

## ABERDEEN CITY COUNCIL

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COMMITTEE: Finance and Resources

DATE: 28<sup>th</sup> January 2010

DIRECTOR: Stewart Carruth

TITLE OF REPORT: Fairer Scotland Fund Thematic Programmes and Staffing Update

REPORT NUMBER: CG/09/178

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### 1. PURPOSE OF REPORT

To provide members with an update on progress with the thematic programmes of employability, financial inclusion, health and literacies (see Appendix A) agreed by the Fairer Scotland Fund Board and currently receiving Fairer Scotland Fund grant. The report also seeks permission to extend the Fairer Scotland Fund Support Staff arrangements from April 2010 onwards (see Agenda Item 12.1).

### 2. RECOMMENDATION(S)

The committee is asked to:

- a) consider and comment on the update on progress with the thematic programmes of activity being funded by the Fairer Scotland Fund
- b) advise the Fairer Scotland Fund Board of the Committees comments on the thematic programmes.
- c) approve arrangements for the Fairer Scotland Fund staffing as outlined in the Business Case (Agenda Item 12.1).

### 3. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

The Fairer Scotland Fund is a relatively new fund created by the Scottish Government, in December 2008 aimed at tackling poverty and deprivation. The first two years of the fund has been ringfenced within the Council's budget for the Community Planning Partnership in order to support partners to work together to tackle area-based and individual poverty; and to help more people access and sustain employment opportunities. In 2010 -11 the Fairer Scotland Fund is no longer ringfenced and The Aberdeen City Alliance allocation of £2.843 million will be paid to Aberdeen City Council as part of it's block allocation paid via Revenue Support Grant.

At the Finance and Resources Committee on the 12<sup>th</sup> November 2009 members considered, in light of the unringfencing of Fairer Scotland Fund from 2010/2011, options for the future provision, disbursement and management of the Fairer Scotland Fund in 2010 -11. The Committee agreed to consider the level of funding allocation from the identified £2.843 million in the 2010 -11 Revenue Support Grant to the Aberdeen City Alliances Fairer Scotland Fund as part of the

Council's budget setting process. The Committee also agreed to receive a further report regarding the arrangements for the Fairer Scotland Fund staff team.

#### 4. SERVICE & COMMUNITY IMPACT

The Fairer Scotland Fund outcomes are reflected in the Single Outcome Agreement. These are also contained within the recently approved Aberdeen City Council Interim Business Plan. Funding is being applied to support the following specific national outcomes:

- We realise our full economic potential with more and better employment opportunities for our people
- Our children have the best start in life and are ready to succeed
- We live longer, healthier lives
- We are better educated, more skilled and more successful, renowned for our research and innovation
- Our young people are successful learners, confident individuals, effective contributors and responsible citizens
- We live our lives safe from crime, disorder and danger
- We have strong, resilient and supportive communities where people take responsibility for their own actions and how they affect others
- We have tackled the significant inequalities in Scottish society

The Fairer Scotland Fund also contributes to a wide range of objectives contained within the Council's policy statement in relation to tackling disadvantage, regeneration and closing the gap between Aberdeen's most disadvantaged communities and the rest of the city.

#### 5. OTHER IMPLICATIONS

##### Legal

Projects funded by the Fairer Scotland Fund Board are required to meet specific terms and conditions and comply with State Aid regulations, where required, and with guidance to local authorities on "Following the Public Pound" policy. Application for grant is through an open process to the Board.

##### Personnel

Through the thematic and neighbourhood programmes, currently being funded to support frontline services that are provided by the Council, Community, Voluntary and other public services sector partners, a combined total of 60 FTE staff are paid from the fund.

The Fairer Scotland Fund provides funding for a Support Team comprising 2 FTE Programme Co-ordinators, 1 FTE Development Officer and 1 FTE Monitoring and Evaluation Officer.

The team is responsible for fund allocation, reporting, evaluation of Fairer Scotland Fund programme projects and initiatives, partnership building, advising applicants, supporting the Regeneration Matters community representatives group, administering and managing the Fairer Scotland Fund on behalf of the Fairer Scotland Fund Board, 120 projects are being funded by the Board.

Currently, staff are employed on a fixed term basis until 31<sup>st</sup> March 2010. The staff are employed on fixed termed contracts primarily due to these posts being funded through external monies which were renewed annually and have accrued employment rights equivalent to permanent staff.

Given the unringfencing of the Fairer Scotland Fund from 2010 it is proposed, subject to the Council agreeing the Fairer Scotland Fund allocations that these posts should be continued on a fixed term basis for a further year. These posts will form part of the consideration of the further restructure of the Council below 3<sup>rd</sup> tier within Corporate Governance.

The Business Case for this proposed staffing arrangement is set out at Item 12.1 on this agenda.

#### Property

Staff are currently located within the Community Planning and Regeneration Service, (Ground Floor, St Nicholas House).

#### Equipment

This is currently being provided.

#### Sustainability and Environmental

The Fairer Scotland Fund has an important role to play in providing services aimed at tackling poverty and contributes to improving sustainability by improving the environment and well being for communities and individuals. The thematic programmes aimed at addressing unemployment, providing financial inclusion services, improving health and literacies for people help towards enabling more sustainable communities

#### Risk Management

Failure to continue to address the needs of Aberdeen's most disadvantaged communities would have a detrimental effect for the individual and communities involvement and potentially increased costs in the long term for public services. Supporting people into employment, maximising people's income, providing early intervention in relation to education and health is not only a better outcome for individuals but reduces the costs involved in responding to the effects of poverty in the long run.

Failure to provide funding for the Support Team could lead to loss of highly experienced and skilled staff in the area of work and weaken the current arrangements which ensure good financial management and provide a strong basis for increased partnership working with stakeholders.

## 6. REPORT

### Main Considerations

- 6.1 The Finances and Resources Committee of the 12<sup>th</sup> November 2009 considered a report from the Corporate Director of Governance regarding the "Community Planning Partnership Fairer Scotland Fund" (CG/11/100).
- 6.2 The Committee noted that the Aberdeen City Alliance were awaiting an update on thematic spend, and requested a report be brought back further to this. TACA's Fairer Scotland Fund Board met on the 10<sup>th</sup> December 2009 and considered reports on thematic spend. Appendix A provides members with information on thematic programmes for the first 6 months April - October 2009.
- 6.3 The Finance and Resources Committee of 12<sup>th</sup> November 2009 also agreed that updates should be provided for the Corporate Performance and Policy Committee on the outcomes achieved through the investment in Fairer Scotland Fund (in February and October). A further report will therefore be provided for the 4<sup>th</sup> March Corporate Policy and Performance Committee and reported through the Single Outcome Agreement performance report.

### Fairer Scotland Fund Staffing - Background

- 6.4 The Fairer Scotland Fund is relatively new fund created by the Scottish Government in December 2007 aimed at tackling poverty and deprivation across Scotland. From April 2008 the Fairer Scotland Fund effectively replaced five previous national programmes that had operated in the city including the Community Regeneration Fund and the Working for Families Fund.
- 6.5 With the introduction of the Fairer Scotland Fund and the effective merger of previous programmes the Fairer Scotland Fund is currently operating on the basis of 3 FTEs - 2 posts co-ordinating and managing the specific programmes and 1 Development Officer post dedicated to provide support for community engagement.
- 6.6 The Business Case (Agenda Item 12.1) requests that subject to the Council agreeing a continuation of Fairer Scotland Fund to The Aberdeen City Alliance for 2010 - 11 that the current staffing compliment of 3 FTEs should be continued. The Business Case also identifies a change in title for the 2 Co-ordinator posts to reflect the changed names to the Fairer Scotland Fund.

- 6.7 It is proposed that the Fairer Scotland Fund Support Team posts shall be continued on a fixed term basis until 31<sup>st</sup> March 2011 and that these posts will form part of the consideration of the further restructure of the Council below 3<sup>rd</sup> tier within Corporate Governance.

7. REPORT AUTHOR DETAILS

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8. BACKGROUND PAPERS