

## ABERDEEN CITY COUNCIL

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<b>COMMITTEE</b>	Operational Delivery Committee
<b>DATE</b>	31 <sup>st</sup> August 2022
<b>EXEMPT</b>	No
<b>CONFIDENTIAL</b>	No
<b>REPORT TITLE</b>	Child Poverty six monthly update report
<b>REPORT NUMBER</b>	CUS/22/150
<b>DIRECTOR</b>	Andy MacDonald
<b>CHIEF OFFICER</b>	Derek McGowan
<b>REPORT AUTHOR</b>	Derek McGowan
<b>TERMS OF REFERENCE</b>	Terms of Reference:  1.1.1  1.1.3

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### 1. PURPOSE OF REPORT

- 1.1 At the Operational Delivery Committee on 13<sup>th</sup> January 2021, it was agreed that the Committee would receive a half yearly report on the actions being taken by Community Planning Aberdeen (CPA) to reduce and eradicate child poverty around the priorities for that year.

### 2. RECOMMENDATION(S)

That the Committee: -

- 2.1 notes the work being undertaken this financial year to reduce and eradicate child poverty.

### 3. CURRENT SITUATION

- 3.1 The Child Poverty (Scotland) Act 2017 (the Act) creates a requirement for Local Authorities and Local Health Boards to annually agree a Child Poverty Action Report (CPAR). At Operational Delivery Committee on the 17<sup>th</sup> September 2019, the Committee agreed to adopt the Local Outcome Improvement Plan (LOIP) as the Council's Child Poverty Action Plan for the years 2019-22.
- 3.2 The Act requires each Local Authority and NHS Board to publish a CPAR and undertake annual monitoring and reporting to demonstrate progress against statutory targets.
- 3.3 A local child poverty action report must describe any measures taken in the area of the local authority during the reporting year by the local authority and each relevant Health Board for the purpose of contributing to the meeting of the child poverty targets, and measures that are proposed to be taken to meet these targets.

- 3.4 Additionally, a local child poverty action report must describe any income maximisation measures taken in the area of the local authority during the reporting year to provide pregnant women and families with children with—
- a) information, advice, and assistance about eligibility for financial support, and
  - b) assistance to apply for financial support;
- 3.5 The report must in particular also describe any measures taken during the reporting year, or which are proposed to be taken, in the area of the local authority in relation to children living in households whose income is adversely affected, or whose expenditure is increased, because a member of the household has one or more protected characteristics.
- 3.6 The Act states that progress against these targets will be scrutinised nationally by the Poverty and Inequality Commission. However, at a local level it is the responsibility of the Local Authority and Health Board to publish, as soon as practical after the end of each financial year, a report on progress locally.
- 3.7 The Population Needs Assessment used as the basis for the refresh of the LOIP in 2021 identified that the rate of child poverty in Aberdeen was estimated to be 21.8%, or around 5500 children. Poverty is defined as 'below 60% median income after housing costs'.
- 3.8 This report sets out the measures that are being taken by the Council, NHS and other partners to tackle and mitigate the effects of child poverty during 2022/23.

## **4 KEY WORK DELIVERED SINCE 1<sup>ST</sup> APRIL 2022**

- 4.1 Through Community Planning, key achievements include:
- Completion of the Community Pantry project, led by CFINE through the Anti-Poverty Group. This resulted in an increase in membership of community pantries of 146%, and an increase in volunteers of 188% from January 2021 to April 2022. This work will continue to be developed and embedded.
  - Access to unclaimed benefits, with over £40,000 in additional income being made available through outreach work undertaken in communities by Aberdeen City Council's Financial Advice Team, in conjunction with Education through the use of Scottish Government grant funding.
  - Continuing increase in the number of Living Wage accredited employers in Aberdeen
  - Promotion of the ABZ Works platform to support people into employment, with 110 people supported to access employment, 34 of these being parents.
  - Ongoing support to minority ethnic communities for employability and community support, including the Power Tools programme for preparing for employment.

- The provision of over £3m in grant funding to community organisations with a focus on providing support to children and young people. This includes:
  - £1.6m commitment through the Fairer Aberdeen Fund
  - £1.2m through revenue grant funding to community groups and associations
  - £750k commitment to Leased and Learning Centres across Aberdeen
  - £120k commitment through the Common Good Fund
- Summer in the City activities are ongoing, focussed on the 6 key priority areas for Child Poverty and funded by the Scottish Government. This is supported by a range of partnership agencies. Final participant and outcome numbers will be provided once these sessions end on 19<sup>th</sup> August 2022.
- Provision of Scottish Welfare Fund benefits of £200k so far this year.
- Ongoing provision of free school meals, with efforts to increase up take of the meals by those eligible.

4.2 Wider single service work continues across the partnership, including key Council services such as Housing, Education, Social Work; NHS Grampian, through Aberdeen Council of Voluntary Organisations, and Grampian Regional Equality Council. This ongoing work is reflected in agency delivery plans, including the Council delivery Plan and Commissioning Intentions.

4.3 Work is also ongoing to mitigate and alleviate where possible the cost of living crisis, with a report developed for Operational Delivery Committee on the 31<sup>st</sup> August 2022 with recommendations to allocate £1m to anti-poverty measures.

## **5 FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

5.1 Financial implications relating to this report would result from failure to achieve the outcomes sought for children and families across the City. Public services face significant challenges on expenditure, with financial projections indicating that these pressures will remain. Demand management is a key driver in helping meet these challenges, and failing to address child poverty may mean that costs associated with child poverty do not reduce, adding to projected pressures in coming years.

## **6 LEGAL IMPLICATIONS**

6.1 There are no direct legal implications arising from the recommendations of this report.

## **7. ENVIRONMENTAL IMPLICATIONS**

7.1 There are no direct environmental implications arising from the recommendations of this report.

## 8. 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?
<b>Strategic Risk</b>	Risk that the Council along with partners does not meet the requirements of the legislation, to the long term detriment of children and families in Aberdeen	Partnership work to mitigate the effects of poverty across the city	L	Yes
<b>Compliance</b>	Risk relates to failure to comply with statutory requirements	Provision of the LOIP as Aberdeen City Child Poverty Action Plan; annual reporting.	L	Yes
<b>Operational</b>	Failure to meet statutory targets	This work will improve outcomes for children and families across the City.	L	Yes
<b>Financial</b>	Risk relates to non-achievement of targets long term and failing to reduce demand through early intervention in key drivers. Failure to achieve the outcomes desired will mean residents requiring support from public agencies for longer.	Joint working and multi-agency service redesign to identify appropriate measures.	L	Yes
<b>Reputational</b>	Risk relates to failure to meet the statutory targets.	Meeting the LOIP outcomes.	L	Yes
<b>Environment / Climate</b>	Risk as opportunity	Meeting the LOIP outcomes will improve the environment for children.	L	Yes

## 11. OUTCOMES

Local Outcome Improvement Plan Themes	
	<b>Impact of Report</b>
<b>Prosperous Economy</b>	This report demonstrates the positive range of work being undertaken at service and partnership level to improve the quality of life for families and children in poverty.
<b>Prosperous People</b>	This report demonstrates the positive range of work being undertaken at service and partnership level to improve the quality of life for families and children in poverty.
<b>Prosperous Place</b>	This report demonstrates the positive range of work being undertaken at service and partnership level to improve the quality of life for families and children in poverty.
<b>Enabling Technology</b>	Digital support provided in several areas including education provision and Connecting Scotland.

## 12. IMPACT ASSESSMENTS

Assessment	Outcome
<b>Integrated Impact Assessment</b>	Stage 1 assessment completed.
<b>Data Protection Impact Assessment</b>	Not required.

## 13. BACKGROUND PAPERS

None.

## 14. APPENDICES

None.

## 12. REPORT AUTHOR CONTACT DETAILS

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