



From mountain to sea

Appendix 4

TACKLING POVERTY & INEQUALITIES BUDGET UPDATE FOR 2024- 25 AND 2025/26 (Indicative)

Introduction

This strategic framework outlines the areas of investment and the governance structure which has been used to allocate and monitor the range of funding.

Governance

An annual budget is allocated through Tackling Poverty & Inequalities Strategic partnership to be used to address this complex agenda. In 2021, as part of the commitment from Aberdeenshire Council to reduce poverty and inequalities, a reserve of £3.5 million was secured to support this agenda. This funding is non-recurring, and as a reserve it is not time limited.

On the 14th October 2021 Communities Committee, the policy committee which has responsibility for Tackling Poverty & Inequalities, approved a strategic framework for investment. The framework highlights the following key areas for investment, which have been reviewed to reflect current developments :

- Food Insecurity
- Fuel Poverty & Housing
- Rural Poverty including Transport.
- Financial Inclusion
- Mental Health & Wellbeing
- Employability
- Children & Young People

Tackling Poverty & Inequalities produce an annual report outlining the outcomes and added value the existing resources, including the reserves has had over the last 12 months and outlines the programme for the future 12 months. This report will be presented in a draft form to all Area Committees prior to its approval at Communities Committee. This ensures Area and Policy Committee scrutiny.

Tackling Poverty & Inequalities Strategic Partnership uses a partnership approach when allocating funding through its Project Assessment Group. This is a partnership working group which meets when required to assess Fairer Aberdeenshire Fund applications, Cash First Funding, including those that will be supported from the reserves to ensure that there is no duplicate funding of commissioned services to address Poverty & Inequalities.

Wherever possible projects are co-designed/co-delivered with communities and a rights-based approach underpins their development.

Structure:



In line with Aberdeenshire Council's Scheme of Governance Part 3 - Financial Regulations, approval of specific projects, business cases and investment will be confirmed by Communities Committee and the appropriate Area Committee.

Principles of Investment

All Tackling Poverty & Inequalities applications or proposals should:

- Recognise Place and empower communities and individuals to not only influence/inform decisions but co-produce services to meet their needs.
- Ensure a holistic approach is developed through partnership working at a local and strategic level.
- Improve health inequalities.
- Address the causes of poverty and not just symptoms.
- Make early interventions for vulnerable individuals, families, and disadvantaged communities.
- Improve employability as a key mean of tackling poverty.
- Take a strategic, and where appropriate, cross service/partner approach.
- Enable sustainability of projects/activities funded through short term/non-recurring arrangements.
- Facilitate co-production or a participatory budgeting approach.
- Build capacity – to leverage extra funding, support additional families/households.
- Add additionality or sustainability to other funding streams, and in particular, those that are time limited.
- Demonstrate response to issues/opportunities within the community impact assessment.
- Recognise community wealth building pillars.

Sustaining Investment

Investment will support sustainability of projects that have demonstrated positive outcomes whilst also allowing for a level of creativity and innovation to develop new projects and activities which will help mitigate poorer socio-economic outcomes as a result of the rising cost of living. To further support sustainability, the Tackling Poverty & Inequalities Strategic Partnership will collaborate with the council's Investments & Projects Team (Economic Development) to identify funding streams that can extend the reserves or sustain innovation enabled by the reserves.

Proposal for 2024/25 Tackling Poverty & Inequalities (TP&I) budget and indicative of 2025/26

Area	Budget (2024/25)	Allocation to date	Budget Available	Comments
Fairer Aberdeenshire Fund <i>(£1,068,400)</i>	£541,200	£316,606	£224,594	Staffing within the TP&I Team is as follows – TP&I Coordinator, Project Officer, Child Poverty Engagement Worker, Admin Officer, Welfare Team Leader – £247,069 Grants to third sector - £69,537
Information and Advice Services	£527,200	£ 996,648 Additional income has been secured from a range of sources. Please see comments	none	£410,291 – CAB contract Money Advice Welfare Rights Team (MAWR) – £586,357 Income from UK prosperity fund, Resettlement Team, Housing (21 Hours) and HSCP will cover additional MAWR staff costs.
TP&I Reserves	£1,478,337 <i>(£2,021,663 has already been allocated as below)</i> <i>£460,399 (22/23)</i> <i>£1,454,144 (23/24)</i> <i>£107,120 (25/26)</i>	£ 727,013	£ 751,324	Staff – £91,531, Service Level Agreements – £44,544 Grants – £590,938
Cash First	£100,804	£59,625	£41,179	Staff – £52,425, Grants - £41,179, Lived Experience- £7,200
Total	£2,647,541	£2,099,892	£1,017,097	

Area of investment and Delivery service / organisation	Summary of the service or project.	2024/25 Proposed allocation and source	2025/26 Proposed indicative budget
<p>Food security</p> <p><u>Cfine</u></p> <p>Increase access to good quality food for those in rural communities.</p>	<p>The funding will continue to support the Connecting with Communities project. This project is currently servicing 13 locations across Aberdeenshire - Edzell Woods and St Combs on a weekly basis, and Auchenblae, Fettercairn, St Cyrus, Drumlithie, Turriff, Banff, Macduff, Aberchirder, Crimond, Inverallochy/Cairnbulg, and Rosehearty on a fortnightly basis.</p> <p>There is a review being carried out to ensure the project is accessing those communities that have limited transport or access to low-cost food.</p> <p>Communities within the Marr area are also being considered.</p>	<p>£51,194</p> <p>TP&I Reserves</p>	
<p><u>Garioch Community Kitchen</u></p> <p>Developing food skills</p>	<p>The funding will deliver a range of courses which provide a positive direct impact on both attendees and their families by increasing knowledge, confidence and empowering them to plan and cook healthy affordable meals which will in turn save them money and increase their wellbeing.</p>	<p>£12,537</p> <p>Fairer Aberdeenshire Fund</p>	
<p>Fuel Poverty & Housing</p> <p><u>SCARF</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Heat & Eat Project • Energy Advisors • Energy Fund 	<p>Scarf's Income Maximisation Officer will carry out a structured assessment of each individual household's circumstances and establish the level and type of support required to provide an immediate positive intervention if necessary and long-term positive outcomes.</p>	<p>£85,000</p> <p>TP&I Reserves</p>	<p><i>£85,000</i></p> <p>TP&I Reserves</p> <p><i>indicative</i></p>

<p><u>TP&I Welfare Rights & Money Advice Team</u></p> <p>Energy Challenge Fund & Flexible fund</p>	<p>Money Advice & Welfare Rights workers will have direct access to a flexible fund which is accessed for those who do not meet the threshold for financial support elsewhere. This will reduce homelessness and debt, and increase household income.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reduce personal debt and increase access to financial support. • Increase health & wellbeing. 	<p>£100,000 TP&I Reserves</p>	<p><i>£100,000 TP&I Reserves indicative</i></p>
<p>Rural Poverty including Transport.</p> <p>Rural Poverty Area budgets</p>	<p>Area plans are being developed to address local priorities – Food security, access to services and transport.</p>	<p>Budget already allocated.</p>	
<p>Cash First Project</p>	<p>The aim of this project is to reduce the need for emergency food provision through reviewing and improving referral pathways for those rural communities that have additional challenges in accessing financial advice & support. A local voice panel will be developed to monitor the outcomes of this project which will be supported by a Cash First Project Officer. There is funding available to develop new ways of working resulting in increased access to services and to reduce the risk of a financial crisis.</p>	<p>£100,804</p> <p>Scottish Government</p> <p>£100,000 TP&I Reserves</p>	<p>£63,768</p> <p>Scottish Government</p> <p>£50,000 TP&I Reserves</p>
<p>Financial Inclusion Aberdeen Foyer</p> <p>Financial Inclusion Team</p> <p>The Vinery Project (Banff)</p>	<p>This funding will enable Foyer to increase specialist Financial Inclusion Advice across Garioch, Buchan, Banff and Buchan and Formartine to meet the demand from the existing service. This service provides intensive 1:1 sessions for individuals who are in crisis, including support with benefit applications, debt management, food/fuel poverty.</p> <p>The Vinery Project will be a Community Inclusion project around food, financial inclusion, and skills, delivering personal development and employability programmes for young people/adults in the local area</p>	<p>£92,402 TP&I Reserves</p>	

	who are experiencing multiple and complex barriers to move into good quality, sustainable employment.		
<u>Gordon Rural Action</u> Community Hub - Huntly	To continue to support the delivery of a community-based advice & support hub. This hub ensures an integrated approach is taken in addressing poverty & inequalities within the Huntly and surrounding areas.	£47,000 Fairer Aberdeenshire Fund	
No Recourse to Public Funds	A member of staff has been appointed to develop a framework to ensure all partners are aware of the process and support available. Support training/raise awareness for welfare rights officers and other staff/partners in relation to immigration to ensure appropriate support for them.	£15,000 Reserves	
<u>Progress In Dialogue</u> Wellbeing Fund & Lived Experience project.	This funding is part of our Cash First approach where we not only support those in crisis, but we ensure there is an integrated approach to accessing services to ensure sustained outcomes. Increase access to support for marginalised communities through developing a Wellbeing Fund within Progress in Dialogue.	£62,342 TP&I Reserves	
Mental Health & Wellbeing <u>Aberdeenshire Council Housing Service</u> Health & Wellbeing Officer	The funding will be used to cover a post within housing which will improve outcomes for those who are not in receipt of support services and may be suffering from mental ill health. There is a gap in service provision where those who were showing signs of not being well were frequently contacting housing services and were unable to access mental health statutory services. This service will reduce the risk of clients take their own lives and support staff who worry that their client's mental health needs are not being met.	£18,000 TP&I Reserves	
<u>Community Collective</u> Community Living Room in Stonehaven	The Living Room is a home from home. A warm, comfortable space to make social connection and develop community spirit . The funding will support the project by covering accommodation and food costs.	£10,000 Fairer Aberdeenshire Fund	

<p>Employability</p>	<p>The employability partnership has been allocated funding through Noone Left Behind to cover a range of employability programmes to support people from 1-1 confidence building to ensuring people can not only secure but sustain employment. The parental support fund is also allocated through the partnership which is to support parents to secure, sustain and progress through employment. There is an assumption that these streams of funding will continue into 2024/25 however Tackling Poverty & Inequalities funding may be required.</p>		
<p>Children & Young People</p> <p>Tackling Poverty & Inequalities Youth Poverty Engagement Project:</p> <p>The Space - Peterhead</p> <p>Aberdeenshire Youth Rights Committee (AYRC)</p>	<p>2 Youth Poverty Engagement Workers are now employed through TP&I to engage with young people using a rights-based approach resulting in coproduction of services & opportunities.</p> <p>The Space is a youth led project which is used by a range of young people including unaccompanied young adults.</p> <p>AYRC has young people from across Aberdeenshire that meets on a regular basis to discuss issues and priorities. In 2024 they will be working on the Cost of the school day, young people's health & wellbeing and addressing stigma as priority areas.</p>	<p>£91,531</p> <p>TP&I Reserves</p>	
<p><u>Aberdeenshire Council Children Services</u></p> <p>Child Protection Advocacy Worker</p>	<p>To improve outcomes for those who children and young people who are involved within the Child Protection system through establishing independent advocacy service. This service will be co-produced with children and young people with lived experience.</p>	<p>£26,544</p> <p>TP&I Reserves</p>	<p>£26,544</p> <p>TP&I Reserves <i>indicative</i></p>
<p>Child Care Development fund</p>	<p>A cross service group have been established to develop a Childcare framework which will reflect the recommendations of the research carried out in 2023 "Provision of Rural Childcare Research and Model Review for Aberdeenshire".</p>	<p>£100,000</p> <p>TP&I Reserves</p>	<p>£100,000</p> <p>TP&I Reserves <i>indicative</i></p>

	It has been agreed that financial support to develop the sector in Aberdeenshire maybe required therefore a further paper will be presented to Communities, Education & Children Services and Infrastructure Service Committee to agree a collective budget to support this development.		
Information & Advice <u>Kincardine & Mearns CAB</u> Commissioned Community Based Provision	Deliver a range of community-based information & advice services through the 4 CABs at a local level. Review of framework has taken place and appendix 4 outlines options for the Committee to consider. Existing contract ends December 2024.	£ 410,291 Fairer Aberdeenshire Fund	
<u>TP&I Money Advice Welfare Rights Team</u> Specialist pathways and sector development	To develop specialist pathways to ensure people can access the services they need through GP practices, Foodbanks, Community projects and Health Visiting teams. To ensure the sector is supported through a range of training opportunities which will result in a constant service across the shire.	£ 586,357 Fairer Aberdeenshire Fund , Health & Social Care Funding UK Prosperity fund has been secured till 2025	£386,132 Fairer Aberdeenshire Fund ,Health & Social Care Funding <i>Indicative</i>
Total allocation		£1,909,002	£811,444 <i>Indicative</i>