

## ABERDEEN CITY COUNCIL

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<b>COMMITTEE</b>	Anti-Poverty and Inequality
<b>DATE</b>	1 November 2023
<b>EXEMPT</b>	No
<b>CONFIDENTIAL</b>	No
<b>REPORT TITLE</b>	External Advisers report
<b>REPORT NUMBER</b>	CUS/23/319
<b>DIRECTOR</b>	Andy MacDonald
<b>CHIEF OFFICER</b>	Jacqui McKenzie
<b>REPORT AUTHOR</b>	External advisers; Paul Tytler
<b>TERMS OF REFERENCE</b>	1.1

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### **1. PURPOSE OF REPORT**

- 1.1 To provide committee with an update report from the external advisers.

### **2. RECOMMENDATION(S)**

That the Committee:

- 2.1 Notes the report from the external advisers.

### **3. CURRENT SITUATION**

- 3.1 The external advisers were involved in a joint workshop with the Anti-Poverty Outcome Improvement Group (OIG) on 19<sup>th</sup> September to begin the process of refreshing the Local Outcome Improvement Plan (LOIP). A summary of the development actions are contained in Appendix 1.
- 3.2 In addition, the external advisors have been involved in a bid led by Aberdeen Council of Voluntary Organisations (ACVO) and a group of third sector and public partners to the Scottish Government Cash First fund. The outcome of the bid is expected to be known by the end of October. Appendix 1 contains a summary of the bid proposal and expected outcomes.

### **4. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

- 4.1 There are no direct financial implications arising from the recommendation in this report.
- 4.2 In the event that the bid to the Scottish Government Cash First Fund is successful, any supporting activity required from Council officers will be accommodated from within existing resources.

## 5. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

5.1 There are no direct legal implications arising from the recommendations in this report.

## 6. ENVIRONMENTAL IMPLICATIONS

6.1 There are no direct environmental implications arising from the recommendation in 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	None	None	L	Yes
Compliance	None	None	L	Yes
Operational	None	None	L	Yes
Financial	None	None	L	Yes
Reputational	None	None	L	Yes
Environment / Climate	None	None	L	Yes

## 8. OUTCOMES

<u><a href="#">COUNCIL DELIVERY PLAN 2023-2024</a></u>	
	Impact of Report
<b>Aberdeen City Council Policy Statement</b>  <u><a href="#">Working in Partnership for Aberdeen</a></u>	There is no proposal in this report
<u><a href="#">Aberdeen City Local Outcome Improvement Plan 2016-26</a></u>	
Prosperous Economy Stretch Outcomes	There is no proposal in this report
Prosperous People Stretch Outcomes	There is no proposal in this report
Prosperous Place Stretch Outcomes	There is no proposal in this report
<b>Regional and City Strategies</b>	There is no proposal in this report

## 9. IMPACT ASSESSMENTS

Assessment	Outcome
<b>Integrated Impact Assessment</b>	It is confirmed by Chief Officer Jacqui McKenzie that no Integrated Impact Assessment is required
<b>Data Protection Impact Assessment</b>	not required.
<b>Other</b>	n/a

## 10. BACKGROUND PAPERS

10.1 [Cash-First Fund: form and guidance - gov.scot \(www.gov.scot\)](http://www.gov.scot)

## 11. APPENDICES

11.1 Appendix 1 – External advisers report

## 12. REPORT AUTHOR CONTACT DETAILS

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## **External Advisers Report**

ACVO have led a group of third sector and public partners in developing and submitting a bid to the Scottish Government. The bid is for £200k over two years, and the outcome is expected to be known in October 2023.

### **Aberdeen Cash First Network - Project Summary**

The project aims to provide speedy access to cash-first help at a time of crisis including flexible cash payments to alleviate immediate pressures. The purpose is to position food banks as a last resort for emergency help in the city.

The proposal would establish a flexible crisis fund to provide direct cash payments to people facing financial emergency. The project would identify improvements to the co-ordination and sharing of information between existing services currently providing emergency food along with financial advice. A review would be undertaken to improve the resources available to the public with a view to making it easier and quicker to find the right type of help at the right time whilst understanding the limitations caused by digital exclusion.

The project would use the knowledge of those with direct experience of financial crisis to design the parameters of a flexible crisis fund, to identify barriers to accessing cash focused support services in Aberdeen, and to identify pathways to other 'wrap around' support services which can help promote longer term financial stability.

The funding would also be used to employ a co-ordinator for the project, to establish a flexible crisis fund and to fund a lived experience group.

The co-ordinator would establish a lived experience group and work with them to understand what level of emergency financial help would be most helpful and at what points in the crisis timeline. The group would also use their experience as service users to identify barriers – systematic, psychological or other – to accessing financial help quickly.

The co-ordinator would work with partner organisations to improve existing cash-first pathways, establish new ways of working between services and identify circumstances where emergency cash payments have the greatest impact.

A new shared approach and ambition around cash first would then be extended to other organisations in the city beyond the life of the project.

### **Project Outcomes**

A cash first approach would be co-designed and tested - but not cash only – the approach would be to reduce people's need to access food banks and move towards making them a last resort for emergency assistance in Aberdeen.

Each provider has much to offer, however it can be challenging to navigate and ensure the right support at the right time. Living with poverty can be exhausting and so the project will support ways to improve the referral and support pathways between partners, removing or reducing barriers identified by those from the target group working with them to support streamlining of processes where required.

The key elements of the project would be co-designed with people who have lived experience supporting power and voice that can influence local and national policy.

The outcomes would include an understanding of the effective timing and level of emergency cash payments and the appropriate route for distribution with a view to seeking ongoing funding to support this method of emergency intervention.

The impact of the cash first intervention would be measured with each individual to measure what works. The hope would be that those who access support through the project no longer require emergency food aid.

Improved and ongoing understanding across all partners as to what each has on offer across the city.

In the event that the bid is unsuccessful, the group led by ACVO will request consideration by the Anti-Poverty Committee and wider Council for support to enable the work to progress.

### **Anti-Poverty Workshop 19<sup>th</sup> September 2023**

The external advisers joined the Anti-Poverty Outcome Improvement Group for a workshop to begin the process of refreshing the Local Outcome Improvement Plan (LOIP) and the potential to refresh the stretch outcome and improvement aims in the plan.

A number of development actions were identified, including:

- Understand lived experience through third sector to determine causal factors of poverty
- Understand impact of cash first on emergency food demand/minimum income
- Understand impact of Free School Meal vouchers during school holidays on demand
- Develop more consistent data on emergency food provision through Food Poverty Action Aberdeen
- Identify key indicators or proxy for poverty to improve clarity on measurement and progress
- Improve public debt recovery and write off processes
- Support people with no recourse to public funds

- Just Transition, new types of businesses
- Develop systematic resilience

The focus will be on reducing the use of foodbanks and the development of cash first approaches, along with wrap around support, including place-based benefit and financial advice services. The outcomes from the workshop are being further developed and will now feed in to the community planning process for refreshing the LOIP.

## **Anti-Poverty and Inequality Committee External Advisers**

**November 2023**