poverty and inequality matters;
 - 1.3 Seek the views and involvement of those experiencing poverty and inequality;
 - 1.4 Consider the effect of In-work Poverty and the Living Wage, including by receiving reports on Living Wage accreditation rates;
 - 1.5 Consider evidence of "what's worked" in combating poverty and inequality;
 - 1.6 Consider the impact of ongoing Welfare Reform measures, including by receiving reports on benefit access and uptake;
 - 1.7 Consider the impact of poverty on Employability and Youth Employment, including by receiving reports on employment rates and positive destinations;
 - 1.8 Consider the impact of Food Insecurity and Fuel Poverty, including by receiving reports on community food provision and energy cost impacts;
 - 1.9 Consider the impact of stigma and discrimination on those experiencing poverty;
 - 1.10 Consider the impact of poverty on the health and wellbeing of those experiencing it;
 - 1.11 Monitor the progress of research relevant to poverty and inequality, including in relation to health determinants;
 - 1.12 Consider matters relating to the provision of Credit Unions, fair and affordable banking and advice services;
 - 1.13 Examine the nature of institutional and systemic discrimination in Aberdeen, and consider the steps required to eradicate such discrimination;
 - 1.14 Monitor the performance of Council-funded community programmes and projects which seek to address poverty or inequality.
2. The Committee will:
 - 2.1 approve for publication Local Child Poverty Action Reports in terms of the Child Poverty (Scotland) Act 2017 and Child Poverty Action Plans;
 - 2.2 approve for publication the Council's (i) reports on its progress on mainstreaming the equality duty, (ii) sets of equality outcomes, and (iii) reports on the progress made to achieve the equality outcomes, all in terms of the Equality Act 2010 (Specific Duties) (Scotland) Regulations 2012; and

- 2.3 monitor the Memorandum of Understanding between the Council and the Department for Work and Pensions through receipt of an annual report.
- 3.1 In undertaking the aspects at 1 and 2, the Committee will ensure that it is acting within the budget set by Council and is supporting the delivery of the Council's agreed outcomes, commissioning intentions and service standards.
- 3.2 The Committee may make recommendations to the appropriate Committee(s) or Sub Committee(s) on matters affecting its remit where the authority to approve sits within the remit of another Committee or Sub Committee.

EXTERNAL ADVISERS:

Emphasising the close links with Community Planning Aberdeen's Anti-Poverty Group, the Committee will appoint advisers who are not members of the Council.

These External Advisers will be appointed by the Committee as follows:

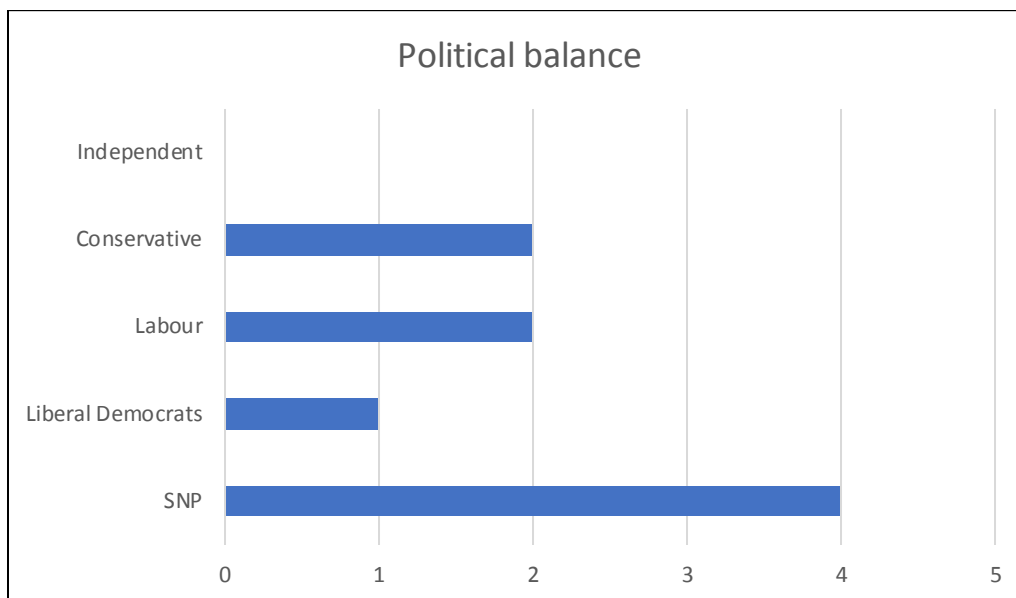
- 1 resident of Aberdeen with lived experience of poverty;
- Up to 2 people representing the charitable sector in Aberdeen;
- 1 person representing higher and further education in Aberdeen;
- 1 person representing key interest groups in Aberdeen (that may be appointed for a defined period of time); and
- 1 public health professional/practitioner who works in Aberdeen.

EXECUTIVE LEAD:- Executive Director of Corporate Services

3. Membership of the Committee during 2023/2024

3.1 The Anti-Poverty and Inequality Committee had 13 members, however in February 2024, Council agreed to reduce the number of elected members to nine.

3.2 The Committee composition is presented below:-



3.3 The Committee also has six External Advisers. The Advisers attend the Committee meetings, can ask questions and participate in any debate, but do not have the ability to move or second motions or amendments, nor to vote. These Advisers are:-

Professor John Bone	University of Aberdeen
Kerry Gavin (from 3 July 2024)	Lived Experience, CFINE
Sophy Green	Instant Neighbour
Dr Marjorie Johnston (from 3 July 2024)	Public Health, NHS Grampian
Edward Obi (from 1 November 2023)	Chair of ethnic minority group
Vacancy: Charitable Sector representative	
Maggie Hepburn (until 28 August 2024)	ACVO
Phil Mackie (until 12 June 2024)	Public Health, NHS Grampian



*Visiting Cairncry Community Centre
(L-R) Councillor Richard Brooks, Convener Councillor Christian Allard with External Advisers Edward Obi, Kerry Gavin and Dr Marjorie Johnston, and Vice Convener Councillor Desmond Bouse.*

3.4 The value the Advisors add to the Committee is reflected in these two quotes:

“The Committee’s commitment to addressing poverty head-on, through strategic partnerships and innovative solutions, is both commendable and essential. We are honoured to contribute to the vital work being done to tackle the challenges faced by our most vulnerable communities. We look forward to continuing our collaboration, ensuring that every effort is made to uplift and empower those in need, paving the way for a more equitable and prosperous future for all.” – Edward Obi.

“Thanks very much, it has been an interesting experience being an External Adviser and I look forward to hearing what happens next. ACVO will always be available as a source of information and support for the Committee.” – outgoing External Adviser Maggie Hepburn, Chief Executive of ACVO.

4. Membership Changes

4.1 Councillors Clark, Crockett, Graham and Greig were members of the Committee until February 2024 when places were reduced from 13 to nine. There were no other changes to the membership during the reporting period.

5. Member Attendance

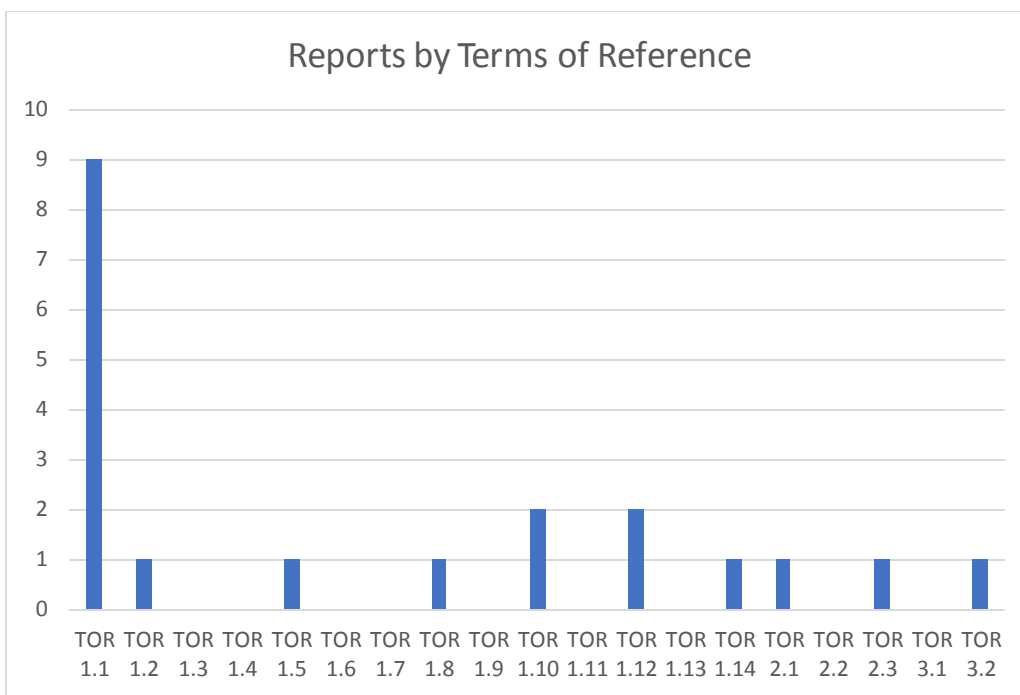
Member	Total Anticipated Attendances	Total Attendances	Substitutions
Councillor Christian Allard	5	5	
Councillor Desmond Bouse	5	3	Councillors Henrickson, Radley/ Yuill
Councillor Richard Brooks	5	5	
Councillor Derek Davidson	5	5	
Councillor Michael Hutchison	5	5	
Councillor Michael Kuszniir	5	5	
Councillor Jessica Mennie	5	4	Councillors Radley, Yuill
Councillor Deena Tissera	5	4	Councillor Thomson
Councillor Simon Watson	5	5	
The following were members until the membership of the Committee was reduced in February 2024:			
Councillor Donna Clark	2	2	
Councillor Barney Crockett	2	0	
Councillor Gordon Graham	2	0	Councillors Malik, Bonsell
Councillor Martin Greig	2	2	

6. Meeting Content

6.1 During the 2023/2024 reporting period (15 October 2023 to 15 October 2024), the Committee had five meetings and considered a total of 15 reports.

6.2 Terms of Reference

6.2.1 The following chart details how reports aligned to the Terms of Reference (set out at section 2 above) for the Committee.



6.2.2 During the course of 2023/2024 the Committee received reports under most of the main Terms of Reference which indicates that the Committee has discharged its role effectively throughout the course of the reporting period.

6.2.3 Some minor changes were made to the Committee Terms of Reference as a result of the Scheme of Governance 2024 Review. Additions were to approve for publication Local Child Poverty Action Reports in terms of the Child Poverty (Scotland) Act 2017 and Child Poverty Action Plans; and approve for publication the Council’s (i) reports on its progress on mainstreaming the equality duty, (ii) sets of equality outcomes, and (iii) reports on the progress made to achieve the equality outcomes, all in terms of the Equality Act 2010 (Specific Duties) (Scotland) Regulations 2012. The new Terms of Reference will continue to be monitored throughout the year, in preparation for the 2025 Scheme of Governance review.

6.2.4 The majority of reports fell under Terms of Reference 1.1 (Consider the impact of poverty on the city as a whole and targeted population levels, including on key groups such as children, minority ethnic communities and those of pensionable age who are known to be particularly disadvantaged by poverty), 1.10 (Consider the impact of poverty on the health and wellbeing of those experiencing it) and 1.12 (Consider matters relating to the provision of Credit Unions, fair and affordable banking and advice services).

7. Reports and Decisions

7.1 The following information relates to the committee reports and Notices of Motion presented to Committee throughout the reporting period, as well as the use of Standing Orders and engagement with members of the public.

	Total	Total Percentage of Reports
Confidential Reports	0	0
Exempt Reports	0	0
Number of reports where the Committee amended officer recommendations	0	0
Number of reports approved unanimously	3	20%
Number of reports or service updates requested during the consideration of another report to provide additional assurance and not in business planner	0 reports 2 Service Updates*	N/A
Number of reports delayed for further information	0	0
Number of times the Convener has had to remind Members about acceptable behaviour in terms of the Code of Conduct	0	0
Late reports received (i.e. reports not available for inspection at least 3 clear days before the meeting)	0	0
Number of referrals to Council under SO 34.1	1**	7%

* Two Service updates were requested – (1) on the potential criteria to be considered in order to make recommendations for the allocation of the £1 million funding; and (2) the costs and potential benefits of providing free school meals to Primary 6 and Primary 7 pupils.

** Referral by Councillor Kuszniir on 12 June 2024 in respect of the report on Accessing Money Advice Services.

Notices of Motion, Suspension of Standing Orders, Interface with the Public	
Number of Notices of Motion to Committee*	1
Number of times Standing Orders suspended	0
Specific Standing Orders suspended	N/A
Number of deputations requested	0
Number of deputations heard	N/A
Number of petitions considered	0

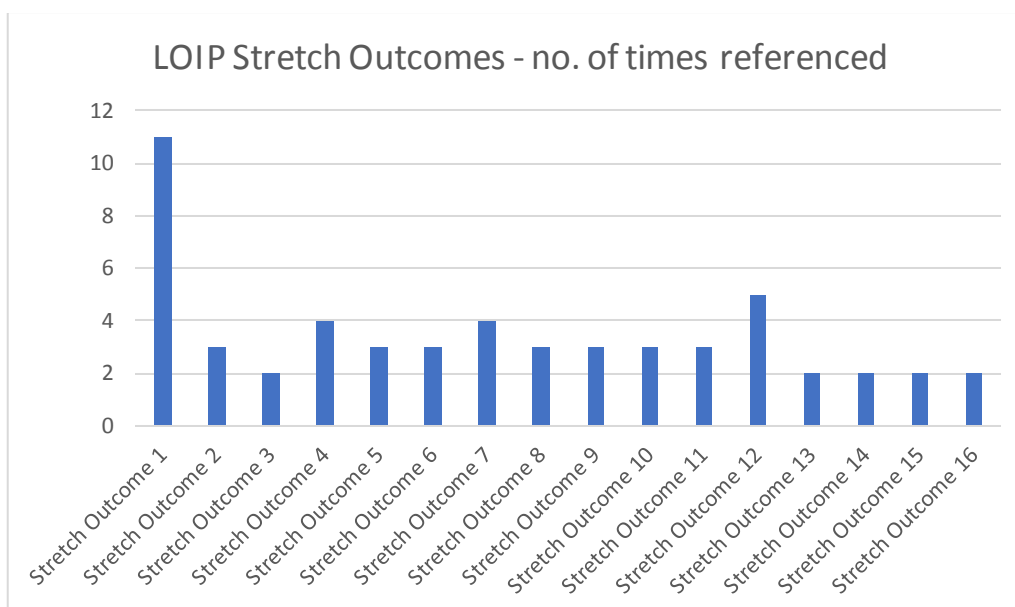
* Notice of Motion by Councillor Kuszniir on 20 March 2024, withdrawn at the meeting.

8. Reports with links to the Local Outcome Improvement Plan

- 8.1 The following table details, of the 15 reports, how each report linked to the Local Outcome Improvement Plan (LOIP Stretch Outcomes are appended to this report for reference at Appendix 1).

Stretch Outcomes were correct at the time of recording on the Committee reports, however, these were updated in April 2024 and therefore the Stretch Outcomes noted after that date refer to the new outcomes in Appendix 1.

As can be seen from the chart below, reports to the Anti-Poverty and Inequality Committee had links to all of the stretch outcomes. It is encouraging to see that the Stretch Outcomes have been used so frequently in reports presented, as it demonstrates that the reports are closely tied to meeting the objectives of the Local Outcome Improvement Plan.



9. Training and Development

- 9.1 New external advisers coming on to the Committee have received an induction which includes an introductory meeting and an invitation to join the Community Planning Aberdeen Anti-Poverty Group.
- 9.2 The Anti-Poverty Group provides a forum where external advisers can come together with wider partners from across the public, private and third sector in Aberdeen. Together the group explores key issues, collaborates on improvement activity and seeks to coordinate efforts across partner organisations. Organisations represented on the group include: Aberdeen City Council, Aberdeen City Health and Social Care

Partnership, ACVO, Aberdeen Foyer, CFINE, Fountain of Love Church, GREC, Aberdeen Health Determinants Collaboration, Instant Neighbour, Igbo Community Aberdeen, NHS Grampian, SCARF, SHMU, and the University of Aberdeen.

- 9.3 Through the Anti-Poverty Group, external advisers have had the opportunity to collaborate with wider partners in shaping anti-poverty strategy through the refresh of the Local Outcome Improvement Plan and Locality Plans. On 23 January 2024 the group lead an [economy themed stakeholder session](#) as part of the refresh process. The session considered the latest poverty data and insights and consulted on suggested priorities for action. This informed the refreshed Local Outcome Improvement Plan that was approved in April 2024.

Poverty – what we know

What the data is telling us..	What the community is telling us could be better..
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 8.4% of City Voice respondents (Dec 22) said that they were worried they would not have enough food to eat, up from 6.5% in Aug 21 32% of City Voice respondents (Dec 22) reported being worried they would not be able to heat their home – up from 10% in Aug 2021 Across four foodbanks in Aberdeen, almost 62,000 emergency food parcels were distributed in 2022/23, averaging over 5,000 parcels every month In Scotland in 2019/22 an estimated 21% of people were living in relative poverty after housing costs and it is estimated that 57% of those in relative poverty are in working households Provisional data for 2022/23 shows there were 1,772 homelessness applications in the year – an increase of 26.1% from 2021/22. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Better insulation and more energy efficient homes Type and availability of housing with more affordable housing available – rent vacant properties Access to affordable food, such as food banks. “in the central locality there are no big supermarkets in the community, mini versions can be expensive.”(Central locality only) Affordability of public transport – reducing transport poverty Increases to, and improvements for, making neighbourhoods ‘look’ better was suggested which could help build community spirit and community pride.

- 9.4 As part of the Anti-Poverty Group, external advisers have also had the opportunity to do a deep dive into topics including food insecurity, fuel poverty, No Recourse to Public Funds and the final topic of the year will be transport poverty. These development sessions support external advisers in their role with the Committee by creating space for them to share thoughts and ideas with wider partners in a less formal setting. External advisers are also supported by Council Officers in undertaking specific tasks such as making recommendations to the Committee on Cost of Living funding.
- 9.5 Further development opportunities will be considered for next year based on Committee business throughout the year, Executive Lead proposals and Member feedback on what may be required to assist them in performing their roles.

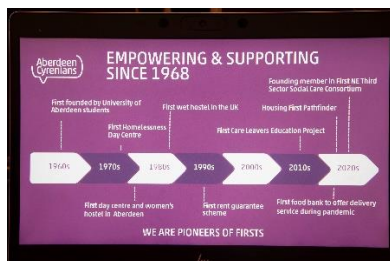
10. Code of Conduct Declarations and Transparency Statements

10.1 No declarations of interest and 16 transparency statements were made by Members during the reporting period. Information in respect of declarations of interest and transparency statements is measured to evidence awareness of the requirements to adhere to the Councillors' Code of Conduct and the responsibility to ensure fair decision-making.

11. Civic Engagement

11.1 During the reporting period, the Committee has engaged in a wide variety of engagement and consultation. The following bullet points list some, but not all, of the engagement undertaken to give a flavour of the work throughout the year.

- Visit to Aberdeen Cyrenians as part of their programme of visits to key organisations
- Visit to Cairncry Community Centre
- External Advisers of the Anti-Poverty and Inequality Committee and members of the Community Planning Aberdeen Anti-Poverty Outcome Improvement Group ran an economy themed stakeholder session as part of the Local Outcome Improvement Plan in January 2024
- Participation and promotion of [Challenge Poverty Week in Aberdeen 2024](#)



Aberdeen Cyrenians Visit, January 2024 (Photo: Norman Adams - Aberdeen City Council)

11.2 The visits have been extremely helpful for the Committee in learning about the work of organisations across the city, hearing at first hand the issues and difficulties faced by people experiencing poverty, as well as from staff and volunteers on the challenges of supporting vulnerable people. This builds on input to the Committee from our external advisers and Anti-Poverty Group. The commitment of the organisations in organising and hosting the visits is very much appreciated.



Cairncry Community Centre Visit, August 2024

The Committee helped encourage involvement in Challenge Poverty Week (7-13 October 2024) coordinated by the Poverty Alliance. A [briefing](#) was developed for elected members, staff, external partners and communities to promote the events planned in Aberdeen and other national events being held online. The week kicked off with a free drop in community fair held by SCARF to raise awareness of the range of support with the cost of living crisis available to people across Aberdeen. Mid-week, GREC launched their report about their ongoing work to explore solutions to tackle financial disadvantage in migrant households. The week culminated in Fairer Aberdeen Fund partners holding a special event aimed at raising awareness of the lived experience of poverty and inequality of Aberdeen's communities.

CHALLENGE POVERTY WEEK  **Mon 7th - Sun 13th October 2024**

  **Community Planning Aberdeen**

Aberdeen City Council's Anti-Poverty & Inequality Committee and Community Planning Aberdeen's Anti-Poverty Group encourage you to get involved in:

Challenge Poverty Week 7 October -13 October 2024

In this briefing find out:

- Page 1 What is Anti-Poverty Week?
- Page 2 What is going on in Aberdeen?
- Page 3 Online events
- Page 4 Other ways to get involved
- Page 5 Challenge Poverty Week Background and Footers

What is it?

- A week long campaign coordinated by the Poverty Alliance which promotes compassion and Justice
- It's about having a unified voice around the injustice in poverty
- It's a time to campaign to challenge the stigma and discrimination which can often be associated with poverty, one of the main barriers for people getting the support they need
- It's also an opportunity to share the anti-poverty work happening in Aberdeen across Scotland
- Involvement can be as small or as large as organisations want to go
- The campaign has been growing year on year

Policy Asks and Themes 



Events in Aberdeen

The aim is to encourage a coordinated effort between Aberdeen partners and communities to ensure we have a united voice and are united in **action and support**, **reducing stigma** and **improving the lives** of people affected by poverty.

Monday 7 October – Sunday 13 October @ 11.00am – 1pm, [shmu](#) radio
Challenge Poverty Packed Lunch



[shmu](#) will also host a week of Challenge Poverty "Packed Lunch" specials, with volunteer presenters interviewing third sector and community organisations about their work to tackle poverty in the City. Tune in on 99.8FM, or on DAB in most of the City. [shmu](#) will also be releasing a series of three visual podcasts during the week, exploring different themes relating to poverty (stigma, health inequalities, and unpaid carers), with lived experience guests alongside academics and representatives of the Joseph Rowntree Foundation and others.

Monday 7 October @ 10:00am – 4.00pm, Music Hall
Empower Aberdeen



A free drop in community fair, providing direct access to support available across Aberdeen. It will be a day of sharing services, experiences and networking with other like-minded organisations in Aberdeen to improve the lives and homes of those living in our city/area.

Aberdeen City Council and Community Planning Aberdeen are just two of the stall holders at the event. All community organisations being invited to sign up by following the link [MusicHall2024 \(scarf.org.uk\)](#)

The event is being sponsored by Community Planning Aberdeen Responsible Business Partner [Vital Energy](#) who are paying for the cost of the venue.

Monday 7 October @ 3pm, Marischal College
Marischal College to be lit up in solidarity for Challenge Poverty Week



The Lord Provost will light up Marischal College pink and blue on Monday 7 October to mark the beginning of Challenge Poverty Week.

11.2 Looking ahead, in December 2024 members are taking part in the AberNecessities Christmas Volunteering opportunity, helping to play a role in the Believe in Magic campaign which aims to provide essential items and support to children living in poverty across the North East of Scotland, ensuring, “no child misses out on the wonder of the most magical time of the year”.

A key piece of work this year was progression on Citizens’ Assemblies. The Committee has received three reports on this subject, with the most recent resolution to commission the Scottish Women’s Budget Group (SWBG) to deliver an assembly approach on poverty and gender inequality in Aberdeen, Scottish Women’s Budget Group will use mixed method tools to explore the issue and identify solutions with participants. Since July, the organisation has been working with community groups in Aberdeen to recruit a diverse range of women to be part of a steering group. The Scottish Women’s Budget Group is due to report to the Committee on its findings in 2025.

12. Executive Lead to the Committee - Commentary

12.1 Given the public's interest in Committee activities, transparency in reporting is essential. I am pleased to note that all matters this year were discussed in public sessions, with no exempt reports.

Officers consistently integrate feedback from Committee Members to ensure that reports are transparent and accessible. They appreciate the scrutiny and high interest shown in their work across the city.

Throughout the year, officers have delivered detailed reports to the Anti-Poverty and Inequality Committee, highlighting the Council's extensive efforts to tackle poverty. These initiatives span areas such as education, housing and homelessness, employability through City Growth, and the work of the Financial Inclusion Team. Additionally, the Scottish Welfare Fund, managed by the Revenues and Benefits Team, is crucial in this fight against poverty.

It is heartening to see a significant focus on cost of living challenges that our communities may face. Our external advisers, partners and Community Planning Aberdeen's Anti-Poverty Outcome Improvement Group members have been instrumental in offering advice and support to ensure the committee members are offered relevant and local information to assist in determining business presented to committee.

This has led to members being updated on support measures for individuals facing the cost-of-living crisis. These include assistance from the Scottish Welfare Fund, help acquiring emergency food supplies, the development of food pantry memberships, and support with rising energy costs through fuel vouchers. Initial explorations of cash-first approaches have also been highlighted to the committee.

Another key report submitted this year was the Child Poverty Action Report, mandated to outline local efforts against child poverty. The Child Poverty Action Plan is now part of the Children's Services Plan to enable effective, integrated implementation.

13. The Year Ahead

13.1 Committee members and officers have welcomed visits to third sector organisations throughout the year, and these will continue during the year ahead. These visits highlight the fantastic support our partners deliver within the city and help promote their invaluable contribution.

13.2 Aside from the regular annual reports and performance reports received for assurance, a selection of the business for the next year is listed below:-

- Findings and actions from the Accessing Money Advice and Advisory Services survey
- Evaluation on delivering a Citizen Assembly approach on poverty and gender inequality.
- Evaluation report on the 2024/25 Cost of Living funding

- Thematic reports from External Advisers/Community Planning Aberdeen Anti- Poverty Outcome Improvement Group.

13.3 The UNCRC (Incorporation) (Scotland) Act 2024 came into force in 2024. Local authorities have to fully embed children's rights into their policies and practice and children can legally challenge when their rights are breached. There are additional reporting obligations which may impact on the reports to be considered by this Committee.

Appendix 1 – Local Outcome Improvement Plan Stretch Outcomes

Economy	
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
2.	74% employment rate for Aberdeen City by 2026
People (Children & Young People)	
3.	95% of all children will reach their expected developmental milestones by their 27-30 month review by 2026
4.	90% of children and young people report they feel listened to all of the time by 2026
5.	By meeting the health and emotional wellbeing needs of our care experienced children and young people they will have the same levels of attainment in education and positive destinations as their peers by 2026
6.	95% of children living in our priority neighbourhoods (Quintiles 1 & 2) will sustain a positive destination upon leaving school by 2026
7.	83.5% fewer young people (under 18) charged with an offence by 2026
8.	100% of our children with Additional Support Needs/disabilities will experience a positive destination
People (Adults)	
9.	10% fewer adults (over 18) charged with more than one offence by 2026
10.	Healthy life expectancy (time lived in good health) is five years longer by 2026
11.	Reduce the rate of both alcohol related deaths and drug related deaths by 10% by 2026
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.
Place	
13.	Addressing climate change by reducing Aberdeen's carbon emissions by at least 61% by 2026 and adapting to the impacts of our changing climate
14.	Increase sustainable travel: 38% of people walking; 5% of people cycling and wheeling as main mode of travel and a 5% reduction in car miles by 2026
15.	26% of Aberdeen's area will be protected and/or managed for nature and 60% of people report they feel that spaces and buildings are well cared for by 2026
Community Empowerment	
16.	100% increase in the proportion of citizens who feel able to participate in decisions that help change things for the better by 2026