



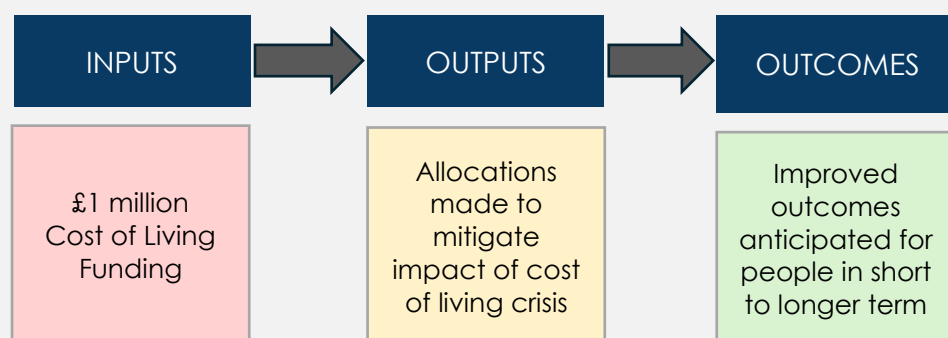
# Supporting People with the Cost of Living Crisis

## Evaluation 2024-25



In March 2024, Aberdeen City Council agreed to provide £1m to mitigate against the ongoing cost of living crisis. During 2024-25 the Council's Anti-Poverty and Inequality Committee agreed recommendations on how this funding should be spent to support people.

While all households will be affected by increases in the cost of living, national and local data shows it is those with lower incomes and little to no savings who will be most impacted as they spend a higher proportion than average on energy and food, and therefore have less flexibility in their budget to cope with price rises.



In **response** to the crisis, funding was allocated to provide food, to ensure people experiencing food insecurity are able to access good, nutritious food to meet their needs; and fuel, to ensure people are able to heat their homes over winter. Funding was also allocated to provide additional Scottish Welfare Fund Crisis Grants, and essentials for children and families.

Taking **early intervention** action, funding was allocated to support food pantries and provide financial advice, to support people on benefits who can't afford their housing costs, to provide winter clothing to ensure children have the clothing they need during cold weather, and provision for low income families to attend a pantomime at Christmas

With a **prevention** approach, funding was allocated to support elderly and disabled people to live independently and safely at home, to reduce delayed discharges for people ready to go home, to provide childcare costs for parents to get back into work, and to raise awareness of poverty to help people understand the effects on individuals and communities.

*My priority was to keep myself safe with a roof over my head*

***Thank you for enabling me to have a decent quality of life!***

**7.6% of respondents reported they could only afford to heat their home or feed themselves.**

**8.9% of respondents were hungry but did not eat.**

**13.6% of respondents were unable to eat healthy and nutritious food.**

**13.3% of respondents ate less than they thought they should.**

**24.6% of respondents were worried they would not be able to heat their home.**

**12.6% of respondents went without heating for more than one day.**

**£1m** invested

**21,013** people supported

**159** tonnes of food distributed equivalent of **378,480** meals

**61** people receiving financial advice

**£232,490** client financial gain

**696** households receiving payments to help with fuel bills

**82** households removed from fuel poverty

**1,108** people receiving a Crisis Grant

**80** pregnant women receiving maternity clothes and hospital bags

**146** people supported with discretionary housing payments

**4,381** children receiving winter clothes

**300** families and children provided with a Christmas panto package

**7** parents supported into employment

**4** poverty awareness films produced

**4** families supported to arrange Power of Attorney



A lorry load of purchased food arriving at CFINE

# Food Poverty Action Aberdeen

**159 tonnes of food distributed**  
**378,480 equivalent number of meals**  
**85 partners distributed to**  
**500 pantry weekly shops**  
**159 tins of infant formula provided**  
**61 people receiving financial advice through outreach sessions**  
**9 organisations receiving outreach support**  
**£232,490 total client financial gain**  
**9,836 people supported**

£493,298 was allocated to Food Poverty Action Aberdeen, a partnership of organisations providing support to people experiencing food insecurity. This has been used by CFINE to procure and distribute food to partners throughout the city. The purchased food supplemented the existing distribution of surplus food accessed through the food industry.

Free pantry memberships were provided to increase the number of people benefiting from the community pantries. Pantries offer a dignified alternative to emergency food provision, providing increased choice and access to wrap-around services, including the SAFE Team. Funding also supported outreach financial advice from CFINE's SAFE Team, to prioritise early intervention and prevention by providing person-centred wrap-around services which tackle underlying reasons that can lead someone to request emergency food.

CFINE is the lead partner of Food Poverty Action Aberdeen and FareShare Regional Centre covering the city. During 2024-25 CFINE used its existing contacts and agreements with suppliers to successfully procure large quantities of non-perishable ambient food. To maximise value for money, the food was procured wholesale in bulk by the lorry load (26 pallets at a time). The food was then processed, ensuring it was

logged correctly on CFINE's bespoke warehouse management system, meaning full traceability of all products.

The food was distributed throughout CFINE's network of Community Food Members in the City, provided in mixed pallet form, or in smaller quantities based on individual organisations capacity/storage. CFINE continued to gather feedback from Community Food Members and adjusted the types of products purchased based on the needs of our partners.

During the funding period, demand for emergency food continued to be extremely high. CFINE's own food bank alone regularly distributed in excess of 4,000 food parcels per month, figures not seen since the height of the Covid19 pandemic. Partner organisations reported significant increases in demand, and CFINE responded regularly to additional requests for support.

Coupled with the food provision was increased capacity for SAFE Outreach support. This ensured a member of the SAFE Team visited community organisations, providing a place-based approach to supporting individual beneficiaries. This was achieved by physically being in local communities, providing a 1 to 1 person-centred service.

By providing drop-in services, attending community groups, and facilitating pop-up engagement events, more individuals were able to access financial advice, benefits maximisation, and money management support. Immediate interventions helped individuals avoid eviction with referrals to Aberdeen City Council's rent assistance fund, secure emergency funds from the Scottish Welfare Fund, cash first initiatives, energy vouchers, access to food provision including pantry memberships, and receive essential household support using CFINE's referral pathways and knowledge. Through outreach efforts beneficiaries gained knowledge of their entitlements, local advisory services such as Grampian Housing Association's SMART Money Advice Project, Christians Against Poverty, Aberdeen Citizens Advice Bureau, and Aberdeen City Council Financial Inclusion Team, and how to access support with self or agency referrals and information about how to follow up referrals.

Beneficiaries who engaged with SAFE Outreach developed sustainable financial management strategies, reducing reliance on crisis support services. Increased levels of wellbeing and confidence were reported, with reduced stress and anxiety associated with financial insecurity. Some participants reported feeling more in control of their finances, identified during



follow up conversations with those supported.

By embedding financial capability education and advice into community settings, beneficiaries were more likely to seek help proactively, preventing future financial crises as they were being met at a location they know, with staff and volunteers who they found approachable and relatable in terms of their ongoing situation and circumstances. The combination of immediate financial interventions and longer-term empowerment strategies ensured that those facing financial hardship were supported in both crisis situations and in building financial resilience for the future.



**Example of a Pantry shop**

Part of the funding went towards providing 500 free memberships of CFINE's Community Food Pantry, allowing for these to be 'sponsored' meaning beneficiaries could use the service for free. Each 'shop' at the pantry is valued at between £15-£20, and members can pick which items they require. This is a more dignified alternative to a food bank and is aimed not only at maximising income for beneficiaries, but crucially has integrated access to all of CFINE's wrap-around services which tackle the underlying causes of poverty & food insecurity. Engagement with these services, such as support from SAFE and employability support, can lead to people moving out of poverty permanently.

The service provided immediate positive impact in enabling members to free up budget to purchase other essentials. In the long term the majority of members will utilise the pantry until their financial situation improves.

**Instant Neighbour receives the Cost-of-Living funded food once a week, distributed through CFINE. In 2024-25, we received 16.01 tonnes of this food, which complimented public donations and food received through Fareshare.**

**This food is the staple of our food parcels, which usually weigh between 6 and 8kg. 16.01 tonnes of food equates to around 2,000 food parcels. In 2024, we distributed 7,797 food parcels, with 1,313 of these food parcels going to families. The Cost-of-Living food alone was enough to cover the food parcels we issued to families, and more.**

**During the break between March and July 2024, without the Cost-of-Living food, we had to cut back our food parcels to around 3-4kg, and at times could only distribute fresh food received through Fareshare.**

**The Cost-of-Living funded food has also taken a significant amount of pressure off of Instant Neighbour, as during the period we were not receiving the funded food, we spent £2,572.90 on purchasing food to keep stock levels up, alongside public donations and Fareshare. This was not sustainable, and our purchased food would usually only last 3 or 4 days as demand was unchanged.**

**With the upcoming rises in Council Tax, social housing rent and the potential changes to Universal Credit health assessments, the demand for emergency food is likely to grow, and without the food that we receive through CFINE, we will find ourselves unable to maintain stocks and unable to keep supporting the people who need our help the most.**

**Shown below is a picture of our food stocks from 22<sup>nd</sup> May 2024, and the following picture is our current stock from the Cost-of-Living food.**



# SCARF

**696 households provided with payments towards fuel bills**

**463 pre-payment vouchers**

**233 direct payments**

**402 discretionary payments**

**1,117 onward referrals made to appropriate advice/support organisations**

**696 households receiving tailored energy efficiency advice via home visit**

**82 households removed from fuel poverty (10% of total income)**

**1,176 people supported**

£130,000 was allocated to SCARF to support households and families living in fuel poverty. Households impacted by the cost of living crisis, particularly those experiencing fuel poverty, were targeted. Financial assistance in the form of fuel vouchers for pre-payment meters and top-ups for credit meters was provided. A discretionary payment to reduce or remove fuel debt was also applied subject to circumstances. Scarf carried out assessments of the household circumstances and established eligibility for support using established criteria to support more people, especially those who are in work poverty.

The Cost of Living Fund has provided crucial support to households across the city, addressing fuel poverty and alleviating the financial pressures of living in a challenging economic environment. The fund has made a tangible difference in the lives of 1,176 individuals, including both adults and children. The largest share of funding has been used to support the city's most economically deprived areas.

In terms of financial support, the direct and discretionary payments have relieved immediate financial stress for households, helping families clear fuel debts, pay for essential

services, and cover other pressing costs.

Energy Advice is given as part of the outreach work, households also received tailored energy efficiency advice, helping them reduce energy usage and lower future bills. This holistic support addresses both short-term needs and long-term sustainability.

A total of 1,117 onward referrals to partner organisations have enhanced the overall impact of this programme. These referrals have directed families to ongoing support, from financial assistance to energy-saving advice, and even food parcel distribution, ensuring that families continue to receive the help they need.

Referred to Scarf for support, an Aberdeen client was facing multiple energy-related challenges. He wanted top-up meters for both gas and electricity, but his gas meter was stuck in credit mode, preventing him from controlling his payments. His supplier had not been receiving meter readings, leading to a growing energy debt that had spiralled beyond what he could afford to pay. With no clear resolution from his supplier, he was struggling to manage his energy costs.

During the first home visit, a Scarf advisor contacted the client's energy supplier to submit an accurate gas meter reading. The client was issued £300 from the Aberdeen Cost of Living Fund, reducing his debt from £800 to £500. An attempt was made to set up a payment plan, but when the supplier's demands were unaffordable, the client opted to make payments as he could.

Although the supplier initially engaged with the client, progress stalled. Over the next month, the client received several calls with no resolution. When the issue remained unresolved, Scarf returned for a follow-up visit to push for action. We recontacted the energy supplier, leading to the case being reassigned to a new department. We issued six £49 fuel vouchers (£294 total) to ease the client's immediate electricity costs and arranged for the meter mode change, ensuring the client could finally switch to a top-up system.

Additionally, tailored behavioural energy advice helped the client cut unnecessary energy waste, leading to £248 in further savings and a 0.7 tonne reduction in carbon emissions. After weeks of delays, the supplier finally processed the meter mode change, giving the client control over his gas payments. With fuel vouchers and £300 off his debt, his financial burden eased, and he could manage his bills with confidence. Scarf's continued intervention ensured the issue didn't slip through the cracks, helping the client navigate a complex process that he would have struggled to resolve alone.

With his meter issue resolved and debt reduced, the client can now manage his energy costs more effectively. Scarf remains available for ongoing support, ensuring he stays on track with his payments and energy efficiency. By gaining control over his bills, the client now feels more confident handling supplier issues - a lasting impact that empowers him beyond this intervention.



## AberNecessities

**50 families fleeing domestic abuse supported with kitchen items**  
**80 pregnant women supported with maternity clothes and hospital bags**  
**1000 families supported with toiletries and cleaning products**  
**4000 people supported**

£40,300 was allocated to AberNecessities to support financially vulnerable families, including lone parents, families with children fleeing domestic abuse, low income families, and families from marginalised groups.

Feedback from professionals working with the families supported have reported positive changes for many of the families and in particular for families fleeing domestic abuse and for pregnant women who have felt a sense of relief and reduced stress on receiving the items.

**“Thank you so much for the items provided for B and her children who are living within our refuge. B shared that she was "crying so much" when they were looking through the items and that she "cannot say how much this has meant" to her, particularly during a time which was very stressful for her. To see her children so happy was an overwhelming feeling of relief for her and the children were very happy with the items.”**



**"I went through the bag with the Mum concerned yesterday, she was so delighted with it. It has allayed her anxiety as she was scared she wouldn't have everything she needed. The way the bags are put together are so beautiful and it makes such a difference to women in similar positions. They feel not good enough but to be given such a lovely gift makes a big difference. The detail in what you provide is amazing, down to the snacks and hair bobbles! You think of everything. The bag is waiting on the Labour ward for this woman's admission, I could see the stress lift from her. I think the bag signifies that people do care and that's so important, you never know what impact that can have."**



# Christmas Family Panto Package

**67 families provided with a Panto package  
300 people benefitted**

£10,000 was allocated to Aberdeen Performing Arts to provide a Christmas family pantomime package for Jack and the Beanstalk at HMT or The Unicorns Christmas Dance Party for younger children at the Lemon Tree. The main target group was families living with deprivation who would otherwise not be able to attend a Christmas show.

The funding gave families the opportunity to visit His Majesty's Theatre and enjoy the festive panto. Many of the families had never been in HMT and it's important to break down barriers to participation and access to the arts, to city venues and to make people feel welcome. Christmas is often a time where money is particularly tight for families and

a visit to the panto can be an unaffordable luxury. Families who attended enjoyed a fun activity together. The aim was for families to feel welcome and included and for any pre-conceived ideas that the theatre is an exclusive experience to be dismantled. Children may be inspired to engage in creative activities as a result of seeing the panto. Aberdeen Performing Arts offer free spaces in all their early years music activities and youth theatre workshops and children who have never been in HMT before may feel less intimidated about joining their Creative Engagement programme. Contact will be made with schools who attended to let them know about the Creative Engagement offers.

“The kids had never been to a panto before, mum said the kids just loved it, the whole experience was brilliant from start to finish. Laughed all the way to the end. Her daughter has not stopped speaking about it. As mum said she would never have been able to afford to take them all there.”

“Thank you very much for the tickets for the panto. We really enjoyed it as we thought it was very funny and we laughed a lot. I loved the ice cream and that I got a new sword which was ace. I know we were very lucky to get tickets so thanks a lot.”



“I enjoyed it. It was funny. The glasses were good and so was the ice cream.”

“I really liked it. I liked it when I got ice cream and I liked the giant beanstalk. It was good going with my friend. I liked the lightsaber I got. I enjoyed it!”

“I liked it! I enjoyed going with my friend. The giant coming out was my favourite part.”





## Winter Clothing

**2699 Primary pupils  
benefitted from a  
£30 award**  
**1682 Secondary pupils  
benefitted from a  
£30 award**  
**4381 children supported**

£20,000 was allocated to Aberdeen City Council to provide 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 going 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.

Every family in the city received direct targeted communication (email or text message) relating to the School Clothing Grant. Those believed to be entitled are sent targeted communications advising how to apply. Information is also included in the "Support for Families" booklet which is issued by the Financial Inclusion Team and sent to every family.

The short-term impact is children and young people are supported to purchase weather-appropriate clothing which removes the stigma and stress of not having appropriate clothing and improves school attendance.

The longer-term impact of providing winter clothing to children and young people in poverty is that it can improve their self-esteem, wellbeing and improve test results.

£17,340 of the funding was spent, due to a reduction in the number of families applying for grants.

## Scottish Welfare Fund

**1,108 people received a Crisis Grant**

£96,382 was allocated to Aberdeen City Council to supplement the Scottish Welfare Fund (SWF), which is a national scheme, underpinned by law and delivered on behalf of Scottish Government by all 32 local authorities. It aims to provide a safety net to vulnerable people on low incomes. Crisis Grants help meet immediate short-term needs when an individual is facing a disaster or emergency situation, and where there is an immediate threat to the health or safety of that individual or their family. They are usually for food, gas or electricity but where a disaster has happened, for example a flood, items like cookers and furniture can be provided.

The short-term impact of awarding a Crisis Grant is citizens receiving immediate financial assistance to help them through an emergency situation.

The Fund adopts a holistic approach and will consider the wider needs of a citizen accessing the service. In this context, it may include longer-term needs and assistance including housing, health issues and money management. Building and maintaining relationships with internal and external partners can ensure users of the fund are signposted to other services to address their wider needs longer-term. Onward referrals are a positive way of offering longer-term solutions.

## Discretionary Housing Payments

**146 claimants supported**

£100,000 was allocated to Aberdeen City Council to provide Discretionary Housing Payments (DHP) to help people on low incomes 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.

The short-term impact of DHP is providing help to citizens who are having difficulty paying their rent due to financial challenges and therefore, being supported to prevent them going into rent arrears. The longer-term impact of DHP with providing those who need extra help with their housing costs, is thereby reducing poverty, maintaining tenancies and preventing homelessness.



"Thank you for your help with our client who would be declaring himself homeless on his 16<sup>th</sup> birthday.

We managed to get him into safe and suitable accommodation and he was very grateful and delighted with the items from AberNecessities, especially the hoodie and the razor!"



# AbzWorks Childcare costs

**16 families supported with childcare costs**  
**7 parents supported into employment**  
**4 parents supported to stay in employment**  
**1 parent supported to sustain education to access paid employment**  
**2 parents supported to undertake paid work experience**  
**16 parents benefitted**  
**28 children benefitted**

£60,000 was allocated to Aberdeen City Council ABZWorks to provide support with childcare costs to parents where childcare provision is a main barrier to employment or employability support. This included financial grants to parents who are looking to enter into employability support, employment or education, for parents already in employment, but struggling to sustain this due to cost of childcare, and 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.

The funding secured has been transformative in creating meaningful opportunities for families, directly addressing childcare costs and supporting their journeys towards greater stability and success in their employment journey. The allocation of funding has

empowered families to achieve their potential, without financial burdens stopping them reaching their goals. Ultimately, the funding has not only alleviated financial worries but also reduced stress for families, empowering them to navigate employment with confidence and focus. It has served as a catalyst for change, supporting families to overcome barriers and embrace opportunities that help them out of poverty.

Only £31,350 of the funding was required to be spent, due to ABZWorks' approach of integrating childcare costs into their commissioned services, funded through Scottish Government's No One Left Behind funding. Using the same funding a Financial Inclusion Officer was embedded within the team, working with parents to access available financial support, including avenues to cover childcare costs where applicable.

**One mum expressed a strong desire to participate in ABZWorks' paid work experience programme delivered in partnership with Early Learning and Childcare. During her interview she demonstrated a clear passion for supporting children's growth and development and shared her aspiration to build a career in this field. However, she highlighted the significant barrier: the cost of childcare for her youngest child, which was unaffordable due to the family's limited income. Through the provision of childcare support, this individual was able to overcome financial obstacles and fully engaged with the placement opportunity. Our participation not only allowed her to gain valuable experience but also brought her immense satisfaction. Following successful completion of the placement, she has now joined the relief pool, enabling her to continue working flexibly around her availability. In addition, the funding facilitated additional settling in days for her daughter prior to the commencement of employment. This approach ensured her daughter's smooth transition and well-being, empowering her mum to focus on her professional journey with confidence.**

**“Help with the childcare cost was crucial, otherwise it would be impossible for me to pay the nursery. Not having to worry with this cost for the beginning of my returning to work, helped me to focus on my learning and development at work.”**



# Poverty Awareness

4 short films produced  
3 events where films screened  
3 podcasts produced  
5 people trained in podcasting and interview methods  
17 volunteers involved



£20,000 was allocated to SHMU to produce a series of podcasts and short films, capturing and platforming the lived experience of those who have been affected by poverty. This included exploring the issues affecting particular groups in more depth, for example lone parents, disabled people, and those affected by No Recourse to Public Funds, developing a stronger sense of the issues and barriers experienced by people and communities within an Aberdeen context. This was with a view to increasing awareness amongst policy and decision makers, as well as the wider public, of the extent and impact of poverty in the City, as well as raising awareness with people and communities affected of the support services available. In terms of shorter term outcomes, the project has provided five lived experience individuals with additional skills and training in media production. One of those individuals is now signed up to take part in a 6-8 week radio training course, and SHMU hope they will host a regular show about the Tillydrone community. SHMU are in discussions to continue working with

the lived experience group at CFINE, to support them to capture their future work around a manifesto around food poverty and the 2026 Scottish elections.

One of the longer terms impacts of this work will be increased awareness of how and where people can access support. For example, as they share the film about unclaimed benefits, they anticipate that this will lead to people accessing support from the partner organisations highlighted in the film, and claiming the benefits that they are entitled to. They also believe that the media that is produced will have the impact of reducing stigma around poverty. The [Women and Poverty](#) film has already been used in training settings for practitioners and professionals (including being used for poverty awareness sessions nationally by the EIS trade union, and locally for a Community Learning and Development staff development day), and this will lead to an increased awareness, empathy and sensitivity when dealing with individuals going through similar experiences in the future. Producing media within a local context will help

individuals feel more empathy for people going through similar situations in the City, and those who need support will be able to see that there is nothing shameful about reaching out for help, advice and support.

In the case of the Tillydrone podcast series, one of the themes brought out by the project was a lack of awareness within the community of different services available within the area. The launch of the podcast will be used to promote the opportunity to get involved in developing a new website for the Tillydrone area, which will help promote relevant support, activities and opportunities in the area, as well as showcase community stories, like the Tillydrone In Focus podcast.

SHMU feel that films and podcasts that highlight lived experiences of poverty and inequality in Aberdeen have an important role to play in terms of prevention of poverty, by helping to reframe narratives, increasing empathy, increasing awareness of services, and decreasing the stigma attached to asking for help at an early stage.

Mary has lived in Tillydrone since the 1990s. She takes part in a number of groups and activities in the area and is on the management committee of the Tillydrone Community Flat. She worked as a Modern Studies teacher as well as a support worker. She has a number of health conditions and, with the exception of audio describing work in the theatre, hasn't been in employment since 2019.

Our first meeting took place at Aberdeen Lads Club, where we discussed how she would like to be involved. Mary expressed a strong interest in the interviewing side of the project, so we decided to begin with an interview with Angie Johnston, the manager at the Lads Club, as she had got to know her and it was a safe space to start. Rhona, SHMU's Podcast worker for the project, met Mary before this interview took place, prepared the questions for Mary to follow and supported her during the recording. As her confidence grew, Mary showed real talent for interviewing and would come up with her own questions as well as including a personal perspective. Her own experience of living in Tillydrone was invaluable – being able to raise discussion points that someone from outwith the area couldn't have anticipated, as well as suggesting people or organisations that might be good to involve in the project. It also allowed her to build up trust with interviewees who would often be sharing quite personal information.

After the podcasts had been edited, Mary was also involved in shaping the final scripts – again, adding her own personal perspective. Mary shared that, thinking back to her first interview with Angie through to the final interview with the local Councillor, she had grown in confidence with her interviewing skills. She intends to enrol in the 6 week shmu radio training as soon as there is a block running that she's available to attend. She has expressed an interest in presenting a show – current affairs is something that is of particular interest to her.

**“There’s a lot more to making a podcast than just asking questions. I hadn’t realised how much goes into it behind the scenes. I’m not very technically minded, so the technical side isn’t really for me.”**



## Telecare

### 1 family supported to purchase telecare equipment

£20,020 was allocated to Aberdeen City Health and Social Care Partnership to 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. This would 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.

£1,022 was spent to support one individual who was in arrears regarding payments for their technology and telecare, so that they could keep their equipment. They also received support to maximise their benefits and to manage their finances. More cases are in progress.

## Power of Attorney

### 4 families supported to arrange Power of Attorney

£10,000 was allocated to Aberdeen City Health and Social Care Partnership to 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. This would support families in gaining power of attorney arrangements for Carers without delay or barrier.

£1,400 was spent and 4 families supported to arrange Power of Attorney. A number of people were able to obtain a Power of Attorney free because of the benefits they are receiving, they have been given advice and support to do this. A number of people have been approached offering assistance due to recent hospital admissions but at this time they and their families have declined to progress POAs however they will continue to be encouraged to consider it.



**“It cannot be understated how critical the supply of purchased food has been in responding to the cost-of-living crisis. During this period, food inflation spiked, and people found themselves with the impossible decision to heat their homes or feed their family. The short-term positive impact of the food is clear: it provided much needed supplies for individuals who had no other way of getting them. It should be noted that CFINE and Food Poverty Action Aberdeen promotes prevention and early intervention to tackle the underlying causes of poverty and food insecurity, so people don’t find themselves having to rely on emergency food in the future. However, it is essential that people’s basic needs are met during times of economic instability, and providing this food support did this successfully.”**

*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 was without enough money to eat properly as priority was to keep was to keep myself safe with a roof over my head.*

*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 the pantry it’s 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!*