
REPORT TO THE MEETING OF THE EXECUTIVE 6 DECEMBER 2022**PORTFOLIO: COMMUNITIES & HEALTH****REPORT FROM DIRECTOR OF COMMUNITIES & HEALTH****SUBJECT: COST OF LIVING UPDATE****1 DECISION BEING RECOMMENDED**

- 1.1 That the update on the cost of living response and work of the Cost of Living Working Group be noted.

2 REASON/S FOR RECOMMENDATION

- 2.1 To allow Members oversight of the work being undertaken by officers in order to respond to the crisis and ensure we are supporting our residents, businesses and staff.

3 SALIENT INFORMATION

- 3.1 As the country prepares for the impact of the cost of living crisis the Council is focused on its response in order to support its residents, businesses and staff. We have developed our response around 5 key themes which are: support with bills and money, support with food, support with wellbeing, go green, and support with work.
- 3.2 We have developed an action plan which provides a whole system approach to support residents, businesses and staff respond to the cost of living issues and enable individual and collective support through a suite of preventative and personalised measures.
- 3.3 This action plan is a live document and will be informed not only from any governmental changes but also a number of sources, such as health colleagues, Housing, Revenues and Benefits, Department for Work and Pensions (DWP), Citizens Advice Bureau (CAB) and voluntary, community and social enterprise (VCSE) organisations that are on the front line providing services to residents.
- 3.4 We recognise that although a number of services were digitised as a result of the pandemic, we also need to make sure that the most vulnerable know how to access the support services that are available to them which may include printed support material or face to face engagement.
- 3.5 A collaborative working group has been established which is widely attended by key partners. There have now been two task and finish groups set up looking at data collation and communication. This working group will help to understand and draw together the support that is currently available across the District. It will also identify any opportunities for collaboration and

additional resources required in order to provide targeted support for residents and businesses.

- 3.6 The development of a dashboard is considered essential to support our work alongside our partners in addressing the challenges ahead. The dashboard is currently being developed and will contain key data that can be presented to future meetings of the Executive to show the impact of the cost of living and the support, advice and guidance being provided locally. It will also assist in identifying emerging support needs of our residents, businesses and staff, any funding gaps and resource issues that need addressing for our partner agencies who are already seeing pressures on their services.
- 3.7 Officers are also working on a digital campaign with a strapline of #ByYourSide. The objective of the campaign is to not only raise awareness of services available but to also assist with addressing the stigma associated for many who will find themselves suffering hardship for the first time and not knowing where to go or what support is available for them. Whilst the campaign is digital officers are fully aware that not all residents, businesses or staff have access to the internet or comfortable online, as mentioned above. This is being reflected in the campaign and material will be available in printed form. The aim is to reach as many residents and businesses as possible through all available channels, social media, online, face to face, press, partners and the communities themselves.
- 3.8 Members will also be aware that a £5,000 grant has been approved by Members to support the establishment of warm spaces across the District. The grant is being awarded through RRAVS and we have already seen a number of requests, which is extremely encouraging. A detailed report of funding awarded will be brought to a future meeting of the Executive.

4 RISK IMPLICATIONS

- 4.1 The risk implications are set out in the action plan.

5 RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS

- 5.1 Consideration will need to be given to the financial implications of any actions that are agreed in the plan. Any central Government grants may need to be applied for and will need to be allocated accordingly.

6 LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

- 6.1 Any work undertaken by the Council, either by itself or in partnership, will be in line with statutory legal guidance.

7 EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY IMPLICATIONS

- 7.1 An Equality Impact Assessment has not been completed as no decision is being made.

I confirm that the above recommendation does not depart from Council policy and that appropriate consideration has been given to any budgetary and legal implications.



Lead Officer Signature: _____

Tracey Lilley
Director of Communities & Health

Background Papers:-

None.

For further information please contact Tracey Lilley, Director of Communities & Health, on:-

Phone: 01277 312644

Email: Tracey.lilley@brentwood.rochford.gov.uk

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